

The Crisis of the American Sense of Mission at the Turn of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

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<https://doi.org/10.30608/HJEAS/2022/28/1/4>

ABSTRACT

The sense of mission is an integral part of the national spirit. Therefore, questioning its validity can lead to the destabilization of a nation's fundamental values and a major crisis in its self-image. This type of crisis accompanied the transformation of the American sense of mission at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which arose from the clash between the principles of traditional continental expansionism and new imperialist aspirations. In the wake of the 1898 Spanish-American War, the United States found itself definitively enmeshed in the global arena of great power politics. The control of overseas possessions not meant for statehood in the Union turned the federal republic into an empire in all but in its name. The crisis of the sense of mission fed on the inherent tension between liberal democratic traditions and the attempt made at imperial governance. As research into the *Congressional Records* will indicate, in the congressional debate developing between traditional and new ideas of expansionism, a consensus emerged that the questions relating to the status of the new overseas territories were the most significant the American people had faced during the nineteenth century, for these questions touched upon the roots of the nation's consciousness. With view to the significance of this historical moment, this essay examines the forces at work both for and against the transformation of the American sense of mission at a time when Congress still constituted a powerful check on the executive in the field of foreign policy. (ÉESZ)

KEYWORDS: sense of mission, isolationism, Manifest Destiny, American imperialism, Congressional Records

“The power and persistence of ideas lie at the base of all historical movements.”

Albert Show¹

The historical sense of mission is inseparably linked with a nation’s aspirations to power, progress, and conquest. The arguments of territorial, economic, and/or political expansion are most convincingly supported by the ideology embodied in a nation’s sense of mission, which serves as vindication and justification for actions otherwise little supported by rational arguments alone. The sense of mission is an integral part of the national spirit; as a result, questioning its validity can lead to the destabilization of a nation’s fundamental values, and can create a major crisis in its self-image.

This type of crisis accompanied the transformation of the American sense of mission at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which arose from the clash between the principles of traditional continental expansionism and new imperialist aspirations. As a result of the 1898 Spanish-American War, the “age of innocence”² came to an end and the United States found itself definitively enmeshed in the global arena of great power politics. The loss of innocence, of course, also entailed the transformation of the nation’s sense of mission, marked by contradictions between the need to preserve the traditional value system of liberal democracy and the call of a new, imperialist era, as well as by the crisis in the sense of mission.

Not that this type of crisis or watershed moment of expansionism was without precedents in American history. Thomas Jefferson’s decision to purchase the entire Territory of Louisiana from the French in 1803 led to serious constitutional objections. Even more

importantly, the 1848 acquisition of the American Southwest through the Mexican-American War raised not only domestic and foreign policy concerns leading to heated debates both within and without Congress, but also dissected the moral implications of the mission. However, the mostly Amerindian and Hispanic, very sparsely populated territories of the Louisiana Purchase and the Mexican cession—with American settler communities already present—were destined to become states, and as such, equal members of the Union. Thus, these territorial acquisitions fit in well with the continentalism embodied in the agrarian expansionism of Manifest Destiny. By contrast, the Spanish-American War left behind challenges that created the need to strike out new paths in order to justify the unprecedented global stance of the United States among rivaling great powers and to control the unwilling, densely populated, multiracial overseas territories deemed unfit for self-government and membership in the Union, yet yearning for independence after the termination of Spanish colonial rule.³ The Treaty of Paris ending the war, ratified by two votes over the necessary two-thirds in the US Senate in February 1899,⁴ catapulted the United States onto the stage of global imperial actors all at once, and turned the federal republic into an empire but in its name. As political scientist Colin Moore pointed out in his seminal book *American Imperialism and the State, 1893-1921*, the crisis of the sense of mission fed on the inherent tension “between American mass democracy and imperial governance.”⁵

As research into the *Congressional Records* will demonstrate in this paper, in the congressional debate developing out of the conflict between traditional and new ideas of expansionism, a consensus emerged, namely, that the questions relating to the status of the new overseas territories acquired during the Spanish-American War were the most significant that the American people had faced during the nineteenth century, for these questions touched upon the very roots of the nation’s consciousness, which simultaneously embraced its past, present, and future.⁶ With view to the significance of this historical moment, this essay will examine the

forces at work both for and against the transformation of the American sense of mission at a time when Congress still constituted a powerful balance vis-à-vis the executive in the field of foreign policy.⁷

The bases of American mission and Manifest Destiny

In my approach, the bases of the American sense of mission lie in its religiosity and the very fact of immigration, that is, in the pursuit of spiritual and physical freedom. Immigration and the disposition to think in positive terms of the chosen new home(land) were the defining experiences of the deeply religious society of the early colonial period, and as such, it stood for the opportunity to create an ideal example for God and humankind. Thus, due to the religious background and the challenges inherent in the process of migration, the sense of mission surfaced during the infancy of the nation's history. This peculiarly idealistic mission, based on the lofty principle of liberty, was present right from inception; it bore such attributes as "exemplary," "special," and "divine," and it has remained unchanged throughout American history, an embodiment of the national spirit.

The other fundamental characteristic of the American sense of mission was born when the colonies became a nation founded upon the idea of liberty. Following the drafting of the Declaration of Independence (1776) and the Constitution (1787), the US political system became a model to set against European systems of government. Thus, the two foundation stones of the American sense of mission that are based on idealism—the expansion of the realm of liberty and democracy for the benefit of humankind—had intertwined by the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The fulfillment of this mission was warranted by the desire for freedom and the demand for land among the new European immigrant groups, as well as by the frontier, which was gradually advancing into the seemingly infinite Western Territories.

Mission also fed nationalism, an essential building block in the process of becoming a nation, and as such was closely related to the pursuit of territorial expansion, that is expansionism, which in turn had a stimulating effect on nationalism. For the advancement of the frontier not only served to accomplish the mission, but also expansionism itself could be employed to acquire new territories in the name of the mission, as was the case with the 1803 Louisiana Purchase.⁸ This is the era when the term “Empire of Liberty” turned into “Empire for Liberty”—in Thomas Jefferson’s own wording⁹—and the view of the mission expressed by it fueled expansion further.

The mission thus rationalized expansionism as the unquestionable will of God. From this conviction evolved Manifest Destiny, or continentalism, as set forth by John Quincy Adams in 1819, then President Monroe’s Secretary of State.¹⁰ However, this expansionist version of the sense of mission became part of the nation’s vocabulary only by the 1840s, when the democratic idealism of the chosen people projected the “expansion of the Empire of Liberty” onto the entire North American continent in defense of the spread of American democracy, and in accordance with the Monroe Doctrine. This resulted in the acquisition of the American Southwest—one half of Mexico, or more than 1.3 million square kilometers¹¹—in the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), and in securing the American Northwest in the Treaty of Oregon (1846) through diplomatic means following the saber-rattling during the presidential election campaign of 1844. American settler communities had already established themselves in these coveted territories meant for statehood (Texas, California, and Oregon Country), and were avid supporters of US ambitions. At the same time, amidst the intensifying sectional crisis between the North and the South, Manifest Destiny was also the result of a realization that the lack of expansion would ultimately endanger the future of the Union.¹²

Such a shift in the sense of mission meant that the expansion of the Empire of Liberty became equated with US expansionism.¹³ Contrary to Merk’s opinion, giving up on the

annexation of all of Mexico in 1848 did not mean the end of the efforts to achieve continentalism.¹⁴ The highly nationalist Young America Movement within the Democratic Party saw the purpose of expansionism as spreading American democracy worldwide, and tended to approach the Caribbean and Central America from this perspective. In addition, the movement considered the issue of slavery, which was at the center of political attention at the time, as temporary; therefore, they did not attribute much significance to it from the point of view of expansionism.¹⁵ However, the desire for further territorial growth inevitably led to a polarization of goals, in line with the increasingly divergent and conflicting national interests. Yet it was the economic prosperity of the 1850s, further fueling expansionism, that exacerbated the deeply rooted North-South conflict between the emerging “imperial visions” in the two halves of the nation: “in the South, an expanding cotton-slavery empire, and in the North an expanding free-soil empire” were projected as the guarantees of continued economic growth.¹⁶ As a result of the Compromise of 1850 and the dominant domestic political conditions of the 1850s, however, the potential establishment of new slave states in the Western Territories was practically unfeasible.¹⁷ No surprise that Southern expansionists would increasingly turn their attention towards the Caribbean Region.

As part of continentalism, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams declared as early as 1823 that Cuba was indispensable to the United States; moreover, because of its geographic location, the island was considered a natural appendage of the mainland.¹⁸ In addition, for US expansionists, Cuba was important not only for the prosperity of the slave states (as Southern Democrats often emphasized), but also for the security of the United States,¹⁹ while Central America was significant because of the planned interoceanic canal, already under consideration at the time.²⁰

The first serious step to acquire Cuba was taken in 1848, when President James K. Polk attempted to purchase the Spanish colony for \$100 million; the offer brought about huge

indignation and a cold rejection in Spain. From that time onwards, however, the “Cuban question”—with some small detours—remained a permanent item on the national political agenda. The Ostend Manifesto, written by the US ministers (of Southern origin) to Spain, Great Britain, and France, and sent to President Franklin Pierce in 1854, already stated that if Spain remained unwilling to sell Cuba (this time for \$120 million), the island should be taken by force. The leaked manifesto was welcomed by the Young America Movement and the South, but it provoked great indignation in the North as well as in Spain, and, in consequence, President Pierce dropped the plan.²¹

The aggressive expansionist aspirations of the Pierce administration and the public were manifested in other ways too. The 1850s constituted the heyday of private military expeditions, that is, filibustering, which enjoyed wide popular support. These expeditions—carried out mostly by pro-slavery Southerners—were aimed at overthrowing certain governments in the Caribbean and Central America in order to facilitate US expansion, and even though the US government had formally distanced itself from these private initiatives, it took hardly any action against them. Such unauthorized military expeditions were attempted by William Walker in Nicaragua, as well as by John Anthony Quitman, who became notorious for his leadership in the Cuban expeditions.²² The supporters of filibustering saw these inglorious military adventures as the realization of Manifest Destiny and claimed that such initiatives also served the mission of spreading American civilization among ignorant nations.²³

As we have seen, in the 1840s and the 1850s, the American sense of mission displayed increasingly aggressive, imperialist tendencies in terms of sharing the blessings of American democracy with other peoples, coupled with the manipulation of elements of the idealistic, humanitarian sense of mission of elevating and reforming the conquered indigenous and Hispanic populations. Expansionists showed ever-greater interest in regions where the motives for acquisition were no longer driven by hunger for land, but by considerations of strategic

interest. In John Blum et al.'s summary, all this indicated that "Manifest Destiny might very easily be converted into a modern doctrine of imperialism."²⁴ It is important to emphasize, however, that Manifest Destiny meant continentalism—the unification of North America under equal conditions. It aimed at elevating the surrounding states so that they could become members of the Union and thus could share the benefits of American democracy as equals. For this reason, Manifest Destiny can be considered the antithesis of modern imperialism,²⁵ and it is not far removed from the idealism that provides the fundamental power and continuity of the American sense of mission.

From Manifest Destiny to Manifest Duty: the formulation of a new sense of mission

The 1860s, 70s, and 80s were marked by the Civil War and its economic, political, and social consequences, as well as by the organization of the West and its incorporation into the national economy. In the absence of external threats, the nation's attention was entirely focused on domestic challenges. As a result, these decades were characterized by marked isolationism—in relation to not only Europe, as originally proposed in the Monroe Doctrine in 1823,²⁶ but regarding the country's outward look in general. This era did not favor expansionist ambitions at all. The sense of mission represented by Manifest Destiny lost its power to a great extent during this period, and although there were some who sustained it, the idea lacked overall popular and political support. The public and Congress reacted with indifference, even reluctance, when Secretary of State William H. Seward successfully purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867 and appropriated the Midway Islands in the Pacific, the very first overseas territory of the United States. The expansionists' dreams regarding Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Canada, Hawaii, and Samoa were met with uninterest in the post-Civil War decades.²⁷

However, the reason behind this lack of interest in aversion to expansionism lies mainly in the fact that the shift of Manifest Destiny towards imperialism contradicted the nation's basic traditions (isolationism and continentalism) and its sense of mission (the expansion of liberty and democracy under equal conditions). Support for the retention of the traditional value system proved stronger in the decades following the Civil War than the appeal of new ambitions.²⁸ In order for the power of tradition not to hinder the transformation of the sense of mission, what was needed was a new constellation of domestic and international economic and political factors, which only reached maturity in the 1890s.

The re-emergence of the expansionist drive was motivated by a combination of several factors at the turn of the century. Most importantly, the national economy had achieved its potential by that time. Surplus production appeared in both agriculture and industry, followed by a collapse in producer prices, which in turn culminated in the Panic of 1893. It became evident that the domestic market was unable to absorb the surplus goods produced by the economy and that an efficient solution could only be expected via the acquisition of new markets.²⁹ Latin American and Asian markets—especially the potentials of the Chinese market—proved irresistible lures to American business interests. Thus, the demand for new markets became one of the determining factors in the renewed interest in expansionism.

Since new markets meant primarily overseas markets for the United States, however, the prerequisite of market acquisition was first and foremost an effective maritime fleet. Its construction began in 1883, and by the end of the 1890s, the United States had risen from twelfth to third place among maritime superpowers.³⁰ The chief advocate of US maritime power was a naval officer and historian, Captain Alfred T. Mahan, whose seminal 1890 work, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, and 1893 essay entitled *Hawaii and Our Future Seapower* expressed the conviction that foreign trade required a large merchant marine and a large

navy to defend it; the operation of fleets necessitated unimpeded access to harbors, bases, and coaling stations, which could be secured by overseas possessions, that is, by expansion.³¹

Mahan's views influenced not only the evolution of Washington's fleet expansion policy, but also the members of the new, largely Republican political elite, such as Henry Cabot Lodge, Theodore Roosevelt, Elihu Root, and Albert J. Beveridge, who became major supporters of overseas expansionism. This new generation of politicians was greatly impressed by the dominant zeitgeist of the contemporary world. It was a time when European powers in need of new markets were intensively competing with each other to annex more and more new territories in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific.³² In the midst of this global phenomenon, America's isolationism was seen as obsolete, and, in the eyes of this new generation, as a barrier to economic development. This feeling was further intensified by one additional fact. The 1890 census marked the official closing of the frontier, which created a sense of national claustrophobia. More and more pioneers were forced to cultivate semi-arid land. The price of land began to rise rapidly and its availability decreased, which introduced a previously unknown limitation in the land of heretofore unlimited opportunities: it was no longer infinite, as the contiguous area of public lands ceased to exist.³³ The words of Republican Senator Orville Platt from 1893 perfectly reflect the public mood emerging from the closing of the frontier and the spirit of the times:

A policy of isolation did well enough when we were an embryo nation, but today things are different. We are the most advanced and powerful people on earth, and regard to our future welfare demands an abandonment of the doctrines of isolation. It is to the ocean our children must look as they once looked to the boundless West.³⁴

Thus, the nation entered the age of maturity. An era had come to a close, and politics immediately recognized the need for renewal. The majority of Republicans saw overseas expansionism as the main tool to achieve that.³⁵

In addition to the aforementioned factors, however, this new type of expansionism also needed ideological support in order to persuade the public and those decision makers who expressed moral concerns. This ideology was intended to justify the imperialist version of Manifest Destiny by manipulating the idealistic features of the American sense of mission. Similarly to the case of the Mexican-American war, the supporters of imperialist aspirations again referred to spreading the blessings of democracy and to the civilizing mission of the American people. This argument was further reinforced, on the one hand, by the pseudoscientific ideology of Social Darwinism, which was gaining ground at that time and, on the other hand, by the propagation of views on the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race, which were used by expansionists to rationalize imperialism.³⁶ Social Darwinism became a dominant ideology at the turn of the century through the work of the English thinker and sociologist Herbert Spencer, and his American followers, William Graham Sumner, John Fiske, and John W. Burgess. According to this sociological theory, the basis of social development was the struggle for existence and natural selection, which depended on hereditary abilities, and which resulted in superior and inferior classes, societies, and races. The superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race was supported by a series of race theories developed in both Europe and America by pseudoscientific racists such as the French diplomat Comte Arthur de Gobineau, the British-born German philosopher Houston Stewart Chamberlain, the American lawyer Madison Grant, sociologist Edward A. Ross, economist John R. Commons, and historian Lothrop Stoddard.³⁷ For the expansionists of the 1890s, the new social and racial theories provided effective arguments with which to fight back at their opponents and to convince the undecided, and

served as moral and ideological justification when promoting a radically new approach regarding foreign policy and national interest.

In addition to the social and racial theories propagated by politicians, these pseudoscientific views were also attractive to another group with great moral influence, the missionary churches, and especially Protestant Churches with foreign missions. In the 1890s, more than 1,000 Protestant missionaries worked in China alone.³⁸ The new views offered “scientific” foundations for the legitimacy of the conversion of pagans, of the spread of Protestantism and democracy. Moreover, the activities of missionaries were closely related to the aims of expansionists since, as shown by a series of historical examples, the flag of the nation followed the Bible.³⁹ Reverend Josiah Strong’s 1885 book, *Our Country*—which greatly influenced public opinion by supporting Anglo-Saxon supremacy and overseas expansion—drew readers’ attention to the significance of divine mission and to the practical consequences of US overseas presence:

And what is the process of civilizing but *the creating of more and higher wants?* Commerce follows the missionary. . . . And with these vast continents added to our market, with our natural advantages fully realized, what is to prevent the United States from becoming the mighty workshop of the world, and our people “the hands of mankind”? . . . “America holds the future.”⁴⁰

The nation underwent major changes in the late 1880s and the 1890s. The combined effects of domestic and international conditions—that is, economic development and the lure of overseas markets, the spirit of the times, the new generation of politicians, ideologies giving new meaning to the American sense of mission—provided the basis for the imperialists to question the continued validity of the fundamental traditions and mission of the nation, as well

as for the new imperialist direction to enter the political mainstream. It was clear to traditionalists that with its new expansionist ambitions the United States was irrevocably drifting into great power politics, from which they had earlier wished to steer clear, and at the same time this new type of expansionism would contradict the fundamental principles of national consciousness. But those who responded to the challenges of the age considered it obvious that with its enormous economic potential the United States could not insist on isolationism forever; it could not avoid its predestined role, as embodied in the new Manifest Destiny. Thus, the conflict between the old and the new sense of mission and the resulting crisis of national consciousness accompanied the international events and foreign policy decisions of the last decade of the nineteenth century, which forced the leaders of the nation to choose sides with relentless haste.

Although American combativeness greatly increased along with the spread of expansionist and imperialist views, and the bellicose public opinion was often accompanied by manifestations of American chauvinism, that is, jingoism, in the media,⁴¹ anti-imperialist forces still managed to contain expansionist aspirations in the first half of the 1890s. An example of this was the rejection of the annexation of the new Republic of Hawaii in 1893 by Democratic President Grover Cleveland (1893-1897), who was known for his anti-expansionist and anti-colonial views.⁴² When Cleveland left the presidency in 1897, however, the very last anti-imperialist president left the White House. His successor, the Republican William McKinley (1897-1901), was much more open and receptive to the demands of the new political forces, and especially to public opinion. At the same time, his figure exemplified the ambivalence that characterized many Americans as a result of the conflict between tradition and change, and the transformation of his stance on expansionism illustrated all too clearly the effectiveness and persuasiveness of imperialism. In his first inaugural address given in March 1897, he still held up the traditional values of isolationism:

It has been the policy of the United States since the foundation of the Government to cultivate relations of peace and amity with all the nations of the world, and this accords with my conception of our duty now. We have cherished the policy of non-interference with affairs of foreign governments wisely inaugurated by Washington, keeping ourselves free from entanglement, either as allies or foes, content to leave undisturbed with them the settlement of their own domestic concerns. It will be our aim to pursue a firm and dignified foreign policy, which shall be just, impartial, ever watchful of our national honor, and always insisting upon the enforcement of the lawful rights of American citizens everywhere. *Our diplomacy should seek nothing more and accept nothing less than is due us. We want no wars of conquest; we must avoid the temptation of territorial aggression.*⁴³

Nevertheless, a year later, on 11 April 1898, he inaugurated the era of American global power marked by economic imperialism when he asked Congress to declare war on Spain.

The 1898 Spanish-American War functioned as a catalyst for both the president and the public in support of pursuing overseas ambitions. The United States had been following the renewed war of independence against Spanish colonial rule in neighboring Cuba—ongoing since February 1895—with great concern and sympathy. The yellow press led by William Randolph Hearst (*New York Journal*) and Joseph Pulitzer (*New York World*) resorted to sensationalism and described the atrocities committed by the Spanish unilaterally; it managed to influence the humanitarian and moral convictions of the public and called for intervention. So did the expansionist politicians led by Lodge, Roosevelt, and Mahan. Business circles, however, rejected the idea of war; instead, they called for peace to be restored, and the

Cleveland and McKinley administrations negotiated with Spain in this spirit. McKinley was an advocate of peace, despite the public mood supporting war. However, when the *USS Maine*—sent to the harbor of Havana as a surveillance ship—exploded on 15 February 1898 in unclear circumstances,⁴⁴ with a loss of 260 lives, it was no longer possible to maintain peace. The incident was an insult to American honor and provoked such a public outcry inside and outside Congress that could only be mitigated by the US declaration of war, which was finally issued by Congress on 25 April.⁴⁵

It is obvious that the expansionists did not trigger the war. They simply took advantage of it to achieve their goals of promoting American business and strategic interests. In other words, the war evolved from the situation in Cuba since the American public, incited by the press, deemed conditions on the island intolerable.⁴⁶ According to contemporary historian Edmund J. Carpenter, the United States was motivated by indignation when it finally took action, that is, he ascribed a moral basis to the US decision to go to war.⁴⁷ The moral purity of the Cuban intervention was also confirmed by the text of the Congressional resolution on intervention. The first section determined “that the people of the island of Cuba are, and of right ought to be, free and independent,” but the fourth section—an amendment proposed by Republican Senator Henry M. Teller of Colorado—went even further to ensure that the annexation of the island would not be entertained. The unanimous acceptance of the Teller Amendment reflected the strength of the traditional ideals:

[T]he United States hereby disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said island except for pacification thereof, and asserts its determination, when that is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the island to its people.⁴⁸

Thus, the beginning of the Spanish-American War, with Cuba gaining independence, did not challenge traditions. However, the war's further evolution was of an imperialist nature, and was in fundamental conflict with the value system and principles of the American nation. Originally a war for freedom, it was transformed into a colonial war when considering its overall objectives, and it resulted in an empire. That meant the loss of innocence.

After the declaration of war, events accelerated and far exceeded expectations. Since the purpose of the war was to liberate Cuba, it took the public by complete surprise to learn that the first victory of the US Navy on 30 April 1898 took place in another Spanish colony, the Philippines, in Manila Bay. The majority of Americans knew little about the geographical location or significance of the region where the first victory was achieved; unlike the expansionists, who had long attached great importance to the archipelago adjacent to China from strategic and commercial perspectives.⁴⁹ Following victory in the Philippines, the position of the United States in the Pacific had changed to a considerable extent; thus, the question of the annexation of Hawaii came to be seen in a new light. On 7 July 1898, Congress abandoned its previous policy and declared the Hawaiian Islands part of the United States.⁵⁰ The annexation of Hawaii, however, did not have much resonance outside Congress. The reason for this was the excitement and the joy over the victories brought about by the Cuban and Puerto Rican operations between 20 June and the ceasefire of 12 August.⁵¹ With moderate casualties, totaling 385 battle deaths, 2,061 dead from disease, and 1,662 wounded⁵² on the American side, the Spanish-American war created an opportunity for the American empire to unfold in only slightly more than three months. The war, which Secretary of State John Hay would call "a splendid little war," had enjoyed popular support all along and turned masses of people into enthusiastic supporters of expansionism, including the president, who had always been intent on gauging public opinion. As McKinley would put it, the president's job was not to resist but to obey public pressure.⁵³

However, after the close of the military operations, the United States faced a serious dilemma. Cuba's independent status had been settled upon at the outset of the war, but what was to happen with the other Spanish colonies? The mainly Democratic opposition was appalled by the potential annexation of new territories, that is, the possibility of the emergence of an American empire, which was contrary to democratic traditions, the principles of the American sense of mission, and the Monroe Doctrine. By then, however, the arguments of the opposition had already lost their impact and proved weak against expansionist emotions fueled by the flush of victory.⁵⁴ Although the American Anti-Imperialist League, founded in Boston on 19 November, tried to warn citizens that imperialism would destroy the fundamental American values represented by the Declaration of Independence, the press and the missionary movement were pushing for the annexation of new territories, especially the Philippines. Moreover, due to the success of the war, commercial and industrial interests now also joined the supporters of expansionist efforts.⁵⁵ The legitimacy of American imperialism was attributed by some to the will of God, to the instincts of the White race, to Darwinian laws, or to the basic principles of the economy. Others referred to the national obligation towards the conquered territories, the respectful acceptance of the new roles engendered by the war, and the inevitability of destiny. What was common to the characteristics of the arguments favoring imperialism was that they were based on a sense of predestination and referred to the fulfillment of the will of superhuman powers and made no reference whatsoever to responsible decision-making.⁵⁶ The fate of the Spanish colonies still had to be decided on, however, and it was ultimately up to President McKinley to make the decision.

In the ceasefire agreement of 12 August 1898, the United States stipulated that Spain had to give up Cuba, Puerto Rico, one of the Ladrões or Mariana Islands, and the city and port of Manila in the Philippines. The decision about the future of the Philippines was, however, left to take shape during the peace talks,⁵⁷ which were increasingly characterized by the imperialist

forces and the new sense of mission gaining the upper hand. McKinley increasingly fell under the influence of imperialist arguments made by expansionist politicians, business circles, missionary churches and, last but not least, the military, especially Major General Francis V. Greene, who had played a prominent role in the Battle of Manila and the surrender negotiations.⁵⁸ In Eric Love's assessment, during this process "keeping and administering the Philippines became, to McKinley's reckoning, the least perilous choice strategically and militarily, commercially, and, looking forward to the elections of 1898 and 1900, politically."⁵⁹

Other historians point principally to the president's reliance on public opinion before making the final decision. To hear the will of the people, the president set off on a tour of the Midwest in the autumn of 1898 and gauged the intensity of the storms of applause and of the reactions to his expansionist speeches.⁶⁰ In the meantime, his decision was becoming more and more definite, as seen in his instructions to the US Peace Commission. According to his instructions of 16 September, the "United States cannot accept less than the cession of full right and sovereignty over the island of Luzon."⁶¹ The president's instructions of 26 October went further: "The cession must be the whole archipelago or none. The latter is wholly inadmissible, and the former must therefore be required"⁶² from Spain. The United States made one concession to the reluctant Spain: it paid the losing party \$20 million for the Philippines. Thus, in the Treaty of Paris signed on 10 December 1898, Spain relinquished sovereignty over Cuba and ceded Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam of the Ladrones archipelago (Marianas) to the United States. The treaty stipulated that the civil rights and political status of the population of the new territories would be determined by the US Congress. This amounted to full-fledged imperialism. What is more, the peace treaty meant the adoption of a principle unprecedented in American history, which was in stark contrast with Manifest Destiny. For the first time, newly annexed territories were not intended to join the Union in the future as member states.⁶³ This unprecedented move placed the United States among the great colonial and imperialist powers.

For the United States, the fate of the Philippines constituted the most serious problem. On the archipelago, revolts against Spanish colonial rule had been practically constant from the mid-sixteenth century. A total of thirty-four revolts alone had signaled Filipino dissatisfaction with colonial status between the mid-eighteenth century and the Spanish-American War.⁶⁴ In 1896, another revolt broke out, led by the young independence leader Emilio Aguinaldo. In 1897, in exchange for reforms promised by the Spanish, Aguinaldo left the islands and went into exile in Hong Kong. Since the promised reforms never materialized, fighting did not stop, and when the Americans occupied the port of Manila on 30 April 1898, the Filipino revolt broke out with renewed intensity. Since the available force of US Marines was not adequate for launching an invasion of the city of Manila, and waiting for reinforcements would have been time consuming, then naval commander George Dewey invited Aguinaldo, who was treated as an ally, to Manila, where he was armed by the Americans. The Filipino leader, however, proclaimed the independence of the Philippines on 12 June 1898, and liberated the island of Luzon before the arrival of the American reinforcements. Then on 13 August, he occupied Manila, together with the new US troops. Subsequently, Aguinaldo formed a government, convened a congress that elected him president and drafted a constitution, and finally, on 31 January 1899, proclaimed the short-lived first Republic of the Philippines.⁶⁵ By that time, however, it had become apparent that the Americans would not fulfill the hopes placed in them: the empire itself from which the Filipinos expected the blessings of liberty and independence began to resemble a new colonizer. This fear was reinforced by the progress of the peace talks and finally by the terms of the peace treaty.

The ratification of the peace treaty, however, was still to come. Within the Senate, a strong opposition was formulating in parallel with the rise of imperialist forces, especially with regard to the annexation of the Philippines. In both parties, opinions were divided along the lines of the old and new principles of the sense of mission, but the majority of Republicans were

for, whereas most Democrats were against, annexation. Constitutional issues proved the most serious as, according to the opposition, the Constitution laid down the pattern of governance for future member states only, while expansionists claimed that the Constitution did not set limits on expansion. Moral considerations also caused major controversy, since colonialism was in sharp conflict with the principle of the consent of the governed; yet with both Germany and Japan eager to jump at any opportunity arising in Southeast Asia, the Philippines could not have maintained their independence for long. The main argument used by the imperialists to justify annexation was that the Filipinos, due to their lack of experience, were not developed enough to govern themselves.⁶⁶

In the protracted debate, two events contributed to cutting the Gordian knot of pros and cons. One of these events was Democratic Party leader William Jennings Bryan's making a stand for the treaty. Although opposed to annexation, he believed it would be better for the Senate to ratify the treaty in order to secure peace and then to decide the future of ruling over the islands in the election of 1900, in which Bryan planned to run on an anti-annexation ticket.⁶⁷ It is not known how many of his supporters' votes Bryan managed to win over for ratification of the treaty in the Senate, but another event provoked great shock and indignation in Congress, and may have been more responsible for tipping votes in favor of ratification. The day before the final vote, on 5 February 1899, the Filipinos took up arms against the United States. This fact, on the one hand, was proof of the Filipinos' desire for freedom and their rejection of American colonization, but on the other hand, it made it impossible for the United States to leave the islands without loss of face and severe damage to its own international reputation. On 6 February, the peace treaty was ratified by 57 to 27 in the Senate. It was only two votes over the necessary two-thirds.⁶⁸ Between signing and ratifying the treaty, Democrats filed the Bacon Amendment, which promised independence to the Filipinos in the case of the establishment of a stable government. The amendment, which remained on the agenda even after ratification,

repeatedly failed to pass the Senate. Faulkner points out that in light of the already ratified treaty, the Bacon Amendment was a mere gesture, yet it did lay bare the imperialists' hypocrisy. For if the reason for annexation had really been to train the Filipinos in the art of self-government, then the imperialists should have supported the amendment, which would have given the islands independence at the end of the teaching process. The repeated rejection of the Bacon Amendment highlighted the fact that the keeping of the Philippines was in fact motivated by the firm belief that the islands were both commercially and strategically valuable to the United States.⁶⁹

The Philippine Insurrection or Philippine-American War was a tragic overture to the American colonial empire. Initial hopes for the rapid suppression of the insurgency gradually faded away as the guerrilla warfare led by Aguinaldo dragged on for three years and more. In the war that began in February 1899 and was waged until 1902, with fighting flaring up time and again until 1906, "about 5,000 Americans, 20,000 guerillas and 200,000 Filipino civilians died in combat or from disease."⁷⁰ The United States—which had stood up against Spain in Cuba in the name of humanitarianism—suddenly found itself in the very same position as the former colonizer, using the same methods of brutality, torture, and re-concentration that the US had so forcefully condemned.⁷¹

The new imperialist sense of mission that called the American empire into being contradicted the core values of the United States so blatantly that it rocked the national self-image to its very foundations and resulted in a severe crisis. The turn of the century was marked by an intensification of the conflict between the old and new values, by the search for people to be blamed and held responsible, by the rationalization and ideologization of unpopular and controversial decisions, that is, by the processing and digesting of the crisis that was surfacing.

There were indeed plenty of issues to digest. The debate that had begun in Congress before the ratification of the peace treaty continued unaltered.⁷² The crisis of national

consciousness had become a permanent item on the agenda. The United States—which had acted as an oppressor in the Philippines by resorting to the use of force in order to keep its new overseas possession, against the will of the locals—practically denied the old-style American humanitarian mission and the principle of the consent of the governed. During the Cuban intervention, the use of force was rationalized as force in the service of humanitarianism and liberty. In addition, the Cubans themselves—especially the members of the junta in New York—had been consciously and actively involved in the preparation of the intervention.⁷³ However, the annexation of the Philippines as a whole was not among the original goals. The Aguinaldo administration officially protested when President McKinley demanded that Spain should renounce its nominal sovereignty over the archipelago. This was clearly an imperialist undertaking. Paradoxically, however, the humanitarian argument reappeared, this time to rationalize annexation itself, according to which annexation served to educate, uplift, convert, and civilize the Filipinos, and was considered inevitable mostly because it could provide the strongest security against the great predator powers of Great Britain, Russia, France, Germany, and the recently emerging world power, Japan, which had just come out victorious from the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894-1895. It was obvious that these powers were ready to devour the defenseless island should the opportunity to do so arise.⁷⁴

The weakness in this reasoning, however, was that these goals could have been achieved by the United States through the establishment of a protectorate as well. Even more importantly, this solution was considered acceptable not only by the anti-imperialists, but also by the Aguinaldo administration, not to mention the fact that a protectorate status would not have contradicted the American traditions of government. Nevertheless, McKinley rejected this approach since it would have entailed commitment and responsibility without actual power.⁷⁵ Historian and Republican Senator from Indiana, Albert J. Beveridge, expressed the same opinion in his maiden speech on 9 January 1900.⁷⁶ Obviously, by that time the McKinley

administration and the expansionists had clearly developed full-fledged imperial aspirations to secure the gateway to China in support of US Secretary of State John Hay's Open Door policy, spelled out in 1899 and 1900.

But there were other emotional difficulties as well, related to the creation of a protectorate, as pointed out by McKinley: who, in the case of a protectorate, would haul down the American flag in the Philippines?⁷⁷ Later, in April 1900, when evaluating this statement made by the president, Senator George F. Hoar, the staunch anti-imperialist Republican of Massachusetts, opined that "this talk that the American flag is never to be removed where it has once floated is the silliest and wildest rhetorical flourish ever uttered in the ears of an excited populace," and it meant nothing else than the American determination "that [the Filipinos] shall be under our dominion forever."⁷⁸ Similarly, Senator James Berry, Democrat of Arkansas, made the following remark: "those who seek to raise the American flag above the crushed liberties of another people have already begun to haul it down from the Capitol of their own country."⁷⁹ The president seemed to have forgotten that the American flag had already been taken down on foreign lands, first in Mexico in 1848, then in Hawaii in 1893.⁸⁰

It was the principle of government based on the consent of the governed that had undergone the greatest alteration in order to rationalize imperialism. According to the new version, the government derived its just powers not from the consent of all or most of the governed, but "from the consent of *some* of the governed"⁸¹ as Senator Orville Platt, Republican of Connecticut, put it. That is, government was based on the consent of peoples who were capable of self-government from the American point of view. In contrast to the Cubans, Filipinos did not meet this requirement.⁸²

On the one hand, the anti-American Filipino insurrection launched in February 1899 provoked indignation and outraged national pride, while on the other hand it constituted the first colonial war to be fought by the United States, a country otherwise bent on proclaiming

liberty and democracy. This impossible situation required the kind of ideological support that would supply effective and convincing justification for the American actions. This ideology, reflected in Rudyard Kipling's "The White Man's Burden," appeared in the United States in February 1899.⁸³ The message was clear: it was the duty of the White race to bear the burden of civilizing the underdeveloped peoples. The bitter taste of imperialism was thus sweetened by the idea of a divine mission as offered by the synonym "duty," which became an integral part of the new American sense of mission: Manifest Destiny was turned into Manifest Duty.

The imperialist ideology also underwent another modification based on the idea of the "White Man's Burden." Initially, as we have seen, the main argument used by imperialists to justify annexation was the Filipinos' lack of experience in self-government and the potential threat posed by the predatory great powers. Although the Bacon Amendment,⁸⁴ which held out the possibility of gaining independence in the long run, did not succeed, it was not this failure that led to the idea of establishing permanent US authority over the archipelago. Rather, the need for permanent authority surfaced in the midst of the worryingly protracted fighting on the islands, and it became acceptable and even inevitable in the eyes of the imperialists in order to convince the Filipinos of the futility of their resistance. It was in this spirit that Senator Beveridge introduced his proposal of annexation on 4 January 1900: "Be it resolved . . . that the Philippine Islands are territory belonging to the United States; that it is the intention of the United States to retain them as such and to establish and maintain such governmental control throughout the archipelago as the situation may demand."⁸⁵ Moreover, as the most radical point of the change in imperialist ideology, Beveridge emphasized that he considered Filipinos incapable of self-government because of their racial inferiority: "They are not capable of self-government. How could they be? They are not of a self-governing race. They are Orientals, Malays . . ."⁸⁶ With this statement, Beveridge denied the very possibility of Filipino independence. And since this move also rejected the original imperialist philosophy, according

to which the purpose of imperialism was to prepare the underdeveloped for self-government, Beveridge effectively called for a new philosophy inspired by the racist pseudoscience of the era and the ideology of the “White Man’s Burden,” that is, racial imperialism,⁸⁷ the essence of which was summarized by the senator as follows:

Mr. President, this question is deeper than any question of party politics; deeper than any question of the isolated policy of our country even; deeper even than any question of constitutional power. It is elemental. It is racial. God has not been preparing the English-speaking and Teutonic peoples for a thousand years for nothing but vain and idle self-contemplation and self-admiration. No! He has made us the master organizers of the world to establish a system where chaos reigns. He has given us the spirit of progress to overwhelm the forces of reaction throughout the earth. He has made us adepts in government that we may administer government among savage and senile peoples. Were it not for such a force as this the world would relapse into barbarism and night. And of all our race He has marked the American people as His chosen nation to finally lead in the regeneration of the world. This is the divine mission of America, and it holds for us all the profit, all the glory, all the happiness possible to man. We are trustees of the world’s progress, guardians of its righteous peace.⁸⁸

Senator Beveridge’s proposal represented the quintessence of American imperialist expansion, the new American sense of mission. It is no wonder, therefore, that the congressional debate following the proposal resulted in the most intense and passionate clash between the advocates of national traditions and the supporters of new aspirations. The evolution of US policy in the Philippines was considered by the mostly Republican imperialists and the largely

Democratic opposition as being crystallized along the lines of the Beveridge versus Bacon proposals. The first preferred the permanent retention of the islands, whereas the second considered the granting of independence as the correct approach, inspired by the example of Cuba.⁸⁹ The general argument of the opposition was that the adoption of the Bacon Amendment would bring an immediate end to the hostilities; indeed, they would not even have started had the amendment been passed.⁹⁰ Beveridge's proposal, however, would require even more human and material losses in order to ensure the fast and definitive suppression of the uprising.⁹¹ In addition, the opposition claimed that the Bacon Amendment was not only in line with American traditions, but also would have corrected the inconsistency of the McKinley administration that resulted from the difference between the treatment of Cuba and the Philippines.⁹²

In defense of tradition, the Democrats distinguished sharply between expansionism, that is the expansion of the same institutional system, and imperialism, namely the acquisition of colonies where self-government did not exist, and they explicitly proclaimed the supporters of the retention of the Philippines imperialists.⁹³ In Congress, the duality and crisis evolving out of these two conflicting aspirations were described by Senator Richard Pettigrew, Republican of South Dakota, as follows:

I think the words of the immortal Lincoln are applicable to this situation: "A house divided against itself can not stand." Under our flag you can not have a republic and an empire. You can not have self-government and government by force. One or the other will triumph. Either the republic will go down and the empire survive, or we will at once retrace our steps to the old safe ground and anchor our ship of state to the declaration and to the doctrine that all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed.⁹⁴

In addition, the opposition also pointed out that the imperialists were themselves divided as to the reasons given in support of abandoning the traditions of US foreign policy. Some, like Senator Beveridge, saw imperialism as a chance to place conquest at the service of economic profit and the leadership of people of color, while others, as Senator Wolcott, Republican of Colorado, viewed imperialism as a commitment to international philanthropy and completely denied the claim that economic motivations were at play in the background. That is, not all imperialists dared to acknowledge that annexation was rooted in the hope for profit, nor did they agree on the amount of altruism needed to rationalize their position.⁹⁵ Their division made it clear how unconvincing their arguments were against the power of tradition. According to Senator Hoar, the imperialists could not reconcile the conflict between the fundamental American value system and the new ambitions. In his opinion, these ambitions were only able to upset tradition but could not provide a viable alternative, and therefore he believed that they would not have a lasting effect:

We have had so far some fundamental doctrine, some ideals to which this people has been devoted. Have you anything to give us in their place? You are trying to knock out the corner stones.⁹⁶

It may be that the battle for this day is lost. But I have an assured faith in the future . . . in justice and the love of liberty of the American people. The stars in their courses fight for freedom. . . . If the battle to-day go against it, I appeal to another day, not distant and sure to come. . . . I appeal from the spirit of trade to the spirit of liberty. I appeal from the empire to the republic. I appeal from the Present, bloated with material prosperity, drunk with the lust of empire, to

another and a better age. I appeal from the Present to the Future and to the Past.⁹⁷

In the presidential election of 1900, McKinley, who argued that the “White Man’s Burden” must be shouldered, won against Bryan, the Democratic supporter of anti-imperialism. As McMillen and Bolton point out, “it cannot be proved that McKinley’s solid victory constituted an endorsement of annexation, however. Many voted once more for the gold standard, the high tariff, and prosperity.”⁹⁸ In the meantime, guerrilla warfare in the Philippines did not subside, no matter what results the elections brought. The Filipino rebels were not dispirited by a Republican victory; their determination did not diminish. The “White Man’s Burden,” however, was becoming an increasingly heavy burden for the United States to bear, both in human and material terms.⁹⁹ The reaction of the US Army of 70,000 in this situation was to take tougher action, which was signaled by the employment of methods used earlier by the Spanish in Cuba, such as the herding and concentration of the inhabitants of settlements into camps, as well as brutal massacres, and torture (for example, the “water cure”) used for gaining information from captives. After Aguinaldo was captured by a daring raiding party on 23 March 1901, the Filipino resistance collapsed in the absence of a unified command, and in September 1902 the guns fell silent.¹⁰⁰ In the meantime, the war and the revealed atrocities created increasing resentment even among imperialists. As a result, both politicians and the public, who had had a surfeit of the new sense of mission full of imperial ambitions, moved to focus again on the principles of humanitarianism and philanthropy. The United States tried to take the “White Man’s Burden” seriously and made efforts to comply with it. This implied cruelty, however, and thus it could preserve its legitimacy for only a short time. In Weinberg’s view, “imperialism forbids taking humanitarianism too seriously. Americans strained long to hold the White man’s burden of cruelty, but on the whole they had taken their humanitarianism

somewhat too seriously to maintain this artificial adjustment to the bitter end.”¹⁰¹ Thus, slowly but surely, US policy turned towards the means of granting independence to the Philippines, which became an open promise in the Jones Act of 1916, and finally came into effect on the symbolic date of 4 July 1946. So, in essence, the Bacon Amendment ultimately prevailed over annexation, just as the traditional sense of mission prevailed over formal imperialism.

Eventually, the classical, empire-building imperialism that was so characteristic of the aspirations of the European great powers and Japan at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries did not take root in the American value system. Traditional, territorial imperialism did not remain an American ambition because, as we have seen, it was in fundamental conflict with the national sense of mission; as Walter Lippman concluded, “the management of an empire by a democracy is impossible.”¹⁰² This does not mean, however, that the country that would go on to become a superpower by the mid-twentieth century was devoid of imperialism. Yet the expansion of the United States became dominant indirectly, primarily through economic imperialism, which manifested itself in economic diplomacy and political pressure. This indirect, modern form of imperialism based on and promoting the principles of liberty, democracy, and humanitarianism produced no such contradictions as the clash between classical imperialism and the American sense of mission, which, as the example of the Philippines illustrated, resulted in the latter becoming dominant, thereby emphasizing the power and continuity of fundamental national ideas.

Conclusion

Among the forces shaping the history of the United States, the sense of mission is of paramount importance. In contrast with the selfish interests of aggressive expansionism and the notion of Anglo-Saxon superiority culminating in the attempt made at formal imperialism, the sense of mission embraced the national spirit that fed on the belief in the idea of liberty and

democracy. In other words, the American sense of mission and the resulting expansionism were essentially idealistic. As one of the early researchers of this topic, Jesse Reeves, formulated it in 1907: “No one fact, either economic, or social, or even political can account for [American expansion]. Perhaps a national idealism—call it manifest destiny or what you will—has had more to do with this expansion movement than anything else.”¹⁰³

As we have seen in the congressional debates, the nation’s sense of mission was shaken to its foundations by the abruptness of the change in the wake of the 1898 Spanish-American War. The loss of innocence led to a fluctuation in the nation’s value system and to a crisis of self-image. But the bloody phase of imperialism, especially as experienced in the Philippines, disillusioned the empire-hungry expansionists, and humanitarian overtones became dominant again. It is true, however, that the United States, as a major international power, could no longer be the same as it was prior to 1898, and during the transformation even the continued validity of national traditions represented by the sense of mission was questioned. After the crisis, however, the core, strength, and continuity of the American sense of mission not only survived and lived on, but also contributed to the normalization of the situation.

The reason for this was that the national spirit was embodied not by Manifest Destiny or imperialism, but rather by the sense of mission itself. This mission was in fact manipulated by Manifest Destiny and imperialism, both of which led the nation to such controversial situations in 1846, and especially in 1898, that could only be absolved and resolved by the foundations of the sense of mission. The American sense of mission in fact embodied the very power that struggled to restrain the aggressive version of expansionism, whether in the movement to annex all of Mexico in the forties or the imperial aspirations of the nineties. The most important difference, however, is that while Manifest Destiny and formal imperialism faded in the twentieth century, to the extent that not even the two world wars could bring them back to life, the sense of mission remained.¹⁰⁴

Yet the crisis the nation experienced did not vanish without a trace and had a profound long-term impact on American politics. As Moore succinctly put it, “[t]he empire, quite simply, was bad politics in a mass democracy.”¹⁰⁵ The crisis of the American sense of mission at the turn of the century would contribute greatly to the resurgence of isolationism right at the time when the young giant was rehearsing its first moves in the arena of world politics. For America, apart from its brief entry into World War I, isolationism was one of the most prominent features of the first half of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, the fight against fascism and then communism brought a new role for the United States. America took on a worldwide mission, and in this spirit, isolationism was irrevocably replaced by international commitment. America took action as a major advocate and leader of democracy and human rights worldwide. This was not an unfamiliar role since, as Henry Kissinger emphasized, “the American people, having marched throughout their history to the drumbeat of exceptionalism, would find their ultimate inspiration in historic ideals, not in geopolitical analysis.”¹⁰⁶ The second half of the twentieth century posed major challenges to the American sense of mission, which, however, fell on fertile ground, since the sense of mission based on the ideas of democracy and liberty had been present since the inception of American history. As a “sacred” foundation of the American value system, expansionists, isolationists, and the advocates of democracy all acted in the name of mission. The significance of the American sense of mission, therefore, lies in the fact that it connects and shows continuity between the different periods of American history, and as such it can be traced to this day.

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Notes

¹ Albert Show, “The Monroe Doctrine and the Evolution of Democracy,” in *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science in the City of New York*, vol. 7, no. 2, The Foreign Relations of the United States: Part I (July 1917): 279.

² The term originates from Edith Wharton’s historical novel, *The Age of Innocence* (1920), which, through the Old New York aristocracy of the 1870s, depicts the passage of an era, as the Gilded Age is overcome by modernity at the turn of the century.

³ Except for the Western Pacific Island of Guam, the other Spanish colonial islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean, and the Philippines on the edge of Southeast Asia, made clear their wish for independence prior to and right after the war, too. It was only Cuba that finally gained nominal independence as a *de facto* protectorate in 1903, in the towering shadow of the Platt Amendment—made part of the Cuban Constitution—that severely limited Cuban sovereignty and reserved the right of American intervention should the need arise to prevent interference by other powers or to preserve stability on the island, next to the US’s strategically most significant sea-lanes.

⁴ Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1987), 41.

⁵ Colin D. Moore, *American Imperialism and the State, 1893-1921* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2017), 5, doi:10.1017/9781316591260.002.

⁶ *Congressional Record Containing the Proceedings and Debates of the 56th Congress*, First Session, Vol. 33, Biweekly Edition (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1900), 805, 4305.

⁷ Moore claims that the structure of the modern “imperial presidency”—the executive-driven foreign policy and war-making machinery—was established in consequence of the unwilling empire created by the Spanish-American War and the Congress also unwilling to assist the establishment of formal empire, which was considered incompatible with the liberal traditions of American democracy (*American Imperialism and the State, 1893-1921*, 5-7, 15-

17, 271). The “imperial presidency”—which would become full-fledged as a result of the emergencies of the Great Depression and World War II and would culminate in Watergate in the Cold War era—emerged as a term in the 1960s and was popularized by historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., in the title of his seminal book *The Imperial Presidency* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973), which shows the continuous growth of presidential war powers at the expense of Congress.

⁸ Albert K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History* (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1958), 12-24, 33.

⁹ Bernard W. Sheehan, “Jefferson’s ‘Empire for Liberty,’” *Indiana Magazine of History* 100, no. 4 (2004): 346-63, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27792581>.

¹⁰ Frederick Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), 14-17.

¹¹ John M. Blum et al., *The National Experience. A History of the United States* (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989), 264.

¹² Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 215; Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 100-13.

¹³ Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 122.

¹⁴ Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 227.

¹⁵ Neil R. McMillen and Charles C. Bolton, *A Synopsis of American History: Through Reconstruction*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1997), 182; Jennings C. Wise, *Empire and Armament. The Evolution of American Imperialism and the Problem of National Defense* (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1915), 184; Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 54-55, 100-01.

¹⁶ McMillen and Bolton, *A Synopsis of American History: Through Reconstruction*, vol. 1, 181.

¹⁷ The paired admission of states was observed between 1802 and 1850 in order to maintain the balance in the Senate. The last slave states added to the Union were Florida and Texas in 1845. On the eve of the Civil War, the Union was composed of 15 slave states and 19 free states. Leonard L. Richards, *The Slave Power: The Free North and Southern Domination, 1780-1860* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2000), 48-49.

¹⁸ John Quincy Adams, "To Hugh Nelson, April 28, 1823," in *Writings of John Quincy Adams, Volume VII (1820-1823)* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1917), 369-421.

¹⁹ Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 205.

²⁰ Wise, *Empire and Armament*, 179-80, 186.

²¹ Edmund J. Carpenter, *The American Advance. A Study in Territorial Expansion* (New York: John Lane the Bodley Head, 1903), 320-24; Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 279-80.

²² Wise, *Empire and Armament*, 184-89. On the era, see Robert E. May, *Manifest Destiny's Underworld. Filibustering in Antebellum America* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2002).

²³ Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 211-212.

²⁴ Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 279.

²⁵ Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 256.

²⁶ Note that the non-interference and non-colonization principles laid down in the 1823 Monroe Doctrine were aimed at Europe, especially France and Russia, in order to forestall further colonization in Alaska and the Northwest, and recolonization of the recently-born

republics emerging victorious from the Spanish-American Wars of Independence (1808-1833). As far as Latin America and the Far East were concerned, however, the US would not practice these principles of isolationism.

²⁷ Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 228-30; Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 479-80.

²⁸ Moore, *American Imperialism and the State, 1893-1921*, 34-35.

²⁹ Neil R. McMillen and Charles C. Bolton, *A Synopsis of American History: After the Civil War*, vol. 2, (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1997), 268; Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 231.

³⁰ Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 481.

³¹ Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 259.

³² McMillen and Bolton, *A Synopsis of American History: After the Civil War*, vol. 2, 269; Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 481-82.

³³ Maldwyn A. Jones, *American Immigration* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1960), 252-53.

³⁴ Platt quoted in Peter N. Carroll and David W. Noble, *The Free and the Unfree: A New History of the United States* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977), 307.

³⁵ Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 231-35.

³⁶ Harold U. Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion 1890-1900* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), 216-17; Ernest R. May, *Imperial Democracy. The Emergence of America as a Great Power* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961), 8.

³⁷ Tibor Frank, "'Race' as Value: Social Darwinism and U.S. Immigration," in *Values in American Society*, vol. 2, ed. Tibor Frank (Budapest: Eötvös Loránd University, 1995), 125-26.

³⁸ Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 481.

³⁹ Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion 1890-1900*, 217.

⁴⁰ Josiah Strong, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Present Crisis* (New York: Baker & Taylor Co., for the American Home Missionary Society, 1885), 14, 15, <https://archive.org/stream/ourcountryitspos03stro?ref=ol> (emphasis in the original); McMillen and Bolton, *A Synopsis of American History: After the Civil War*, vol. 2, 269.

⁴¹ Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 483.

⁴² McMillen and Bolton, vol. 2, *A Synopsis of American History: After the Civil War*, 271; Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 484.

⁴³ William McKinley, "First Inaugural Address, 4 March 1897," *The Avalon Project, Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy*, Yale Law School, Lillian Goldman Law Library, retrieved 3 Sept. 2020, https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/mckin1.asp. (Emphasis added.)

⁴⁴ Louis Fisher, "Destruction of the *Maine* (1898)," The Law Library of Congress, 4 Aug. 2009, <https://www.loc.gov/law/help/usconlaw/pdf/Maine.1898.pdf>.

⁴⁵ Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion 1890-1900*, 220-24, 228-34; Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 249-50.

⁴⁶ Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 484.

⁴⁷ Carpenter, *The American Advance*, 325.

⁴⁸ "The Teller Amendment (20 Apr. 1898), Public Resolution—No. 21," in US Department of State, *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1901), 763.

⁴⁹ May, *Imperial Democracy*, 244; Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion 1890-1900*, 238.

⁵⁰ Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion 1890-1900*, 250.

⁵¹ Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 487-88; Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion 1890-1900*, 250.

⁵² US Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Public Affairs, “America’s War: Factsheet” (Washington, D.C., 2021), 1.

www.va.gov/opa/publications/factsheets/fs_americas_wars.pdf.

⁵³ Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 250; May, *Imperial Democracy*, 255.

⁵⁴ Moore, *American Imperialism and the State, 1893-1921*, 76 -78.

⁵⁵ Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion 1890-1900*, 253; Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 489; Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 251-52.

⁵⁶ Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 265-74; Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 489; Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 252.

⁵⁷ Jerald A. Combs, *The History of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 155-56.

⁵⁸ Eric T. L. Love, *Race over Empire: Racism and U.S. Imperialism, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2004), 175; Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army, from its Organization, September 29, 1789, to March 2, 1903*, vol. 1-2 (Fold3 by Ancestry, 7 May 2013),

<https://www.fold3.com/image/306347383?rec=283054849>.

⁵⁹ Love, *Race over Empire*, 176.

⁶⁰ May, *Imperial Democracy*, 258-60; Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion 1890-1900*, 252-53; Love refutes this interpretation, see *Race over Empire*, 176-77.

⁶¹ Quoted in Love, *Race over Empire*, 175.

⁶² Quoted in Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion 1890-1900*, 252.

⁶³ Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 254; Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 489.

⁶⁴ József Vecseklőy, *A csillagsávos lobogó nyomában. Történelmi esszé, Vol. I-II*. [On the Trail of the Star-spangled Banner. Historical Essay] (Budapest: Magvető Kiadó, 1985), 396.

⁶⁵ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Biweekly Edition, 1257; Moore, *American Imperialism and the State, 1893-1921*, 65-67; Vecseklőy, *A csillagsávos lobogó nyomában*, 396-98. Note that the first Republic of the Philippines was in power between 23 January 1899 and 23 March 1901, until Aguinaldo's capture by the American forces in northern Luzon. Having taken an oath of allegiance to the US, he retired from public life.

⁶⁶ Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 39-40; May, *Imperial Democracy*, 260-61; Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion 1890-1900*, 257-58; McMillen and Bolton, *A Synopsis of American History: After the Civil War*, vol. 2, 273-74; Moore, *American Imperialism and the State, 1893-1921*, 88-92.

⁶⁷ Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 491; Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 254-55.

⁶⁸ Hunt, *Ideology and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 41; Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion 1890-1900*, 257-258; Blum et al., *The National Experience*, 491.

⁶⁹ Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion 1890-1900*, 258; Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 300.

⁷⁰ McMillen and Bolton, *A Synopsis of American History: After the Civil War*, vol. 2, 275; Combs, *The History of American Foreign Policy*, 156.

⁷¹ Combs, *The History of American Foreign Policy*, 157.

⁷² Moore, *American Imperialism and the State, 1893-1921*, 88-92.

⁷³ Faulkner, *Politics, Reform and Expansion 1890-1900*, 220.

⁷⁴ Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 283-93.

⁷⁵ Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 293.

⁷⁶ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Permanent Edition (9 Jan. 1900), 704, retrieved 15 May 2020, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt1-v33/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt1-v33-18-1.pdf>.

⁷⁷ Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 293.

⁷⁸ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Permanent Edition (17 Apr. 1900), 4305, retrieved 15 May 2020, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt5-v33/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt5-v33-9-1.pdf>.

⁷⁹ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Permanent Edition (15 Jan. 1900), 805, retrieved 15 May 2020, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt1-v33/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt1-v33-22-1.pdf>.

⁸⁰ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Biweekly Edition, 4305, Appendix 153; Vecseklőy, *A csillagsávós lobogó nyomában*, 391.

⁸¹ *Congressional Record*, 55th Cong., 3rd sess., vol. 32, Permanent Edition (19 Dec. 1899), 297, retrieved 15 May 2020, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1899-pt1-v32/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1899-pt1-v32-11.pdf>. (Emphasis added.)

⁸² Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 297.

⁸³ Moore, *American Imperialism and the State, 1893-1921*, 109; Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 300-01.

⁸⁴ The amendment was proposed by Senator Augustus O. Bacon, Democrat of Georgia, on 14 Feb. 1899.

⁸⁵ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Permanent Edition (9 Jan. 1900), 704, retrieved 15 May 2020, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt1-v33/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt1-v33-18-1.pdf>.

⁸⁶ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Permanent Edition (9 Jan. 1900), 708, retrieved 15 May 2020, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt1-v33/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt1-v33-18-1.pdf>.

⁸⁷ Moore, *American Imperialism and the State, 1893-1921*, 70; Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 308.

⁸⁸ *Congressional Record*, Senate, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Permanent Edition (9 Jan. 1900), 711, retrieved 15 May 2020, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt1-v33/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt1-v33-18-1.pdf>.

⁸⁹ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Biweekly Edition, 802-05, 4302.

⁹⁰ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Biweekly Edition, 714, 805, 4279, 4301, App. 112.

⁹¹ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Biweekly Edition, 707-08, 1262.

⁹² *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Biweekly Edition, 804, 163-64, 4283, 4285, 4303, App. 106-07.

⁹³ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Biweekly Edition, 806, App. 110, App. 153.

⁹⁴ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Permanent Edition (15 Jan. 1900), 810, retrieved 15 May 2020, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt1-v33/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt1-v33-22-1.pdf>.

⁹⁵ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Biweekly Edition, 811-13.

⁹⁶ *Congressional Record*, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Permanent Edition (17 Apr. 1900), 4284, retrieved 15 May 2020, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt5-v33/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt5-v33-9-1.pdf>.

⁹⁷ *Congressional Record*, Senate, 56th Cong., 1st sess., vol. 33, Permanent Edition (17 Apr. 1900), 4306, retrieved 15 May 2020, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt5-v33/pdf/GPO-CRECB-1900-pt5-v33-9-1.pdf>.

⁹⁸ McMillen and Bolton, *A Synopsis of American History: After the Civil War*, vol. 2, 274.

⁹⁹ Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 314.

¹⁰⁰ Combs, *The History of American Foreign Policy*, 156-57.

¹⁰¹ Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History*, 318.

¹⁰² Quoted in Moore, *American Imperialism and the State, 1893-1921*, 271.

¹⁰³ Jesse S. Reeves, *American Diplomacy under Tyler and Polk* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1907), 58.

¹⁰⁴ Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History*, 261-63, 266.

¹⁰⁵ Moore, *American Imperialism and the State, 1893-1921*, 5.

¹⁰⁶ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 767.

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