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University Centre of Barika
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Institute of Arts and Languages
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Department of English Language and Literature

Course handout on

Civilization Text Study

Subject: British & American History

Licence (L3)

By

Dr. Zakarya SENOUCI

MCB

2024-2025

Civilization Text Study

Dr. Zakarya SENOUCI, MCB

Introductory Note

The objective of this course is not merely to equip students with factual historical information about American history, but to primarily challenge students' minds and encourage a critical approach to history. This is done by contextualizing history and focusing more on what lies beneath and beyond the simple event. Instead of narrating, then, we debate and critically question the key events and figures of the American civilization. The hope eventually is for students to fathom/grasp the essence of the American identity and its national myths.

Civilization is often confused with history. The attempt in this class is to explicitly and implicitly explain the difference to students while simultaneously exposing them to both civilizational and historical data. While history is a corpus of actual events and their background and aftermath, civilization study builds on these facts to analyse the myriad cultural socio-economic and ideological aspects. These, it is argued, shape a nation's identity and heritage.

A number of topics that range from events, key historical figures, and settings are assigned for students. These topics offer a look at history and then spiced with a critical analysis. With the teacher's guidance, students are lead to draw conclusions by connecting different events and figures and highlighting their mutual influence. The aim is to provoke the students' critical thinking in the hope of building a critical mindset and readiness to habitually question narratives.

The lectures on the other hand offer a look at the key ideas that shape the events. Political, economic, and societal ideas are explained in the light of the historical events, underscoring how a people's communal culture shapes their decisions. Those decisions lead to the birth of a nation, in this case the Anglo-Saxon American state. This idea of a nation's "moments" is underscored to show the importance of a people recognizing and acting on historical moment. Civilizations are born out of this ability to spot moments and taking advantage of it to construct a nation.

University Centre Si L'Haoues- Barika **Dr. Zakarya SENOUCI**

Institute of Letters and Languages **Date/Time/Place: Tuesday /1:30h/A02**

Department of English **email:zakarya.senouci@cu-barika.dz**

Course Description

This civilization course invites students to critically explore the evolution of the United States by examining transformative events and periods that laid the foundation for the nation's identity. With a strong emphasis on synthesizing topics, relevant historical debates, and reflective analysis of socioeconomic transformations, the course challenges students to articulate well-substantiated narratives about America's formative years. This section articulates precise criteria for evaluating the clarity, depth, and originality of students' interpretations, ensuring that each analysis and discussion not only recounts historical facts but also integrates diverse perspectives and informative debates.

The course is structured over a full academic semester using a focused timeline that spans from the pre-Revolutionary period through the aftermath of the Civil War. The primary lectures engage students with the pre-Revolutionary Era, exploring early colonial settlements, indigenous interactions, and the emergent ideas of self-governance and dissent (c. 1607–1775). The next lectures transition into the Revolutionary War (c. 1775–1783), where students analyze the military campaigns, ideological shifts, and foundational documents that led the fight for independence. The lectures that follow then examine the Early Republic, focusing on the challenges of rebuilding a nation and establishing political institutions amid rapidly evolving society. Finally, the last lectures concentrate on the era of the Civil War (c. 1861–1865) and its immediate aftermath, delving into the causes and consequences of national conflict, its transformative impact, and the complex process of Reconstruction that reshaped the nation.

Course General Goals

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze the socio-political and economic conditions of colonial America and the pre-Revolutionary era to understand the origins of American identity.
- Examine the evolution of revolutionary ideas and dissenting voices that challenged established power structures, laying the groundwork for the American Revolution.
- Examine the creation and development of government during the Revolutionary period and the early Republic, emphasizing the formulation of democratic principles.
- Critically assess the causes, key events, figures and consequences of the Civil War, focusing on how the conflict reshaped national unity and identity.
- Develop proficiency in interpreting primary and secondary sources, be they textual or visual, thereby strengthening evidence-based historical inquiry and analytical writing skills.
- Connecting the transformation from the pre-Revolutionary era through the post-Civil War period to contemporary American society, highlighting enduring themes and lessons in civic engagement.

Course Requirements

Given that a primary objective of our course is to develop the ability to engage in critical discussions, consistent attendance and active participation are obligatory. Moreover, the course is designed to incorporate a series of in-class activities and writing exercises that foster deeper analysis and vigorous discussion. Consequently, attendance, class participation, and contributions through in-class writing will form an integral part of the overall course evaluation, ensuring that students' engagement is both recognized and rewarded.

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University Centre Si L'Haoues- Barika

Institute of Letters and Languages

Department of English

Level: Licence **Course: British Civilization**

Class: 3rd years **Instructor: Dr Zakarya SENOUCI**

Lecture One:

The British Empire: Early Signs

Learning Objectives: By the end of this lecture, students will be able to:

1. Grasp how the British Empire grew from its early foundations to covering vast lands and diverse populations.
2. Identify important events like Queen Elizabeth I's reign, Sir Francis Drake's circumnavigation, the founding of the English East India Company, and early colonial attempts such as Roanoke.
3. Evaluate how mercantilism and government-mandated trade policies (like the Navigation Act) drove colonial expansion and economic control.
4. Distinguish between the various regions of early British expansion—the Caribbean, North America, and India—and how each contributed uniquely to the imperial project.

Learning Prerequisites:

1. Basic background on the late 1500s to mid-20th century, with an emphasis on the early modern period and the Renaissance.
2. Familiarity with early maritime exploration, overseas commercial ventures, and the challenges of early colonization.
3. An understanding of mercantilism and its role in shaping national policies and trade practices.
4. Awareness of early trade regulations like the Navigation Act and their impact on the empire.

Relevant Lexis:

British Empire: The collection of territories, colonies, and dominions under British sovereignty.

Mercantilism: An economic policy focused on maximizing exports and minimizing imports to build national wealth.

English East India Company: A trade organization established in 1600 that played a key role in British expansion in Asia.

Colonization: The process of settling and establishing control over foreign territories.

Maritime Exploration: Navigational ventures undertaken to explore and establish new trade routes.

Trade Monopolies: Exclusive control over a particular market or trade, often granted by governmental regulation.

British Empire, name given to United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the former dominions, colonies, and other territories throughout the world that owed allegiance to the British Crown from the late 1500s to the middle of the 20th century. At its height in the early 1900s, the British Empire included over 20 percent of the world's land area and more than 400 million people.

The foundations of the British Empire were laid during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603). Under Elizabeth, English support for naval exploration increased dramatically, and in 1580 Sir Francis Drake became the first Englishman to sail around the world. Overseas commercial and trade interests were also established in the form of the English East India Company in 1600. However, because England was at war with Spain, which had a large colonial empire in the Americas, English colonization in the Americas remained almost unknown in the 16th century. The first real venture was the attempted settlement of Roanoke Island off the North American coast in 1585 by Sir Walter Raleigh. This settlement did not survive, and the English did not attempt further exploration and colonization in the Americas until 1604, after peace had been made with Spain.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, Britain established its first empire, which was centered in the Caribbean and in North America. It began with the establishment of tobacco plantations in the West Indies and religious colonies along the Atlantic coast of North America. England established a presence in India during the 17th century with the activities of the East India Company. Although this presence became larger and more entrenched during the 17th and 18th centuries, India did not come under direct British rule until 1858.

An important factor in the first empire was mercantilism, an economic policy based on protected trade monopolies and governmental control of manufacturing. Under this system, colonies were established mainly to increase the wealth of the home country. They were either used as sources of raw materials or as markets for products of the home country. The intention was to keep the amount of the home country's exports higher than the amount of its imports; since the home country would be selling more than it was buying, its capital reserves would grow. Because this system required strict governmental control, the English began to regulate the affairs of its colonies closely. In 1651 the English parliament passed the Navigation Act, which stipulated that imports into English harbors and colonies could only be carried in English ships or those of the producing country.

Reflection Questions:

1. How did exploration under Queen Elizabeth I and the early ventures like Sir Francis Drake's voyage shape the trajectory of British imperialism?
2. In what ways did mercantilism and policies such as the Navigation Act influence the economic and political dynamics between Britain and its colonies?
3. How did the unique colonial experiences in the Caribbean, North America, and India contribute to the overall structure and legacy of the British Empire

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Level: Licence **Course: British Civilization**

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Lecture Two:

The British Empire in the 20th Century: Nationalism, Decolonization, & the Commonwealth

Learning objectives: By the end of this lecture, students will be able to:

1. Understand how the devastation of two world wars led Britain to transition from an expansionist to a more restrained, decolonization-focused approach.
2. Evaluate how WWI and the collapse of major empires (German and Ottoman) expanded the British Empire temporarily, yet also sowed the seeds of nationalist resistance.
3. Learn how economic exhaustion and overextension prompted Britain to grant independence to key territories, setting the stage for a new post-colonial order.
4. Explore the evolution and significance of the Commonwealth of Nations as a multiracial, coequal association grounded in historical ties with Britain.

Learning Prerequisites:

1. Familiarity with the causes and consequences of WWI and WWII, especially their global political and economic impacts.
2. Basic understanding of how earlier periods of expansion set up the challenges of managing a vast empire.
3. An awareness of nationalist movements in colonial territories and the general trends that pushed former colonies toward self-governance.
4. Knowledge of landmark agreements and policies, such as the Treaty of Versailles, that redefined territorial boundaries after major conflicts.

Relevant Lexis:

Decolonization: The process by which colonies are granted independence, often following nationalist movements and external pressures.

Nationalist Movements: Political movements within colonies seeking self-determination and independence from imperial rule.

Commonwealth of Nations: A voluntary association of independent states, most of which have historical ties to the British Empire and recognize the British monarch as their symbolic head.

Treaty of Versailles: The 1919 treaty that ended WWI, contributing to territorial redistributions that temporarily expanded the British Empire.

The British government during the 20h century followed a less active imperial style due to several reasons, particularly the two devastating world wars. The first global war expanded the British Empire to its greatest extent. The Treaty of Versailles in 1919 gave Britain most of the German Empire in Africa, while the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the Middle East led to the British acquisition of Palestine and Iraq in 1918.

However, the war also accelerated support for nationalist movements in the colonies, and the British government found that it could do little to stop this trend. After World War I Britain was exhausted, and the empire was overextended. As a result, during the 1920s and 1930s Britain searched for policies that would both reduce the cost of the empire and the risk of its falling apart. It granted independence to Egypt in 1922 and to Iraq in 1932. The British Commonwealth of Nations was also established as an association of equal and independent states united by common allegiance to the British Crown

Commonwealth of Nations:

Commonwealth of Nations, worldwide association of nations and their dependencies, whose members share a common commitment to promoting human rights, democracy, and economic development. All members accept the British monarch as the symbolic head of the Commonwealth. All but one, Mozambique, were once associated in some constitutional way with either the former British Empire or with another member country. The association was formerly known as the British Commonwealth of Nations, but today is referred to simply as the Commonwealth.

About 1.7 billion people live in the 54 independent nations and the more than 20 dependencies that make up the Commonwealth. Commonwealth members share many customs and traditions as a result of their association with Britain. Many have parliamentary systems of government on the British model, and their judicial and educational institutions are often similar to those in Britain. English is an official language of many members of the Commonwealth

After World War II, British governments did not resist decolonization, provided that it was possible to transfer power to friendly regimes and the circumstances were not humiliating to national pride. With the end of the empire, a multiracial, coequal Commonwealth of Nations evolved, which had modest utility but generally cooperative feelings.

Reflection Questions:

1. Impact of Conflict: How did the economic and military burdens of the two world wars reshape Britain's strategy toward its overseas colonies?
2. Drivers of Decolonization: In what ways did nationalist movements and the overextension of the empire accelerate the process of decolonization during the post-WWI and interwar periods?
3. Legacy and Transformation: How has the creation of the Commonwealth of Nations transformed the relationship between Britain and its former colonies, both politically and culturally?

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Institute of Letters and Languages

Department of English

Level: Licence **Course: American Civilization**

Class: 3rd years **Instructor: Dr Zakarya SENOUCI**

Lecture Three:

The American Revolutionary War: Tracing the Roots of the Conflict

Learning objectives: By the end of this lecture, students will be able to:

1. Grasp the Evolution of Independence: Recognize how shifts in European power dynamics (the defeats of the Spanish and French in North America) spurred changes in British colonial policy and ideas about independence.
2. Analyze Ideological Differences: Understand the contrasting worldviews between British officials—who championed parliamentary sovereignty—and American colonists—who valued local governance and the "power of the purse."
3. Examine Fiscal and Administrative Policies: Identify how the need for increased revenue and military presence led Britain to assert its authority through new taxation and administrative reforms.
4. Link Political Theory to Practice: Appreciate how these evolving ideas about proper governance and representation contributed to the tensions that eventually ignited revolutionary sentiment.

Learning Prerequisites:

1. Familiarity with mid-18th century North American geopolitics, including the decline of Spanish and French empires and increased Native American activity.
2. Basic understanding of the roles and powers of elected colonial assemblies versus appointed governors.
3. Awareness of key political concepts such as sovereignty, constitutional power, and the fiscal importance of revenue bills.

Relevant Lexis:

Parliamentary Sovereignty: The concept that Parliament holds supreme authority within the British constitutional framework.

Constitutional Power: The legal authority derived from the constitution to govern and enact laws.

Power of the Purse: The exclusive control over revenue and taxation typically held by legislative assemblies.

Revenue Bills: Legislative measures that authorize taxation and financial matters.

Popular Liberty: The ideals of individual freedom and self-governance, which influenced colonial resistance.

Ideals Clash: The conflict arising from divergent views on political authority and governance between the British and American elites.

With the defeat of the Spanish/French empires in North America in the 1760s and the increasing aggression from the Native Americans, the British government realized that it needed not only more revenue but also a military presence and a colonial administrative policy to establish British authority and keep the peace in North America.

Ideological & Political Differences Leading up to Conflict:

1. The British argument:

British officials believed that the British government—and Parliament in particular—had the constitutional power to tax and govern the American colonies. The rulers of Parliament assumed what they called parliamentary sovereignty. Parliament, they insisted, was dominant within the British constitution. Parliament was a brake against arbitrary monarchs; Parliament alone could tax or write legislation, and Parliament could not consent to divide that authority with any other body.

2. The Colonists' argument:

The Americans, however, had developed a very different opinion of how they should be governed. By the 1720s, all but two colonies had an elected assembly and an appointed governor. Contests

between the two were common, with governors generally exercising greater power in the northern colonies and assemblies wielding more power in the south.

Governors technically had great power. Most were appointed by the king and stood for him in colonial government. Governors also had the power to make appointments, and thus to pack the government with their followers. The assemblies, however, had the "power of the purse": Only they could pass revenue (tax) bills. Assemblies used their influence over finances to gain power in relation to governors.

Colonists tended to view their elected assemblies as defenders against the king, against Parliament, and against colonial governors, who were attempting to increase their power at the expense of popular liberty. Thus, when the British Parliament asserted its right to tax and govern the colonies (something it had never done before), ideals clashed. The British elite's idea of the power that its Parliament had gained since 1689 collided with the American elite's idea of the sovereignty of its own parliaments. The British assumed that their Parliament legislated for the whole empire. The Americans assumed that while the parts of the empire shared British liberties and the British king, the colonies could be taxed and governed only by their own elected representatives. The British attempt to tax the colonies was certain to start a fight.

Reflection Questions

1. How did the differing visions of authority—British parliamentary sovereignty versus American self-governing assemblies—shape the emerging identity of the colonies?
2. In what ways did the imposition of taxes and revenue bills serve as a catalyst for challenging traditional colonial power structures?
3. How did the concept of "popular liberty" influence colonial resistance to imposed British policies, and what lasting impact did it have on American political thought?

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Lecture Four:

Fighting Through the Confusion of the War & Building the Nation

Learning objectives: By the end of this lecture, students will be able to:

1. Understand why the American victory was not initially assured despite the British military advantages.
2. Analyze how a divided colonial agenda evolved into a unified drive for independence, particularly through the influence of Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*.
3. Recognize how different groups—colonial elites, property–holding white men, and marginalized communities like Native Americans and slaves—were affected by the revolution.
4. Explore the difficulties in building a national government that reflected revolutionary ideals while dealing with practical issues like finance, taxation, and centralized power.
5. Appreciate how the distrust of centralized authority and the demand for popular sovereignty influenced state constitutions and the later formation of a national government.

Learning Prerequisites

1. Familiarity with the key events and overall trajectory of the American Revolution leading up to 1776.
2. Basic understanding of republicanism, the concept of popular sovereignty, and fears of tyranny that permeated revolutionary thought.
3. Knowledge of the differences between a disciplined professional army and an undisciplined militia, as well as the strategic importance of fighting on home territory.
4. Awareness of the roles and limitations of state versus national governments during the revolutionary period, especially regarding issues of taxation and finance.

Relevant Lexis:

Continental Congress: The revolutionary body that attempted to govern the colonies during the war.

Republican Values: Ideals emphasizing self-governance, the primacy of the people's will, and resistance against concentrated executive power.

Common Sense: The influential pamphlet by Thomas Paine that argued strongly for the rejection of monarchy and absolute rule.

National Government: A centralized authority intended to manage war efforts, declare policies, regulate trade, and stabilize finances.

In 1776 the prospects for American victory seemed small. Britain had a population more than three times that of the colonies, and the British army was large, well–trained, and experienced. The Americans, on the other hand, had undisciplined militia and only the beginnings of a regular army or even a government. But Americans had powerful advantages that in the end were decisive. They fought on their own territory, and in order to win they did not have to defeat the British but only to convince the British that the colonists could not be defeated.

Through 1775 and into 1776, the Americans fought without agreeing on what the fight was about: Many wanted independence, while others wanted to reconcile with the king but not with Parliament. The pamphlet Common Sense by Anglo-American philosopher Thomas Paine presented powerful arguments opposing kings and supporting a pure republic. It changed the minds of many colonists.

Colonial elites—large landholders and plantation masters—benefited most from American independence: They continued to rule at home without outside interference. Below them, property–holding white men who became full citizens of the American republic enjoyed the "life, liberty, and property" for which they had fought. White women remained excluded from public life, as did most

white men without property. But the Americans for whom the legacy of revolution proved disastrous— or at best ambiguous—were Native Americans and African American slaves.

The Challenges of Building the New Nation:

By 1777, the states had recognized the people as the originators of government power. State constitutions were written by conventions elected by the voters (generally white men who held a minimum amount of property. The Americans (white men who owned property, that is) were determined to create their own governments, not simply to have them handed down by higher

authorities. All state constitutions demonstrated republican values and all showed a distrust of government power—particularly of the executive. State constitutions reflected fear of government (and particularly executive) tyranny more than they reflected the need to create forceful, effective government.

The Need for a National Government:

Americans began their revolution without a national government, but the Continental Congress recognized the need for a government that could conduct the war, form relations with other countries, borrow money, and regulate trade. The government lacked important powers. It could not directly tax Americans. Revolutionary fear of centralized tyranny had created a very weak national government.

The weakness of the national government made resolving questions of currency and finance particularly difficult. Neither the national government nor the states dared to tax Americans. To pay the minimal costs of government and the huge costs of fighting the war, both simply printed paper money.

International troubles, the postwar depression, led to calls for stronger government at both the state and national levels. Supporters wanted a government that could deal with other countries, create a stable (deflated) currency, and maintain order in a society that some thought was becoming too

democratic. These supporters tended to be wealthy, with their fortunes tied to international trade. They included seaport merchants and artisans, southern planters, and commercial farmers whose foreign markets had been closed. Most of their leaders were former officers of the Continental (national) army and officials of the Confederation government—men whose wartime experiences had given them a political vision that was national and not locals.

Reflection Questions:

1. How did fighting on home territory and focusing on a psychological campaign help the Americans overcome their disadvantages in manpower and military discipline?
2. In what ways did Thomas Paine's arguments shift public opinion among the colonists—from seeking reconciliation to demanding outright independence?
3. How did the challenges of forming a stable national government during the Revolution influence the later development of federal authority and fiscal policy in the United States?

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Level: Licence **Course: American Civilization**

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Lecture Five:

The Building Blocks of the American Nation: The Value of Natural Rights

Learning Outcomes: By the end of this lecture, students will be able to:

1. Recognize how revolutionary rhetoric on equality and natural rights reshaped American society.
2. Analyze how promises of natural rights influenced the demands for dignity among poor white men, women, and even led slaves to revolt.
3. Appreciate the significance of the Bill of Rights in protecting individual freedoms and establishing limits on governmental power.
4. Understand how the concepts of natural rights and republicanism influenced the foundational political institutions of the new nation.

Learning Prerequisites:

1. Familiarity with the events leading up to and during the Revolution, especially debates over independence and reconciliation.
2. Basic knowledge of Enlightenment ideas, particularly the notion of natural rights and popular sovereignty.
3. Awareness of the creation and purpose of the Constitution and the subsequent adoption of the Bill of Rights.
4. Understanding the social dynamics affecting various groups (e.g., poor white men, women, slaves) during the revolutionary era.

Relevant Lexis:

Natural Rights: Inherent rights assumed to belong to every individual (e.g., life, liberty, and property).

Democracy: A system of government where power resides with the people, underpinned by notions of equality and popular sovereignty.

Bill of Rights: The first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution, guaranteeing key individual freedoms and limiting governmental power.

Amendments: Formal changes or additions made to a legal document, notably the Constitution.

Republic: A form of government in which citizens elect representatives to govern on their behalf.

The formation of the American nation was rooted in a fervent belief in natural rights and democratic principles. In the decades following Independence, the very fabric of American society was being rewoven with the revolutionary rhetoric of equality and natural rights. These ideals, which had emerged during the Enlightenment and were fervently embraced by the revolutionaries, began permeating every layer of society. Even those at the socioeconomic margins—such as the poorest white men—demanded recognition of the inherent dignity that a republic promised. Their voices, echoing the assertion of fundamental rights, played a critical role in molding the national discourse. Moreover, this transformative period ignited aspirations among women, who started to envision roles beyond the domestic sphere, while even enslaved individuals began to see in these principles the promise of a life beyond bondage. Indeed, natural rights became the rallying cry, suggesting that sovereignty and dignity were not the sole privileges of a select elite but universal claims of every human being.

An illustrative episode of these radical ideas in action is found in the events of 1800 when a slave named Gabriel led a revolt in Richmond, Virginia. Gabriel's uprising, carried under the stark banner "Death or Liberty," underscored the extent to which the ideology of natural rights had taken root even among those who had long been oppressed. While the revolt was small in scale, it became a potent

symbol of resistance against an institution that denied basic human rights. This episode serves to highlight the dual nature of independence: while the nation was founded upon lofty ideals of liberty and equality, significant portions of society—particularly African American slaves and Native Americans—found that the revolutionary promise was either ambiguous or, in some cases, entirely unfulfilled.

In the immediate aftermath of the American Revolution, the budding nation faced a monumental challenge: translating revolutionary ideals into a concrete system of governance. In early 1789, as the movement toward formalizing American government took shape in New York City, Congress proposed a series of 12 amendments to the Constitution. These amendments were not merely legal formalities but were intended to enshrine the rights that had fueled the revolutionary struggle. After a thorough process of debate and ratification, ten of these amendments became permanently enshrined in the Bill of Rights. This document was designed to protect individual freedoms from potential government overreach and to establish a clear framework for citizen rights—an essential counterweight to any form of centralized tyranny.

The Bill of Rights is structured to safeguard various dimensions of personal liberty and justice. The First Amendment stands as a robust protector of personal freedoms, ensuring that speech, the press, assembly, and the practice of religion remain untouched by federal interference. This amendment laid the groundwork for a pluralistic society where the exchange of ideas could flourish without fear of repression. In addition to this, the Second Amendment enshrines the right to bear arms, a measure aimed at empowering citizens and providing a means of defense in a society wary of both external threats and potential governmental oppression. Alongside this, the Third Amendment restricts the quartering of soldiers in private homes—a reaction to colonial grievances experienced during the British occupation, thereby reinforcing the sanctity of personal space and property.

Moving further into the Bill of Rights, the Fourth through Eighth Amendments collectively outline procedural protections for citizens. These include safeguarding individuals against unreasonable

searches and seizures, ensuring the right to a fair trial, and defining the limits of governmental power when citizens are in custody or facing legal action. Such protections were integral in creating a judicial system that balanced state power with individual rights, embodying the revolutionary desire for justice that was both impartial and accessible. The Ninth Amendment, often seen as a safety net, explicitly states that the enumeration of certain rights in the Constitution does not mean that other rights should be denied or disparaged. In that same spirit, the Tenth Amendment reinforces the federal system by affirming that any power not delegated to the national government nor prohibited to the states by the Constitution remains with the states or the people. Together, these amendments illustrate the founders' commitment to a balanced government—one that respects individual freedoms while maintaining an accountable and limited authority at the national level.

This detailed framework did more than just articulate legal protections; it reflected the deep-seated conviction that all citizens, regardless of their station, were entitled to the fundamental rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The emergence of these natural rights as the cornerstone of American identity was, in many ways, both a unifying force and a source of tension. While the revolutionary elite and property-owning citizens could readily claim the benefits of independence, for others—such as indigenous peoples, slaves, and women—the promise of the revolution was at best incomplete. Their struggles would continue to reverberate throughout American history, challenging future generations to extend these rights to all.

Reflection Questions:

1. In what ways did the revolutionary ideals of natural rights and equality reshape societal expectations for all citizens, including those traditionally marginalized?
2. How did the creation and adoption of the Bill of Rights serve to protect individual freedoms, and what implications did these protections have for the development of American political culture?
3. How did the interplay between rapidly growing democratic sentiments and the existing social hierarchy influence the evolution of government and law in the early United States?

University centre Si L'Haoues- Barika

Institute of Letters and Languages

Department of English

Level: Licence **Course: American Civilization**

Class: 3rd years **Instructor: Dr Zakarya SENOUCI**

Lecture Six:

The Impact of the War Of 1812

Learning Objectives: by the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

1. Understand that British interference with American shipping and military aid to Native American groups in Canada were the primary triggers of the war.
2. Explain why U.S. leaders chose to fight a land war—with an emphasis on the capture of Canada—instead of engaging the superior British navy.
3. Recognize significant events such as the British raid on Washington, D.C. (including the burning of the Capitol and White House) and the defense of Baltimore at Fort McHenry.
4. Comprehend how the Napoleonic Wars in Europe influenced the War of 1812 and contributed to its resolution.
5. Examine how post-war treaties led to the abandonment of British Native American alliances and the dropping of American maritime grievances, thereby reshaping U.S.-British relations.

Learning Prerequisites:

1. Basic familiarity with the Napoleonic Wars and their impact on global politics.
2. Understanding of early American trade, shipping issues, and why maritime rights were critical to national development.
3. Awareness of the limitations of the U.S. navy at the time and the strategic rationale for focusing on land operations.
4. Insight into how British support for Native American groups in Canada influenced frontier dynamics and U.S. expansion efforts.

Relevant Lexis:

Sovereignty: The authority of a state to govern itself without outside interference.

Maritime Rights: Legal rights and freedoms concerning navigation and trade on international waters.

Land War: A military campaign conducted primarily on land rather than at sea.

Native American Allies: Indigenous groups in North America who were supported by the British against American expansion.

Treaty: A formal agreement between countries; in this context, the treaty ended the War of 1812 by addressing key grievances.

Napoleonic Wars: A series of European conflicts during which Britain's global policies, including those affecting North America, were influenced.

The War of 1812 emerged at a time when the United States was fiercely determined to defend its national sovereignty, protect its western settlements, and safeguard its maritime rights. Declared against Britain in 1812, this conflict was fueled by two principal causes. First, British interference with American shipping severely disrupted trade and commerce. The British navy's policies—including restrictions on neutral trade and the impressment of American seamen—were a direct affront to American economic freedom. Second, British military support provided to Native American tribes in Canada exacerbated tensions on the frontier. By arming and assisting Native American groups, Britain effectively undermined American expansion westward and contributed to instability along the borders of the young nation.

The United States found itself in a difficult strategic position from the very start. American leaders were keenly aware that they could not hope to match the power and experience of the British navy. Instead of attempting a direct confrontation on the seas, American military strategy shifted toward a focus on land warfare. The rationale behind this approach was clear: a direct assault on British Canada was seen as a viable pathway to force favorable concessions. The thinking was that by capturing key British settlements in Canada, the Americans would not only secure a valuable prize

but also sever the crucial supply lines that provided western Native American allies with arms and logistical support. In effect, controlling Canada would serve as leverage—holding a strategic portion of British territory "hostage" until Britain conceded to American demands regarding territorial claims and maritime freedoms.

The summer of 1814 proved to be one of the most dramatic chapters of the conflict. Recognizing the symbolic and strategic importance of the American capital, the British launched a daring raid on Washington, D.C. During this attack, key landmarks—including the Capitol building and the White House—were burned to the ground. This act of aggression was not only intended to demoralize American leaders but also to force the fledgling nation into submission by demonstrating British military might. However, despite delivering a severe psychological blow, British raids did not bring about the decisive outcome they had hoped for.

Shortly thereafter, the focus of the war shifted to Baltimore, one of America's crucial port cities. In September 1814, British forces attacked the city, aiming to disrupt American military operations and commerce along the eastern seaboard. At Fort McHenry, however, American defenders mounted a determined resistance; their successful defense of Baltimore's harbor proved pivotal. During the intense bombardment, American poet Francis Scott Key observed the unfolding battle from a nearby ship and was profoundly inspired by the sight of the American flag still flying high at dawn. His impassioned verse would later be immortalized as "The Star-Spangled Banner," a stirring reminder of American resilience that eventually became the national anthem, encapsulating national pride and the spirit of defiance in the face of overwhelming odds.

The roots of the War of 1812 can also be traced to the broader geopolitical context of Europe, particularly the Napoleonic Wars. Britain's ongoing conflict with Napoleon had a direct impact on its ability—and willingness—to address American grievances. For much of the war, both Britain and the United States were entangled in broader strategic calculations influenced by European events. When Napoleon's defeat in 1814 finally shifted the continental balance of power, the priorities of both

nations also began to change. The British, now relieved from the pressing demands of their European engagements, saw little benefit in continuing a protracted conflict with the Americans. In the subsequent peace treaty, the British conceded by abandoning their armed alliances with Native American groups—a significant setback for those who had been resisting American expansion. Concurrently, the Americans opted to set aside their longstanding complaints about maritime rights in recognition of the changing geopolitical landscape. Both nations assumed that with the cessation of European hostilities, the issues that had provoked the war would naturally dissipate.

In retrospect, the War of 1812 served as a crucial turning point in American history. It forced the United States to reassess its military strategy, rely more on land-based operations, and ultimately laid the groundwork for a more assertive national identity. While the conflict did not result in dramatic territorial changes, its long-term impact on national pride, military policy, and the development of American political culture was profound. Both Britain and the United States emerged from the war with a better understanding of their geopolitical interests, setting the stage for a future in which the two nations would eventually find common cause rather than continued rivalry.

Reflection Questions:

1. How did British interference with American shipping and support for Canadian Native American allies contribute to the outbreak of the War of 1812, and what were the long-term consequences of these actions?
2. In what ways did the United States' decision to engage in a land war with Canada reflect both the limitations and opportunities it faced, and how effective was this strategy in advancing American objectives?
3. How did the outcome of the Napoleonic Wars influence the resolution of the War of 1812, and what lessons can be drawn about the interplay between global conflicts and regional disputes?

University centre Si L'Haoues- Barika

Institute of Letters and Languages

Department of English

Level: Licence **Course: American Civilization**

Class: 3rd years **Instructor: Dr Zakarya SENOUCI**

Lecture Seven:

Western Expansion and Manifest Destiny

Learning Objectives: by the end of the lecture, students will be able to:

1. Understand how Napoleon's defeat and the Congress of Vienna in 1815 marked a turning point in American history from a Europe-focused to a domestically focused agenda.
2. Analyze how the loss of Britain as a European ally left eastern Native Americans vulnerable to American expansion and forced relocation.
3. Evaluate how, after 1815, American political priorities shifted toward internal development and territorial expansion.
4. Understand the popular belief—including its economic, cultural, and political rationales—that justified U.S. expansion "from sea to shining sea."
5. Discuss how concepts such as the "American ethic of hard work" and the idea of a divine destiny underpinned aggressive expansionist policies.

Learning Prerequisites:

1. Familiarity with the French Revolution, the Napoleonic Wars, and the Congress of Vienna.
2. An understanding of early U.S. foreign policy and the nation's initial ties to European conflicts.
3. Awareness of the relationships between Native Americans and European colonial powers, and how these alliances shifted after 1815.
4. Basic knowledge of territorial acquisition (e.g., Texas, Oregon, California) and the roots of American nationalist ideology.

Relevant Lexis:

Manifest Destiny: The 19th-century doctrine that the expansion of the U.S. across North America was both inevitable and divinely ordained.

Pioneer: An individual who ventures into and settles previously uncharted or sparsely populated regions; pioneers exemplified the spirit of exploration and self-reliance that defined early American expansion.

Wilderness: Refers to vast, undeveloped tracts of land that remained largely untouched by urbanization or intensive agriculture, the wilderness embodied both the promise and the challenge of the frontier.

Westward Expansion: The deliberate policy and process of increasing U.S. territory towards the western frontiers of the continent; this expansion was driven by economic opportunities, ideological beliefs like Manifest Destiny, and the desire for new living spaces.

Frontier Spirit: The mindset characterized by ingenuity, toughness, and a willingness to embrace uncertainty while carving out a new life in uncharted lands; this cultural attitude was central to the ethos of American expansion.

Expansionist: Pertaining to policies or actions that promote the territorial enlargement of a nation.

Nationalist: Reflecting a strong identification with one's own nation and support for its interests, often at the expense of others.

Congress of Vienna: The 1815 conference of European powers that reshaped Europe after the Napoleonic Wars, contributing indirectly to American shifts in focus.

Hunting Lands/Plantations: Terms highlighting the transformation of Native American territories into agricultural estates and settlements.

Ideological Narratives: The prevailing ideas or beliefs—in this case, that American expansion was preordained and beneficial—that shaped political and public opinion.

The year 1815 marked a turning point—a watershed moment—in American history. Up until that time, the United States' destiny had been heavily interwoven with European events. The French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars had cast long shadows over American politics and trade. When Napoleon was finally defeated and the European powers came together at the Congress of Vienna, a long period of relative peace was established throughout Europe. This newfound stability shifted American attention away from the distant conflicts that had once captivated national leaders. With

Europe no longer a central theatre of war or trade disputes, U.S. policymakers began to direct their energies inward toward domestic growth and the expansion of the nation's internal resources.

This pivot had profound consequences. Freed from the pressing need to mediate or become entangled in European wars, American leaders started emphasizing infrastructure, economic development, and territorial expansion. Policy discussions increasingly revolved around the future shape of the nation, with debates centering on how best to harness America's natural resources, emerging markets, and vast tracts of unsettled land. This internal focus spurred rapid economic growth and set a foundation for the transformation of the United States into a continental power.

Native American Displacement and the Drive for Expansion:

While Americans celebrated a renewed emphasis on national development, this shift signaled bitter news for Native American communities east of the Mississippi River. For generations, Native Americans had not only coexisted with European settlers but, in many cases, also aligned with European powers like Britain. However, with Britain's retreat from American involvement in 1815, the Native Americans lost their last reliable European ally. No longer could they count on the diplomatic or military support that had, at earlier times, provided a counterbalance to the expanding frontier.

Facing an aggressive new reality, Native American lands became the focus of American expansionist projects. The American government, now guided by policies aimed at consolidating national power, viewed the vast hunting grounds and forested regions occupied by Native American tribes as prime territory for farming and settlement. By the 1830s, the federal government had set in motion a series of relocations designed to clear eastern lands of Native American presence. These policies forcibly moved Native Americans to territories west of the Mississippi River. As these lands were converted into farms and plantations, American settlers advanced further westward, driven by the belief that continued expansion was both necessary and inevitable.

The Emergence of an Expansionist Ideology:

During this period of transformation, the political leadership of the United States coalesced around an aggressively nationalist and expansionist foreign policy. The idea was simple: to redefine the nation's future by extending its borders. This era saw the rapid consolidation of a popular ideology that celebrated expanding the American frontier. Few American migrants questioned their right to move into regions like Texas, Oregon, and California. In fact, popular opinion, by the mid-1840s, had crystallized around the belief that it was a natural and even divine mandate for the United States to claim the entire North American continent.

The movement was driven by several interlocking ideas. Some Americans believed that expansion would extend the freedoms and prosperity born of the American Revolution to new territories. For others, it was a chance to spread what they considered the epitome of the American work ethic—a commitment to hard work, self-reliance, and economic progress. Furthermore, strategic considerations played a significant role. Many saw the addition of Pacific ports as crucial for establishing new trade routes and opening economic relations with Asia. Such ports would not only diversify trade opportunities but would also strengthen America's position on the global stage.

Concurrently, however, an undercurrent of cultural superiority began to emerge among many expansionists. They imagined a future North America devoid of what they labeled as the "savagery" of Native Americans. They criticized Mexicans for perceived laziness and political instability, and they dismissed the vestiges of British monarchy as symbols of a corrupt, outdated system. This confidence reached its apotheosis when, in 1845, a New York City journalist by the name of John L. O'Sullivan coined the term "Manifest Destiny." In his writings, O'Sullivan argued that it was not merely a right but a divine obligation for America to "overspread the continent allotted by Providence." He claimed that the expansion of the United States was part of a predestined plan for the nation's growth and the free development of its ever-multiplying people.

The Legacy of Manifest Destiny:

Manifest Destiny became more than a slogan—it encapsulated the spirit of a rapidly changing nation. It justified the numerous territorial acquisitions and served as a rallying cry for those pushing westward. As settlers advanced into new territories, they transformed the physical and cultural landscapes of the continent. The ideology provided the moral and political framework that underpinned controversial measures such as the forced relocation of Native Americans and the annexation of territories that had previously belonged to other nations or indigenous peoples.

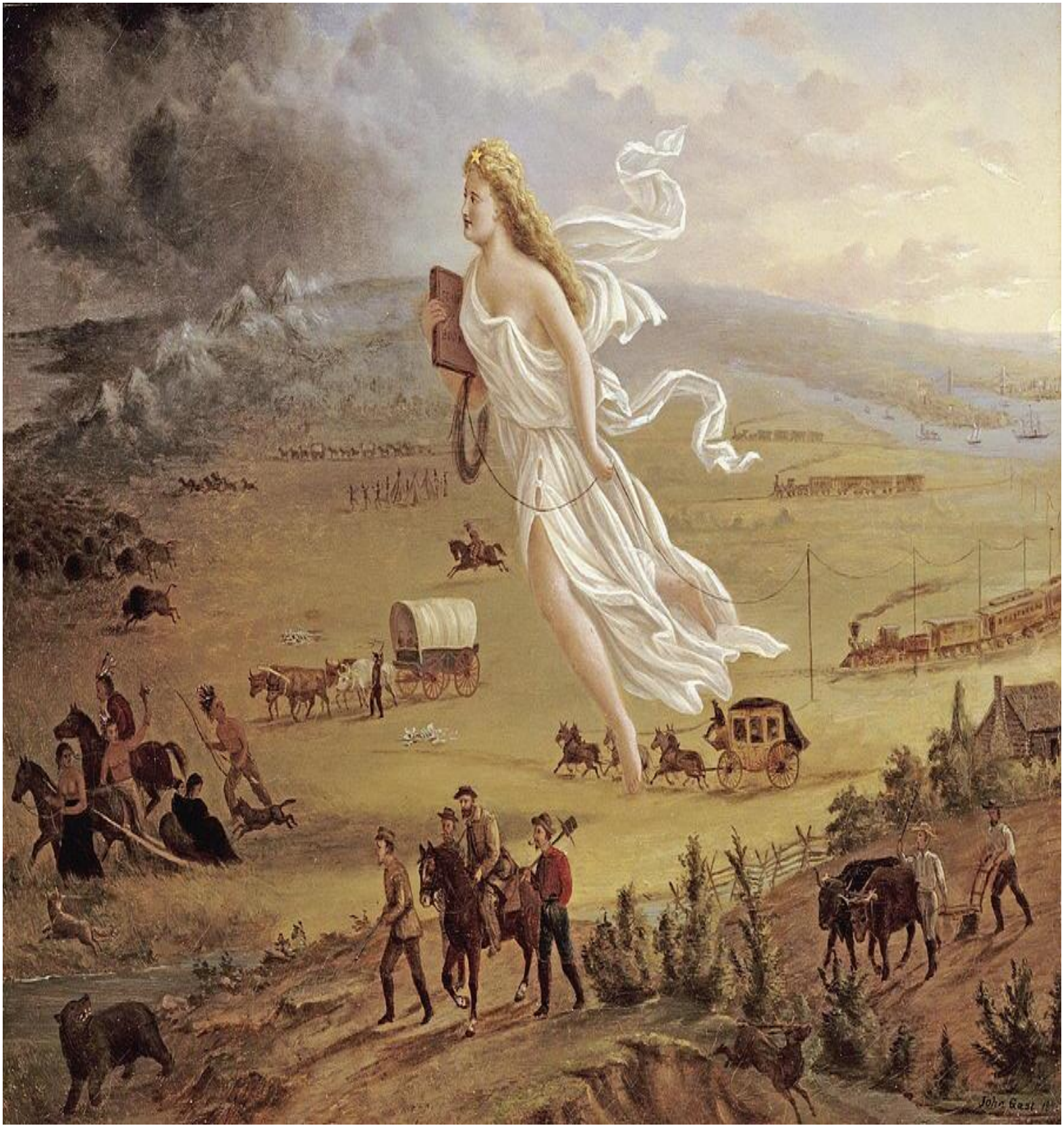
At its core, Manifest Destiny was both optimistic and ambivalent. It heralded unprecedented growth, economic enrichment, and the spread of democratic ideals. Yet, it also laid the groundwork for future conflicts—both internal and external—by legitimizing expansion at the expense of native populations and neighbouring countries. This dual legacy has continued to influence American national identity and foreign policy. The belief in a divinely sanctioned national mission still echoes in American political discourse, shaping debates about territorial claims, immigration, and domestic development.

In summary, the post-1815 era signified a profound transformation in the focus of American policy. With Europe enjoying relative peace and stability after the Napoleonic Wars, the United States turned inward, embarking on ambitious projects of national development and territorial expansion. This shift, however, came at great cost to Native American communities that had once balanced power dynamics through alliances with European nations. Simultaneously, a powerful expansionist ideology, crystallized in the concept of Manifest Destiny, swept the nation. This belief not only rationalized the occupation of vast new lands in Texas, Oregon, and California but also played a critical role in defining the American national character—a blend of bold ambition, economic progress, and the controversial legacy of displacing an entire way of life.

Reflection Questions:

1. How did the peace in Europe after 1815 alter American priorities, and what internal developments did this new focus promote?
2. In what ways did the termination of European alliances, particularly Britain's, directly affect the fate of Native American societies east of the Mississippi?
3. How did the ideology of Manifest Destiny justify territorial expansion, and what are its lasting implications on the cultural and political identity of the United States?

Audio-visual Materials for Discussion



American Progress, John Gast. 1872

Texts for Analysis and Debates

“America is the only country that went from barbarism to decadence without a civilization in between.” Oscar Wilde

On the Idea of the Frontier

In his essay "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" (1893), Frederick Jackson Turner insisted that "the peculiarity of American institutions is, the fact that they have been compelled to adapt themselves to the changes of an expanding people-to changes involved in crossing a continent, in winning a wilderness, and in developing at each area of this progress out of the primitive economic and political conditions of the frontier into the complexity of city life." It was this unique American experience that reshaped inherited patterns into native ones. It created "a new product that is American." It explains "American development.”

The Impact of the Frontier on American Character

Turner and the multitude of later historians who were influenced by him saw the frontier as having had a defining influence in creating certain American intellectual traits. For them a practical, inventive quality in dealing with material things, an idealism that merges into an incurable belief in progress, and a conservative approach that is mixed with a willingness to try new things when the accepted fails were frontier traits that have become American traits. With them has gone a rather unusual emphasis on the simple virtues of courage, loyalty, energy, and physical strength; a larger respect for women; and a rather marked indifference to things abstract. European travellers, commenting on Americans and their ways, have stressed these things and found them more common to the West and the newer regions than to the East.

Melting Pot or Salad Bowl?

In 1908 Israel Zangwill wrote a play, The Melting Pot. The hero, a refugee from persecution in Czarist Russia, escapes to the United States. In the final scene be speaks with enthusiasm about the mixture of peoples in his new homeland:

"America is God's Crucible, the great Melting Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming! Here you stand in your fifty groups with your fifty languages and histories, and your fifty blood hatreds and rivalries, but you won't be like that for long, brothers, for these are the fires of God you've come to -these are the fires of God… German and Frenchman, Irishman and Englishman, Jews and Russians -into the Crucible with you all! God is making the American ...He will be the fusion of all races, the coming superman."

Zangwill's play was a great success. This was perhaps because many in the audiences who came to see it found its message reassuring. At a time when poor and uneducated immigrants from Europe were flooding into the United States in millions, it was comforting for Americans to be told that their country could turn the newcomers into Americans like themselves.

In fact this never really happened, at least not completely. The United States turned out to be more of a salad bowl than a melting pot. Groups from similar national and ethnic backgrounds often stayed together, keeping alive their old identities and many of the old customs. They lived in "Chinatowns" or "Little Italys, areas populated almost entirely by Americans of similar ethnic origins. Such districts can still be found in many large American cities

Americans from different immigrant backgrounds do mix together in time. It has been estimated, for example, that about 80 percent of the great-grand-children of early twentieth century European immigrants marry outside their own ethnic groups .Yet such third generation Americans often cling with pride to important elements of their ethnic heritage. So do many Americans whose immigrant origins are even further in the past.

University Centre Si L'Haoues- Barika

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Department of English

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Class: 3rd years **Instructor: Dr Zakarya SENOUCI**

Lecture Eight:

The Myth of the American Exceptionalism

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the historical roots of American exceptionalism, including its Puritan origins and foundational documents.
2. Analyze the socio-political implications of American exceptionalism in domestic and global contexts.
3. Compare American exceptionalism with ideologies from other world powers, identifying key similarities and differences.
4. Evaluate the criticisms and defences of American exceptionalism as a concept.

Learning Prerequisites:

1. Familiarity with foundational U.S. historical documents like the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.
2. Basic knowledge of Puritan ideology and its role in early American history.
3. General understanding of global imperial ideologies such as Manifest Destiny and the "civilizing mission."
4. Awareness of modern socio-political terms like "free market" and "individual rights."

Relevant Lexis:

American exceptionalism: The belief that the United States holds a unique place in history and a special role in the world, often tied to moral or ideological superiority.

Manifest Destiny: The 19th-century belief that the U.S. was divinely destined to expand its territory across the North American continent.

Puritanism: A religious reform movement originating in the 16th and 17th centuries, emphasizing strict moral conduct and the idea of being a chosen people under God.

City upon a Hill: A metaphor used by Puritan leader John Winthrop, describing a model society that others would look up to, symbolizing moral and spiritual leadership.

Founding Fathers: The leaders who played pivotal roles in establishing the United States, particularly through drafting the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Divinely inspired: The belief that something, like a document or idea, is guided or created with divine influence or approval.

Civilizing mission: The justification for imperialism, claiming the duty to "civilize" other nations or cultures based on the colonizer's values and standards.

Judeo-Christian God: The deity worshiped in the Jewish and Christian traditions, often central to American cultural and political ideals.

Free market: An economic system where prices and production are determined by supply and demand, with minimal government intervention.

Individual rights: The freedoms and protections entitled to every individual, often prioritized over collective needs in American ideology.

The concept of American exceptionalism is grounded in the belief that the United States holds a unique position in world history, portraying itself as not only distinct but also morally superior to other nations. This perspective, rooted in historical, ideological, and religious justifications, has often been accompanied by the assertion that the United States has a moral obligation to play a preeminent role in global politics. Proponents of American exceptionalism frequently depict this ethos as a guiding principle for governance, national identity, and international relations.

Historical Roots of American Exceptionalism:

The origins of American exceptionalism can be traced to the foundational principles articulated in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. These seminal documents are occasionally described by their adherents as divinely inspired, embodying ideals of liberty, justice, and self-

governance. For advocates of this belief, adhering to the vision of the Founding Fathers represents the blueprint for national success. This framework is often perceived as universally applicable, fostering the idea that exporting American values beyond the nation's borders constitutes both a social imperative and a moral obligation.

The theological underpinnings of American exceptionalism predate the founding documents, emerging from the Puritan settlers of 17th-century New England. Puritan leader John Winthrop's metaphor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony as a "City upon a Hill" exemplified this early worldview, presenting the colony as a beacon of divine purpose and moral leadership. This sense of a divine mandate has since remained an integral aspect of American identity, shaping both internal policies and foreign relations. For instance, in the 19th century, the notion of Manifest Destiny—a belief in a God-given mission to expand the American way of life across the continent—was used to justify territorial annexation and westward expansion. Similarly, in the 20th century, the ideological framework of American exceptionalism was employed to oppose communist governments worldwide, positioning the United States as a global force for democracy and freedom.

Critiques and Comparisons:

Despite its enduring appeal, the doctrine of American exceptionalism has not escaped critical scrutiny. Scholars and critics often draw parallels between this ideology and other imperialist narratives, such as the British Empire's "white man's burden" or the French and Portuguese colonial "civilizing missions." Furthermore, the Soviet Union's rationalization of its expansionist policies as a Marxist-Leninist mission of liberation mirrors similar claims of moral superiority and global leadership. While proponents of American exceptionalism reject these comparisons as overly simplistic or inapplicable, they nonetheless highlight the potential for such beliefs to rationalize aggressive or self-serving policies.

Representations and Core Ideals:

At its core, American exceptionalism is anchored in three key ideals, which remain central to its patriotic ideology: a reverence for the Judeo-Christian God, an unwavering commitment to free-market capitalism, and the prioritization of individual rights over collective needs. These principles are not merely theoretical; they have been actively propagated both domestically and internationally, often through forceful means. U.S. history demonstrates the persistence of these ideals, with successive leaders invoking them to justify policy decisions and consolidate national identity.

The myth of American exceptionalism, therefore, serves as both a guiding narrative and a contested framework. It continues to shape the United States' self-perception and its interactions with the world. While its proponents emphasize the nation's unique role as a moral exemplar and global leader, its critics underscore the dangers of viewing American policies through an infallible lens. This duality invites ongoing reflection on the nature and consequences of exceptionalist beliefs, particularly in a rapidly changing and interconnected global landscape.

Reflection Questions:

1. How does the concept of Manifest Destiny demonstrate the influence of American exceptionalism in U.S. expansionist policies?
2. In what ways does the notion of American exceptionalism parallel or diverge from other imperial ideologies historically?
3. Considering modern critiques, how relevant is American exceptionalism in contemporary global politics?

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Class: 3rd years **Instructor: Dr Zakarya SENOUCI**

Lecture Nine:

The American Civil War

Learning Objectives:

1. Explain how economic differences, the institution of slavery, sectionalism, and debates over states' rights fuelled tensions leading up to the war.
2. Understand the strategic significance and outcomes of major battles (Fort Sumter, Antietam, Gettysburg, Vicksburg, and Sherman's March) in shaping the conflict.
3. Examine both immediate and long-term consequences—including the abolition of slavery, Reconstruction efforts, and shifts in federal versus state authority—on American society and identity.
4. Critically engage with how military actions, political decisions, and cultural narratives combined to influence the course and legacy of the Civil War.

Learning Prerequisites:

1. Familiarity with the antebellum period, including the socio-economic reliance on slavery and regional disparities between North and South.
2. Basic understanding of U.S. governance, particularly the evolution of federal versus states' rights and key events like the Missouri Compromise, Compromise of 1850, and the Dred Scott decision.
3. Introductory knowledge of military strategies and terminology to comprehend the tactical developments in key battles.
4. Awareness of how industrialization in the North contrasted with the agricultural economy of the South and its impact on national development.

Relevant Lexis:

American Civil War: The conflict (1861–1865) between the Union (North) and the Confederacy (South) that reshaped the nation.

Secession: The act whereby eleven Southern states withdrew from the Union to form the Confederate States of America.

Slavery: The enforced labor system central to the Southern economy, whose existence was a key factor in the conflict.

Emancipation Proclamation: President Lincoln's 1863 decree that declared the freedom of slaves within Confederate-held territory.

Reconstruction: The post-war era focused on reintegrating the Southern states and establishing rights for newly freed African Americans.

Union: The collective term for the Northern states that remained loyal to the federal government.

Confederacy: The group of seceding Southern states that fought against the Union.

Total War: A military strategy involving the mobilization of all available resources aimed at completely defeating the enemy.

Industrialization: The rapid development of industry and manufacturing, particularly significant in the North during the war period.

States' Rights: The principle advocating for individual states to govern themselves independently of the federal government.

Prelude to the War:

The secession of the Southern states (in chronological order, South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Texas, Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina) in 1860–61 and the ensuing outbreak of armed hostilities were the culmination of decades of growing sectional friction over slavery. Between 1815 and 1861 the economy of the Northern states was rapidly modernizing and diversifying. Although agriculture—mostly smaller farms that relied on free labour—remained the dominant sector in the North, industrialization had taken root there. Moreover, Northerners had invested heavily in an expansive and varied transportation system that included canals, roads, steamboats, and railroads; in financial industries such as banking and insurance; and in a large communications network that featured inexpensive, widely available newspapers, magazines,

and books, along with the telegraph. By contrast, the Southern economy was based principally on large farms (plantations) that produced commercial crops such as cotton and that relied on slaves as the main labour force. Rather than invest in factories or railroads as Northerners had done, Southerners invested their money in slaves—even more than in land; by 1860, 84 percent of the capital invested in manufacturing was invested in the free (no slaveholding) states. Yet, to Southerners, as late as 1860, this appeared to be a sound business decision. The price of cotton, the South's defining crop, had skyrocketed in the 1850s, and the value of slaves—who were, after all, property—rose commensurately. By 1860 the per capita wealth of Southern whites was twice that of Northerners, and three-fifths of the wealthiest individuals in the country were Southerners.

The extension of slavery into new territories and states had been an issue as far back as the Northwest Ordinance of 1784. When the slave territory of Missouri sought statehood in 1818, Congress debated for two years before arriving upon the Missouri Compromise of 1820. This was the first of a series of political deals that resulted from arguments between pro-slavery and antislavery forces over the expansion of the "peculiar institution," as it was known, into the West. The end of the Mexican-American War in 1848 and the roughly 500,000 square miles (1.3 million square km) of new territory that the United States gained as a result of it added a new sense of urgency to the dispute. More and more Northerners, driven by a sense of morality or an interest in protecting free labour, came to believe, in the 1850s, that bondage needed to be eradicated. White Southerners feared that limiting the expansion of slavery would consign the institution to certain death. Over the course of the decade, the two sides became increasingly polarized and politicians less able to contain the dispute through compromise. When Abraham Lincoln, the candidate of the explicitly antislavery Republican Party, won the 1860 presidential election, seven Southern states (South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas) carried out their threat and seceded, organizing as the Confederate States of America.

In the early morning hours of April 12, 1861, rebels opened fire on Fort Sumter, at the entrance to the harbour of Charleston, South Carolina. Curiously, this first encounter of what would be the bloodiest war in the history of the United States claimed no victims. After a 34-hour bombardment, Maj. Robert Anderson surrendered his command of about 85 soldiers to some 5,500 besieging Confederate troops under P.G.T. Beauregard. Within weeks, four more Southern states (Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee, and North Carolina) left the Union to join the Confederacy.

With war upon the land, President Lincoln called for 75,000 militiamen to serve for three months. He proclaimed a naval blockade of the Confederate states, although he insisted that they did not legally constitute a sovereign country but were instead states in rebellion. He also directed the secretary of the treasury to advance $2 million to assist in the raising of troops, and he suspended the writ of habeas corpus, first along the East Coast and ultimately throughout the country. The Confederate government had previously authorized a call for 100,000 soldiers for at least six months' service, and this figure was soon increased to 400,000.

Causes of the War:

At its core, the war emerged from the clash between fundamentally opposed conceptions of society and governance:

Slavery and Economic Contrasts: The most polarizing issue was the institution of slavery. The Southern states, with economies largely dependent on agriculture and the labor-intensive plantation system, viewed slavery as essential for their economic survival and social order. In contrast, the industrializing North increasingly embraced wage labor and free-market principles. This economic divergence intensified sectional animosities, with each region interpreting the nation’s destiny in light of its distinct economic interests.

Sectionalism and the Debate Over States’ Rights: Sectional loyalties grew deeper as cultural and regional identities coalesced around differing views on the role of the federal government. The

South ardently defended the idea of states' rights—the legal and political assertion that states retained sovereignty over certain issues, including the regulation of slavery—whereas many in the North championed the supremacy of federal authority, believing that the central government should set the framework for national policy. This ideological rift fueled repeated political confrontations and left compromise as a fading hope.

Political Polarization and Compromised Negotiations: Throughout the antebellum period, attempts to settle these differences found only temporary respite. Legislative measures such as the Missouri Compromise (1820) and the Compromise of 1850 attempted to maintain a balance between free and slave states, while judicial decisions like the Dred Scott v. Sandford (1857) exacerbated tensions by denying fundamental rights to African Americans. The election of Abraham Lincoln as president in 1860—on a platform opposing the spread of slavery—served as the final catalyst. His victory, perceived by Southern states as a direct threat to their socio-economic order, led to the rapid secession of eleven states and the formation of the Confederate States of America.

This culmination of economic disparities, ideological divisions, and failed political compromises set the stage for a conflict that would redefine the nation's future.

Major Battles:

Overview of Military Engagements:

The American Civil War was punctuated by numerous pivotal battles. These engagements not only demonstrated the evolution of military strategy and technology but also served as turning points in the conflict's trajectory. The scale and ferocity of these battles underscored the high stakes of the national struggle.

Battle of Fort Sumter (April 1861): The conflict began in earnest when Confederate forces fired upon Fort Sumter in South Carolina, marking the official outbreak of hostilities. This initial clash

galvanized public opinion in both the North and South, transforming a regional dispute into a war for the future of the nation.

First and Second Battles of Bull Run (Manassas) (July 1861 and August 1862): Early battles such as the First Battle of Bull Run revealed the war's harsh realities and dispelled any illusions of a brief conflict. The subsequent engagements around Manassas further entrenched the belief among Southerners in their military prowess, while also serving as early lessons in the devastating cost of a prolonged war.

Battle of Antietam (September 1862): Fought in Maryland, Antietam remains notorious as the bloodiest single-day battle in American history. Though tactically inconclusive, its strategic implications were significant. The battle provided President Lincoln with the political capital necessary to issue the Emancipation Proclamation—a policy that redefined the war's purpose and discouraged foreign intervention on behalf of the Confederacy.

Battle of Gettysburg (July 1863): Often cited as the war's turning point, Gettysburg was a massive engagement marked by fierce combat and high casualties. The Union victory at Gettysburg ended General Robert E. Lee's ambitious invasion of the North and shifted momentum decisively in favor of the Union forces. The battle's profound impact on Confederate morale and its symbolic significance in the national narrative cannot be overstated.

Battle of Vicksburg (May–July 1863): Parallel in importance to Gettysburg, the Union victory at Vicksburg, Mississippi, secured strategic control of the Mississippi River. This conquest effectively split the Confederacy along the river, isolating its western states and hindering the logistical coordination of Confederate armies.

Sherman's March to the Sea (November–December 1864): Later in the conflict, General William Tecumseh Sherman's march through Georgia was emblematic of the Union's total war strategy. This

scorched-earth campaign not only provided a psychological blow to the Confederate war effort but also significantly disrupted the Southern economy by destroying vital infrastructure and supply lines.

Each of these battles contributed uniquely to the overall war effort, with the ebb and flow of victories and losses setting the stage for the eventual Union triumph.

Consequences:

Immediate Outcomes:

The culmination of the American Civil War brought profound immediate changes to the nation:

Abolition of Slavery: One of the most enduring legacies of the war was the formal abolition of slavery. The Emancipation Proclamation, issued in 1863, and the subsequent ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865 legally freed millions of African Americans, marking a critical step toward civil rights. The moral and legal implications of ending the institution of slavery resonated deeply in both domestic policies and global perceptions of the United States.

The Reconstruction Era: Following the cessation of hostilities, the nation embarked on the Reconstruction era—a complex and often turbulent period during which the Southern states were gradually reintegrated into the Union. This era was characterized by significant political, social, and economic reforms. The federal government took on an active role in restructuring Southern society, attempting to establish legal and political rights for formerly enslaved individuals while also setting the foundations for a modern, industrialized economy.

Long-Term Impact:

The consequences of the war reverberated through every aspect of American life and governance

Federal vs. States' Authority: The war decisively resolved the longstanding debate over the balance of power between federal and state governments. The supremacy of the federal government

was affirmed, curtailing the once pervasive doctrine of states' rights and setting a precedent for the centralized regulation of critical national issues.

Shifts in National Identity and Memory: The experience of the Civil War fundamentally reshaped American national identity. The narrative of a country united through sacrifice and moral purpose became integral to the collective memory, even as regional differences continued to inform political debate. The valor and tragedy of the conflict have since been memorialized through literature, art, and public commemorations—a testament to its enduring impact on the American psyche.

Economic and Social Transformations: Beyond redefining political power, the war accelerated social and economic transformations. The expansion of industrialization in the North, spurred by wartime innovation and infrastructure development, laid the groundwork for the United States' emergence as a global economic power in the ensuing decades. In contrast, the devastated Southern economy had to undergo a slow process of reconstruction, a challenge compounded by the lasting social repercussions of systemic racial inequality.

In summary, the American Civil War was a multifaceted conflict that emerged from irreconcilable differences over slavery, states' rights, and the very nature of national governance. The major battles not only illustrate the tactical and strategic evolution of warfare but also underscore the high human cost of the struggle. Its profound consequences—in the realms of law, politics, economy, and societal values—continue to inform contemporary debates about national identity and the course of American history. The legacy of the Civil War endures as both a stark reminder of the nation's divided past and a beacon for its ongoing pursuit of justice and unity.

Reflection Questions:

1. In what ways did the contrasting economic models and social structures of the North and South intensify the sectional tensions that precipitated the Civil War?

2. How did key battles such as Gettysburg and Vicksburg shift the momentum of the war, and what do these shifts reveal about the interplay between military strategy and national morale?
3. Reflect on how the outcomes of the Civil War—particularly the abolition of slavery and the subsequent Reconstruction—have continued to shape modern American political, social, and economic identities.

University centre Si L'Haoues- Barika

Institute of Letters and Languages

Department of English

Level: Licence **Course: American Civilization**

Class: 3rd years **Instructor: Dr Zakarya SENOUCI**

Lecture Ten:

The Reconstruction Era

Learning Objectives:

1. Analyze the efforts to rebuild the Southern economy and political structure after the Civil War and explore how Reconstruction aimed to reintegrate Southern states into the Union and redefine American citizenship.
2. Evaluate the impact of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments on civil rights and federal authority and assess how these legal changes reshaped the relationship between the federal government and state governments.
3. Identify both the successes and limitations of Reconstruction policies and discuss the roles and experiences of different groups—including freedmen, carpetbaggers, and scalawags—in shaping the period's legacy.
4. Analyze how the unresolved challenges of Reconstruction influenced later periods, including the rise of Jim Crow laws and ongoing debates about racial equality and federalism.

Learning Prerequisites:

1. Understanding the causes, key events, and outcomes of the Civil War and recognizing the significance of slavery and sectional conflict in American history.
2. Awareness of how the U.S. Constitution has been amended and the context behind major amendments, especially those related to civil rights.
3. A grasp of the balance between federal authority and state sovereignty as it evolved through pre- and post-war periods.
4. Knowledge of the plantation system, slavery's economic impact, and the early methods of agricultural labour (such as sharecropping) that emerged post-war.

Relevant Lexis:

13th Amendment: Legally abolished slavery throughout the United States.

14th Amendment: Established citizenship and equal protection under the law for all persons born or naturalized in the United States.

15th Amendment: Prohibited denying the right to vote based on race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Black Codes: Laws passed by Southern states after the Civil War to restrict the rights and movements of African Americans.

Freedmen's Bureau: A federal agency established to assist freed slaves with education, healthcare, employment, and legal aid during Reconstruction.

Carpetbaggers: Northerners who moved to the South during Reconstruction, often perceived as opportunists exploiting post-war instability.

Scalawags: White Southerners who supported Reconstruction and assisted the new state governments, often viewed as traitors by other Southerners.

Sharecropping: An agricultural system emerging in the South where freed slaves and poor whites worked land in exchange for a share of the crop; often resulted in economic dependency.

Jim Crow: Later segregation laws that institutionalized racial discrimination, providing context for the long-term challenges following Reconstruction.

In U.S. history, the period (1865–77), that followed the American Civil War and during which attempts were made to redress the inequities of slavery and its political, social, and economic legacy and to solve the problems arising from the readmission to the Union of the 11 states that had seceded at or before the outbreak of war. Long portrayed by many historians as a time when vindictive Radical Republicans fastened black supremacy upon the defeated Confederacy, Reconstruction has since the late 20th century been viewed more sympathetically as a laudable experiment in interracial democracy. Reconstruction witnessed far-reaching changes in America's political life. At the national level, new laws and constitutional amendments permanently altered the federal system and the definition of American citizenship. In the South, a politically mobilized black community joined with white allies to bring the Republican Party to power, and with it a redefinition of the responsibilities of government.

Origins of Reconstruction:

The national debate over Reconstruction began during the Civil War. In December 1863, less than a year after he issued the Emancipation Proclamation, Pres. Abraham Lincoln announced the first comprehensive program for Reconstruction, the Ten Percent Plan. Under it, when one-tenth of a state's prewar voters took an oath of loyalty, they could establish a new state government. To Lincoln, the plan was an attempt to weaken the Confederacy rather than a blueprint for the postwar South. It was put into operation in parts of the Union-occupied Confederacy, but none of the new governments achieved broad local support. In 1864 Congress enacted (and Lincoln pocket vetoed) the Wade-Davis Bill, which proposed to delay the formation of new Southern governments until a majority of voters had taken a loyalty oath. Some Republicans were already convinced that equal rights for the former slaves had to accompany the South's readmission to the Union. In his last speech, on April 11, 1865, Lincoln, referring to Reconstruction in Louisiana, expressed the view that some blacks—the "very intelligent" and those who had served in the Union army—ought to enjoy the right to vote.

Presidential Reconstruction:

Following Lincoln's assassination in April 1865, Andrew Johnson became president and inaugurated the period of Presidential Reconstruction (1865–67). Johnson offered a pardon to all Southern whites except Confederate leaders and wealthy planters (although most of these subsequently received individual pardons), restoring their political rights and all property except slaves. He also outlined how new state governments would be created. Apart from the requirement that they abolish slavery, repudiate secession, and abrogate the Confederate debt, these governments were granted a free hand in managing their affairs. They responded by enacting the black codes, laws that required African Americans to sign yearly labour contracts and in other ways sought to limit the freedmen's economic options and re-establish plantation discipline. African Americans strongly resisted the implementation of these measures, and they seriously undermined Northern support for Johnson's policies.

When Congress assembled in December 1865, Radical Republicans such as Rep. Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania and Sen. Charles Sumner from Massachusetts called for the establishment of new

Southern governments based on equality before the law and universal male suffrage. But the more numerous moderate Republicans hoped to work with Johnson while modifying his program. Congress refused to seat the representatives and senators elected from the Southern states and in early 1866 passed the Freedmen's Bureau and Civil Rights Bills. The first extended the life of an agency Congress had created in 1865 to oversee the transition from slavery to freedom. The second defined all persons born in the United States as national citizens, who were to enjoy equality before the law.

A combination of personal stubbornness, fervent belief in states' rights, and racist convictions led Johnson to reject these bills, causing a permanent rupture between himself and Congress. The Civil Rights Act became the first significant legislation in American history to become law over a president's veto. Shortly thereafter, Congress approved the Fourteenth Amendment, which put the principle of birth right citizenship into the Constitution and forbade states to deprive any citizen of the "equal protection" of the laws. Arguably, the most important addition to the Constitution other than the Bill of Rights, the amendment constituted a profound change in federal-state relations. Traditionally, citizens' rights had been delineated and protected by the states. Thereafter, the federal government would guarantee all Americans' equality before the law against state violation.

Radical Reconstruction:

In the fall 1866 congressional elections, Northern voters overwhelmingly repudiated Johnson's policies. Congress decided to begin Reconstruction anew. The Reconstruction Acts of 1867 divided the South into five military districts and outlined how new governments, based on manhood suffrage without regard to race, were to be established. Thus began the period of Radical or Congressional Reconstruction, which lasted until the end of the last Southern Republican governments in 1877.

By 1870 all the former Confederate states had been readmitted to the Union, and nearly all were controlled by the Republican Party. Three groups made up Southern Republicanism. Carpetbaggers, or recent arrivals from the North, were former Union soldiers, teachers, Freedmen's Bureau agents, and businessmen. The second large group, scalawags, or native-born white Republicans, included some

businessmen and planters, but most were no slaveholding small farmers from the Southern up-country. Loyal to the Union during the Civil War, they saw the Republican Party as a means of keeping Confederates from regaining power in the South.

In every state, African Americans formed the overwhelming majority of Southern Republican voters. From the beginning of Reconstruction, black conventions and newspapers throughout the South had called for the extension of full civil and political rights to African Americans. Composed of those who had been free before the Civil War plus slave ministers, artisans, and Civil War veterans, the black political leadership pressed for the elimination of the racial caste system and the economic uplifting of the former slaves. Sixteen African Americans served in Congress during Reconstruction—including Hiram Revels and Blanche K. Bruce in the U.S. Senate—more than 600 in state legislatures, and hundreds more in local offices from sheriff to justice of the peace scattered across the South. So-called "black supremacy" never existed, but the advent of African Americans in positions of political power marked a dramatic break with the country's traditions and aroused bitter hostility from Reconstruction's opponents.

Serving an expanded citizenry, Reconstruction governments established the South's first state-funded public school systems, sought to strengthen the bargaining power of plantation labourers, made taxation more equitable, and outlawed racial discrimination in public transportation and accommodations. They also offered lavish aid to railroads and other enterprises in the hope of creating a "New South" whose economic expansion would benefit blacks and whites alike. But the economic program spawned corruption and rising taxes, alienating increasing numbers of white voters.

Meanwhile, the social and economic transformation of the South proceeded apace. To blacks, freedom meant independence from white control. Reconstruction provided the opportunity for African Americans to solidify their family ties and to create independent religious institutions, which became centres of community life that survived long after Reconstruction ended. The former slaves also demanded economic independence. Blacks' hopes that the federal government would provide them

with land had been raised by Gen. William T. Sherman's Field Order No. 15 of January 1865, which set aside a large swath of land along the coast of South Carolina and Georgia for the exclusive settlement of black families, and by the Freedmen's Bureau Act of March, which authorized the bureau to rent or sell land in its possession to former slaves. But President Johnson in the summer of 1865 ordered land in federal hands to be returned to its former owners. The dream of "40 acres and a mule" was stillborn. Lacking land, most former slaves had little economic alternative other than resuming work on plantations owned by whites. Some worked for wages, others as sharecroppers, who divided the crop with the owner at the end of the year. Neither status offered much hope for economic mobility. For decades, most Southern blacks remained propertyless and poor.

Nonetheless, the political revolution of Reconstruction spawned increasingly violent opposition from white Southerners. White supremacist organizations that committed terrorist acts, such as the Ku Klux Klan, targeted local Republican leaders for beatings or assassination. African Americans who asserted their rights in dealings with white employers, teachers, ministers, and others seeking to assist the former slaves also became targets. At Colfax, La., in 1873, scores of black militiamen were killed after surrendering to armed whites intent on seizing control of local government. Increasingly, the new Southern governments looked to Washington, D.C., for assistance.

By 1869 the Republican Party was firmly in control of all three branches of the federal government. After attempting to remove Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, in violation of the new Tenure of Office Act, Johnson had been impeached by the House of Representatives in 1868. Although the Senate, by a single vote, failed to remove him from office, Johnson's power to obstruct the course of Reconstruction was gone. Republican Ulysses S. Grant was elected president that fall. Soon afterward, Congress approved the Fifteenth Amendment, prohibiting states from restricting the right to vote because of race. Then it enacted a series of Enforcement Acts authorizing national action to suppress political violence. In 1871 the administration launched a legal and military offensive that destroyed the Klan. Grant was re-elected in 1872 in the most peaceful election of the period.

The end of Reconstruction:

Nonetheless, Reconstruction soon began to wane. During the 1870s, many Republicans retreated from both the racial egalitarianism and the broad definition of federal power spawned by the Civil War. Southern corruption and instability, Reconstruction's critics argued, stemmed from the exclusion of the region's "best men"—the planters—from power. As Northern Republicans became more conservative, Reconstruction came to symbolize a misguided attempt to uplift the lower classes of society. Reflecting the shifting mood, a series of Supreme Court decisions, beginning with the Slaughterhouse Cases in 1873, severely limited the scope of Reconstruction laws and constitutional amendments.

By 1876 only South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana remained under Republican control. The outcome of that year's presidential contest between Republican Rutherford B. Hayes and Democrat Samuel J. Tilden hinged on disputed returns from these states. Negotiations between Southern political leaders and representatives of Hayes produced a bargain: Hayes would recognize Democratic control of the remaining Southern states, and Democrats would not block the certification of his election by Congress. Hayes was inaugurated; federal troops returned to their barracks; and as an era when the federal government accepted the responsibility for protecting the rights of the former slaves, Reconstruction came to an end.

By the turn of the century, a new racial system had been put in place in the South, resting on the disenfranchisement of black voters, a rigid system of racial segregation, the relegation of African Americans to low-wage agricultural and domestic employment, and legal and extralegal violence to punish those who challenged the new order. Nonetheless, while flagrantly violated, the Reconstruction amendments remained in the Constitution, sleeping giants, as Charles Sumner called them, to be awakened by subsequent generations who sought to redeem the promise of genuine freedom for the descendants of slavery. Not until the 1960s, in the civil rights movement, sometimes called the "second Reconstruction," would the country again attempt to fulfil the political and social agenda of Reconstruction.

Writing assignment:

Write a well-structured composition/paragraph that critically examines the achievements and shortcomings of the Reconstruction era in the United States. Your paragraph should address how legislative reforms (such as the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments) and socio-economic interventions (including the actions of the Freedmen's Bureau and the enactment of Black Codes) reshaped Southern society and American citizenship.

University Centre Si L'Haoues- Barika

Institute of Letters and Languages

Department of English

Level: Licence **Course: American Civilization**

Class: 3rd years **Instructor: Dr Zakarya SENOUCI**

Lecture Eleven:

Segregation: The Offspring of Slavery

Learning Objectives:

1. Trace the development and institutionalization of racial segregation in U.S. history and examine the social, economic, and political forces that contributed to segregationist policies.
2. Analyze key legal doctrines and court cases (e.g., Plessy v. Ferguson, Brown v. Board of Education) that shaped segregation practices. And understand how policies such as Jim Crow laws enforced and maintained racial separation.
3. Assess how historical segregation has influenced modern manifestations of systemic racism and critically evaluate ongoing challenges and debates surrounding equality and social justice in today's society.

Learning Prerequisites:

1. Basic knowledge of U.S. history, including the Reconstruction era and the Civil Rights Movement and familiarity with early 20th-century societal shifts and the conditions that led to the formation of segregationist policies.
2. Understanding of constitutional principles and amendments relevant to civil rights plus an introductory grasp of landmark legal cases that have impacted race relations in the U.S.
3. Awareness of the economic and social systems that influenced regional policies in the United States and prior exposure to discussions on federalism versus states' rights, particularly as they relate to civil rights.

Relevant Lexis:

Racial Segregation: The enforced separation of people based on race, either through legal mandates or pervasive social practices.

Jim Crow Laws: A series of state and local laws that mandated racial segregation in the Southern United States.

Plessy v. Ferguson: The 1896 Supreme Court decision that established the "separate but equal" doctrine, legitimizing state-sanctioned segregation.

De jure Segregation: Racial separation enforced by law.

De facto Segregation: Racial separation that occurs in practice due to social, economic, or cultural factors, without explicit legal mandates.

Civil Rights Movement: The mid-20th-century movement aimed at ending racial segregation and discrimination against African Americans.

Integration: The process of eliminating racial segregation and ensuring equal access to resources and opportunities.

Systemic Racism: The complex interplay of policies, institutions, and practices that create and maintain racial inequality over time.

The practice of restricting people to certain circumscribed areas of residence or to separate institutions (e.g., schools, churches) and facilities (parks, playgrounds, restaurants, restrooms) on the basis of race or alleged race. Racial segregation provides a means of maintaining the economic advantages and superior social status of the politically dominant group, and in recent times it has been employed primarily by white populations to maintain their ascendancy over other groups by means of legal and social colour bars. Historically, however, various conquerors—among them Asian Mongols, African Bantu, and American Aztecs—have practiced discrimination involving the segregation of subject races.

Racial segregation has appeared in all parts of the world where there are multiracial communities, except where racial amalgamation has occurred on a large scale, as in Hawaii and Brazil. In such countries there has been occasional social discrimination but not legal segregation. In the Southern states of the United States, on the other hand, legal segregation in public facilities was current from the late 19th century into the 1950s. (*See* Jim Crow law.) The civil rights movement was initiated by Southern blacks in the 1950s and '60s to break the prevailing pattern of racial segregation. This movement spurred the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which contained strong provisions against discrimination and segregation in voting, education, and the use of public facilities.

Elsewhere, racial segregation was practiced with the greatest rigour in South Africa, where, under the apartheid system, it was an official government policy from 1950 until the early 1990s.

Writing Assignment:

In a well-structured paragraph, compare and contrast between slavery and segregation and explain the southern needs of each institution.

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Level: Licence **Course: American Civilization**

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Lecture Twelve:

The Interplay of Race and Ethnicity in the US

Learning Objectives:

1. Distinguish between "race" (a socially constructed category based on perceived physical traits) and "ethnicity" (a cultural category defined by shared heritage, language, and traditions).
2. Analyze how colonial expansion, slavery, and the displacement of Indigenous peoples laid the groundwork for modern racial classifications, while also influencing ethnic self-identification.
3. Evaluate how legal frameworks (e.g., Jim Crow laws) and cultural narratives have both enforced and challenged the separation of racial and ethnic identities.
4. Assess the ongoing effects of historical racial and ethnic categorizations on issues such as education, housing, political representation, and systemic inequality in today's society.

Learning Prerequisites:

1. Familiarity with key periods such as colonial history, the era of slavery, and the Civil Rights Movement.
2. An introductory grasp of how concepts like race and ethnicity have been constructed socially, rather than based on biology.
3. Knowledge of landmark policies and court cases that have affected racial and ethnic group definitions (e.g., segregation laws, redlining practices).
4. An understanding of how immigration and cultural preservation have influenced ethnic identity formation over time in the United States.

Relevant Lexis:

Race: A socially constructed category based on physical characteristics and associated cultural meanings.

Ethnicity: The classification of people based on cultural factors such as heritage, language, and traditions.

Social Construct: The idea that categories like race and ethnicity are created by societies rather than being innate or biologically determined.

Racial Segregation: The enforced separation of racial groups through laws and social practices.

Racialization: The process of ascribing racial identities to groups or individuals, often leading to stereotyping.

Systemic Racism: The embedding of racial inequality in the policies and practices of institutions.

Cultural Identity: The feeling of belonging to a group, characterized by shared cultural traditions and heritage.

The United States is a nation defined by its diversity, a mosaic comprised of myriad racial and ethnic groups whose identities and histories intermingle. In American society, race and ethnicity are frequently invoked to explain differences in lived experiences, social status, and access to opportunity. Although these two constructs are often used interchangeably in everyday conversation, they refer to distinct yet interrelated phenomena. Race generally pertains to perceived physical characteristics and the social meanings ascribed to them, while ethnicity encompasses shared cultural traits, heritage, language, and traditions. Together, these concepts inform personal identity, group membership, and the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion within social structures.

Historical Context and Evolution:

Historically, the construction of race in the United States has been rooted in colonial expansion, the enslavement of Africans, and the displacement of Indigenous peoples. During the colonial period, European settlers devised categories based on skin colour and physical features to justify unequal treatment and to establish hierarchies. In contrast, ethnicity has been a fluid category, often reflecting immigrants' hopes to maintain cultural continuity and distinctiveness in a new land. As successive waves of immigrants arrived—from Irish and German groups in the 19th century to Latin American, Asian, and Middle Eastern populations in the 20th and 21st centuries—the boundaries of ethnicity

expanded, complicating the narrow racial categories that had been institutionalized. Consequently, American society has experienced an evolution of both racial classifications and ethnic identities, revealing the inherent malleability of these social constructs.

Race as a Social Construct:

Race in the United States is not based on intrinsic biological differences but is a social construct that has been used to sustain economic and political power structures. For instance, laws such as those underpinning slavery and segregation were justified by pseudoscientific racial theories that posited the superiority of one group over another. These ideas later became codified in policies like Jim Crow laws, segregating public facilities and education along racial lines. Such legal frameworks did not operate in isolation; they intermingled with cultural narratives about race and nationhood, reinforcing stereotypes that continue to affect the lived experiences of minority communities. Even today, discussions about race often emerge in debates over criminal justice reform, political representation, and remedial policies aimed at addressing historical inequalities.

Ethnicity and Cultural Identity:

In contrast to race, ethnicity centres on cultural affiliation, collective traditions, language, and shared ancestry. Ethnic groups in the United States have often embraced their cultural heritage as a source of pride and resistance. For example, immigrant communities may celebrate their linguistic traditions and culinary practices as a means of preserving an identity that distinguishes them within a predominantly Anglo society. This celebration of cultural uniqueness is evident in events like heritage months, ethnic festivals, and community-based organizations that promote cultural literacy. Ethnicity can serve not only as a badge of identity but also as a bridge for coalition-building, enabling groups to unite across racial lines to advocate for common social or political goals.

The Intersection and Interplay:

The interaction between race and ethnicity is complex and multifaceted. In many cases, ethnic identities are racialized—that is, the cultural markers of an ethnic group become interpreted through the lens of racial stereotypes. For instance, Latino communities in the United States often negotiate a

dual identity: they may assert a rich ethnic heritage while simultaneously being categorized into a broader, and sometimes reductive, racial framework. Similarly, individuals of mixed heritage, such as those identifying as biracial or multi-ethnic, challenge conventional boundaries by embodying elements of multiple cultural traditions and racial classifications. This fluidity highlights how the categories of race and ethnicity are continuously reshaped by both individual experiences and broader societal forces.

Contemporary Implications:

Today, the interplay of race and ethnicity influences nearly every aspect of American life, from education and employment to politics and health care. Disparities in these fields are often traced back to historical legacies of racial segregation and immigration policy, which have left indelible marks on economic opportunity and social mobility. Debates surrounding affirmative action, immigration reform, and social justice movements such as Black Lives Matter illustrate how race and ethnicity remain central to public discourse and policy-making. Moreover, the rise of new media and digital platforms has allowed minority voices to challenge dominant narratives, reshape identities, and advocate for more inclusive representations of both race and ethnicity.

Institutional and Policy Dimensions:

On an institutional level, policies in education, housing, and public health continue to reflect the persistent inequities rooted in historical constructions of race and ethnicity. Redlining practices, for instance, have long contributed to segregated neighbourhoods and unequal access to resources, thereby reinforcing racial and ethnic stratifications. Likewise, educational curricula that neglect the histories and contributions of diverse ethnic groups further entrench a narrow view of American identity. In response, many policymakers and community leaders are now working to implement reforms designed to redress these imbalances, such as multicultural education initiatives and community investment programs.

The interplay of race and ethnicity in the United States is a dynamic and evolving phenomenon. Far from being fixed categories, both constructs are continually reinterpreted through historical events,

cultural exchanges, and political processes. While race has often been used to justify exclusion and inequality, ethnicity has provided a means for communities to assert their cultural identity and resilience. The ongoing dialogue between these two dimensions is critical to understanding the challenges of racial injustices and the potentials for social transformation. Recognizing and addressing these complex interactions is essential as America continues to strive toward a more inclusive and equitable society.

Reflection Questions:

1. In what ways do processes of racialization and intersectionality influence the way individuals from various ethnic backgrounds experience societal inclusion or exclusion?
2. How can understanding the fluid and socially constructed nature of race and ethnicity inform efforts to address contemporary systemic inequalities in education, housing, and political representation?

Assessments:
Tests and Exams

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Department of English Language and Literature

Teacher: Zakarya SENOUCI	**Module & level: Civilization Text Study/ L3**
Full name: **Group:**	
Exam Date: 21/04/2025 **Exam Duration: 1 hr**	

Last term Test in Civilization Text Study

Students select one question and answer in it in the form of a paragraph.

1. Comment and evaluate Oscar Wilde's quote on America. To what extent does it reflect reality?

2. How do the past and the present match in the US context? Provide examples from the discussions and topics that have been presented and debated in class.
3. How is American identity related to the Frontier/ Western Expansion?
4. What is the role of taxes in the American British conflict (Revolutionary war)?
5. Some argue that the US is undefeated. However, history proves that all civilizations rise and fall. How will the US civilization decline in your opinion?

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Department of English Language and Literature

Teacher: Zakarya SENOUCI	**Module & level: Civilization Text Study/ L3**
L3 Full name: **Group:**	
Academic year: 2024/2025 **Exam Duration: 1:30 hr**	

Final term Exam in Civilization Text Study (Am.)

A. Circle the letter that corresponds to the right answer (4pts.).

1. The local assemblies in the American colonies had:

a. Political power b. economic power c. both

2. It is the colony that represented the center of opposition to British imperial rule:

a. Massachusetts b. Boston c. Virginia

3. It is thanks to him and his efforts that American revolutionists called for full independence:

a. George Washington b. Thomas Paine c. Abraham Lincoln

4. The land that was separating the 13 newly independent colonies from the American west was:

a. The Mississippi b. Louisiana c. New Mexico

B. Decide whether the following statements are <u>TRUE</u> or <u>FALSE</u>. Then <u>JUSTIFY</u> your choice in <u>EITHER</u> case (10 pts.).

1. Americans were clear from the beginning of the war that they wanted full independence from Britain ……

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2. All white men in the colonies had the right to vote. …….

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3. The conflict between the colonists and the British Empire was only over economic issues (taxes). …….

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4. Natural rights philosophy is one reason for the absolute success of the United States. ……

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5. Manifest Destiny is the belief that expansion to the west is an undeniable Godly mission for colonists ……

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C. In a well-structured paragraph, answer the following question (6 pts.):

- ✓ Some groups of American colonial society (**<u>name them</u>**) were excluded from some rights like voting. Explain the reasons behind this.

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