

American Imperialism late 19th and early 20th century

1. Introduction

The late 19th century came to be known as the “Age of Imperialism.”

A. Historical Context

American imperialism refers to the cultural, military, as well as economic impact of America on other countries across the world. Although the exact origin of imperialism is unknown, the idea of imperialism dates back to the 18th century when industrialization pushed American businessmen to look for global markets to market their products. The impact of Social Darwinism resulted in the perception that America was obligated to bring forth democracy, Christianity, and industrialism to the societies that were regarded to be “savage.” The combination of these notions resulted in imperialism in America.

I. Reasons for imperialism;

1. America exceptionalism (Social Darwinism)
2. Economic benefits
3. Military power

B. Thesis Statement:

During the late 19th and early 20th century, the notion of imperialism spread across America partly due to the belief in American exceptionalism. The American exceptionalism is the belief that America is different from other countries as a result of its belief to expand liberty and

democracy to other less developed countries. The notion in American exceptionalism alongside economic benefits and military power led to the American imperialism.

2. Imperialism actions

A. Japan

I. Treaty to open trade with Japan negotiated by Matthew Perry

II. Negative reaction from the Japanese people who felt that the treaty threatened the Japanese culture.

III. U.S gained control of small Pacific Islands

IV. Big Stick Diplomacy

B. Hawaii

I. construction of churches

II. Establishment of plantations

III. Wealthy people gained voting rights

IV. Queen Liliuokalani attempts to restore Hawaii nationalism but is overthrown

V. Hawaii becomes American territory

C. Alaska

I. Alaskan people perceived as “Stewards”

II. Spanish colony: America supports rebellion against Spanish

III. Explosion in U.S.S resulting in war

D. Treaty in Paris

Ended the Spain war

America obtained Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guam

References

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