Manifest Destiny, Social Darwinism, and Other Cultural Constructions in Early 20th Century Us.-Dominican Relations

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Abstract

The impact of culture on U.S. foreign policy, and Dominican responses to U.S. actions, are evident in the intervention and occupation of the Dominican Republic from 1916 - 1924. Long present aspects of U.S. culture, including Manifest Destiny and Social Darwinism, influenced foreign policy decisions made by U.S. government during the occupation. There are many examples of that type of influence elsewhere in the nineteenth century, including the westward expansion within the North America and the acquisition of Mexican territory. Dominican history and culture influenced the patterns of Dominican resistance during U.S. occupation, both within the Dominican Republic and throughout the Western Hemisphere. U.S. intervention and occupation in the Dominican Republic (and other Circum-Caribbean nations) occurred because of the culturally created concepts of Manifest Destiny, Social Darwinism, and other culturally influenced ideologies, and the Dominican responses to the U.S. were grounded in the history and culture of the Dominican Republic.

Key Words: Dominican Republic, Manifest Destiny, Social Darwinism, U.S. Intervention, Foreign Policy, Ideology, Racism

The impact of culture on U.S. foreign policy, and Dominican responses to U.S. actions, are manifestly evident in the intervention and occupation of the Dominican Republic from 1916 - 1924. Several aspects of U.S. culture including Manifest Destiny and Social Darwinism influenced foreign policy decisions made by U.S. citizens and their government during the period of the occupation (Williams, 1955, p.383). Those influences were not new but had their roots deep in the social history of the United States. There are many examples of that influence prior to the twentieth century, including the westward expansion within the North American continent and the forcible acquisition of Mexican territory. Dominican history and culture influenced the patterns through which the Dominicans resisted the U.S. occupation both within their own country and around the world, especially the Western Hemisphere. It is quite clear that the U.S. intervention and occupation in the Dominican Republic (and other Circum-Caribbean nations) occurred, and justified, because of the culturally created concepts of Manifest Destiny, Social Darwinism, and other culturally influenced ideologies, and that the Dominican response to the U.S. intervention and occupation were grounded in the history and culture of the Dominican Republic.

Manifest Destiny, Social Darwinism, and the concept of eugenics were evidence of racism in U.S. society and were cultural constructs that encouraged U.S. leaders to view economic and territorial expansion as a reasonable extension of the values that many of their leaders and citizens held. Although the concepts originated in the nineteenth century, U.S. Progressives adapted them to the conditions of the twentieth century, when they influenced the decision-making of U.S. political leaders. That expansionist spirit led to confrontation with a number of countries in addition to the Dominican Republic. Mexico, Haiti, and Nicaragua all felt the expansionist force of the United States. Cuba, in close proximity to the Dominican Republic, was a potential target of intervention for more than three decades of the twentieth century due to the insertion of the Platt Amendment into the Cuban constitution (Perez, 1998, p. 33). The Dominican Republic was one of the more successful of these nations in ridding itself of U.S. dominance, at least in terms of the length of occupation. The Dominicans cleverly used many of the institutions and groups of the U.S. culture to achieve their goal of sovereignty including the print media and the political system of the United States.

1. History and Culture

The study of foreign policy history has undergone a significant change in recent decades as historians have moved beyond the traditional schools of foreign policy analysis (i.e., revisionism, post-revisionism, realism, etc.) to explore the ways in which culture is a major factor in the determination of foreign policy. Many historians of foreign policy now conclude that culture plays an important role in shaping foreign policy (Iriye, 2004, p. 241). One of the foremost historians to recognize the impact of culture in foreign relations is Akira Iriye. According to Iriye, the cultural approach to diplomatic history analyzes foreign affairs and foreign policy, and views them, "in terms of dreams, aspirations, and other manifestations of human consciousness (Iriye, 2004, 99)." What distinguishes culture as a means of studying diplomatic history is communication. What is abundantly clear is that communication is a cultural phenomenon and that each language or dialect reflects the biases inherent within that particular culture. It is also apparent that nations (as well as individuals) develop a collective set of ideologies based on their culture. They are part of a national persona and affect the decisions made on a foreign policy level. Paul Ricoeur refers to these as a "layer of images and symbols which make up the basic ideals of a nation (Iriye, 2004, 101)." The interactions between nations reflect their respective internal biases and beliefs and they are the starting point for foreign policy historians seeking to use culture as an analytical tool. Because cultures have factions that do not conform to the majority view, there is the likelihood of internal disagreement on some foreign policy issues. This was a vital aspect of the Dominican situation, as they utilized schisms within U.S. institutions and the public to push forward their agenda for a return of their sovereignty.

Iriye posits that there are three cultural approaches to diplomatic history. The first is the concept that one can analyze the contrasting ideologies and value systems that exist between two countries, or groups of countries. Nations develop ideologies that derive from their culture. As historian Michael Hunt notes, "ideologies are integrated and coherent systems of symbols, values, and beliefs (Hunt, 2009, p. 12)." Symbols, values, and beliefs are clearly representations of culture. He further adds that U.S. foreign policy springs from domestic social arrangements, which are manifestations of culture (Hunt, 2009, p. 16).

When looking at the relationship between the United States and the Dominican Republic beginning in the early twentieth century and lasting until 1924, it is apparent the ideologies of the two nations were quite different. The United States had developed certain culturally derived ideologies (as exemplified by Manifest Destiny) that enhanced the possibility of U.S. interference in the Dominican Republic. These beliefs encouraged and demonstrated the unequal relationship that existed between the two nations. That association, in fact, has its roots even further back in U.S.-Dominican relations. The actions of President Ulysses S. Grant in the early 1870s, when he proposed the annexation of the Dominican Republic, clearly establish that connection.

The second cultural approach, according to Iriye, refers to the exchange of people, goods, and services from one country to another. This certainly occurred in the Dominican Republic with the interchange of ideas between the Marines and the Dominican nationals (Iriye, 1990. p. 100). Significantly, the leadership of the occupation forces also attempted to control the media within the Dominican Republic and to minimize Dominican objections to the occupation by imposing censorship. Very importantly to the Dominican Republic, there was also exchange with their allies, particularly in Latin America. This bolstered Dominican confidence and provided them with an outlet to communicate their situation to the world, and convince other people that their cause was just.

The third way to look at cultural influences is the global perspective, with the development of national ideologies based on the internal cultures in the Dominican Republic and the United States, as well as other countries in the Hispanic world. An important aspect of resistance to the Dominican occupation is the support that the country garnered from other Spanish-speaking countries. Nearly all Latin Americans shared some common cultural markers with the Dominicans, and they lent their voices in support of the Dominican people and government. The basis for their relationship was not just culture and language. They also shared a common fear of the colossus of the north – the United States. Historian Peter Smith cites Augusto Sandino (the Nicaraguan rebel), who believed that one Latin American nation's resistance to U.S. expansionism was a reason for all Latin American nations to come together. Sandino spoke of the struggles "of all Latin American peoples against the imperialist polices of the Anglo-Saxon colossus" (Smith 1996, p. 100). That collective fear of U.S. action in Latin America enhanced their sense of unity. One Latin American nation acting alone was vulnerable but a community of Latin American nations working together had the strength to oppose U.S. imperialism.

In the United States, the political elite possessed the ability to alter the direction of U.S. attitudes about international expansion.

Based on that fact, foreign policy decisions of the United States were, to some degree, a result of top-down public perception management. The foreign policy constructed by U.S. leaders was (and is) both a result and an instigator of cultural stances held by people of the United States. Cultural influence on decision-makers helped shape foreign policy positions, and public statements by decision-makers served to mold the opinions of the U.S. public. This does not imply that the United States is unique in terms of cultural influences upon foreign policy but simply an example. As is seen in the case of the U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic, public perceptions in the United States changed over the course of occupation due to the counter efforts of the Dominican political and intellectual elite exerted agency in their relationship with the United States in this way. Media-backed expansionism was an established reality and assisted in the acquisition of power in the early twentieth century (Gienow-Hecht, 2004, p. 265) . In the case of the Dominican Republic in the period 1916-1924, the Dominicans developed a trend of print media *anti-expansionism* using used the worldwide media and political support of their allies to establish a basis for anti-expansionism and the end of the occupation. Opposition to U.S. expansionism erupted within the United States, with political and intellectual leaders and the general population coalescing in antagonism toward their nation's actions.

Cultural historical analysis explores the connection between domestic political culture and foreign relations, and seeks to understand how culture has been a critical factor in the interactions between groups. This includes the existence and formation of national identity, the nature of resistance, and the role of new types of cultural transfer in altering relations. The concept of taking into account cultural aspects of foreign policy becomes a necessity as one recognizes that society influences policy. Society, in turn, both reflects and influences culture (Castigliola and Patterson, 2004, p. 17).

2. Culture, Ideology, and Political Economy

In the late 1800s, culture, ideology, and the political economy intertwined to influence the formulation of U.S. foreign policy. It was a period of intense industrialization and expanding agricultural production. The cultural markers that existed within society during that time coalesced to create ideologies that constituted the nation's beliefs and expectations. Those ideologies both influenced and represented the ideals of the society. Around the beginning of the twentieth century, elites in the United States absorbed ideologies from their class and employed them as they moved into decision-making positions in government. Those elites were often representative of the economic elite in the United States and could justify the combination of their ideologies and national interests. Political economy and the ideologies of the time worked together to shape foreign policy and influence the expansionist actions of the U.S. government.

The announcement of the closing of the American frontier and Frederick Jackson Turner's "Frontier Thesis" were supportive of a new U.S. economic expansionism. A major part of Turner's thesis proposed that free land represented power and the possibility of continued expansion in the United States. After the closing of frontier and a perceived lack of land to expand the economy, Turner concluded that economic expansion must lie elsewhere (Lafeber, 1963, p. 66). Expansionism in the form of trade offered a solution to the cessation of internal economic expansion, and averted the possibility of economic stagnation in the United States (Lafeber, 1963, p. 69). In a subsequent article in 1896, Turner recognized the limitations of continental Manifest Destiny, and wrote that he believed that it and economic expansion must be aligned with a strong foreign policy (Rosenberg, 1984, p. 14).

Turner and naval strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan saw inevitable justification for the expansion of U.S. markets and supported U.S. expansionist actions (Lafeber, 1963, p. 62). Even before Turner wrote his "Frontier Thesis," Mahan recognized the potential problem for the U.S. economy if the frontier closed (Lafeber, 1963, p. 88). Without new areas to expand to, the U.S. economy would stagnate, with the potential for social and political strife. The next logical thing to do was as Turner suggested, and expand into overseas markets. To Mahan and Teddy Roosevelt, the nearest stepping stone to new markets for the United States was Latin America. They were looking to exploit that area economically while refraining from outright colonialism (Lafeber, 1963, p. 91). Expansionism in the form of trade offered a solution to the problem and avoided the possibility of economic decline at home (Lafeber, 1963, p. 69). This was the second phase of Manifest Destiny and it was allied with Social Darwinism. Economic expansionism that was not beneficial to other nations could be justified based on the hierarchical nature of Social Darwinism, because the U.S. elite perceived Latin American nations to be culturally, racially, and morally inferior (Sanford, 1974, 10).

In the 1890s, U.S. businesses were driven by perceived economic needs and a set of ideologies that made economic expansion acceptable. Because of the 1893-1897 depression, many U.S. business leaders believed that their survival depended upon access to markets outside the United States (Lafeber, 1963, p. 326). They felt that their productive capabilities exceeded the potential of sales within the United States, and believed that they must expand outward. The United States was no longer a nation that relied on farmers, as more and more citizens became involved in the huge increase in manufacturing during the last three decades of the 1800s. During the depression of the 1890s, many of those manufacturing workers were idled, underscoring the need for new markets to revive manufacturing (Lafeber, 1963, p. 173). As Progressive Senator Albert Beveridge said in 1897, "American factories are making more than the American people can use…the trade of the world must and shall be ours" (Williams, 1972, p. 28).

Economics and the search for markets did not operate in a vacuum in the 1890s. Many U.S. citizens and their leaders linked business expansion with the sharing of U.S. culture and social enlightenment. Within the context of what was happening in the United States in that period, economics was "intersecting always with cultural and ideological concerns" (Guilderhus, 2000, 6). The mass-produced products that the United States exported were democratic in nature, intended for mass markets, not for foreign elites. This allowed U.S. exporters to link economic production, democratic distribution, and new means of manufacturing items into a scheme of "enlightened democratic spirit," according to Emily Rosenberg (1984, p. 22). How to go about the expansion of U.S. markets without falling into the trap of outright colonialism was a concern for the United States. The answer would be to either create protectorates or encourage the development of private business connections (Rosenberg, 1984, p.47).

Progressivism and Social Darwinism became increasingly important to the spread of U.S. markets as the twentieth century dawned. Progressives were looking to find a new way of ordering society to alleviate the many social wrongs that existed in the United States. Part of that was improved domestic economics, but along with that went the need for new markets outside the United States. For Progressives, the idea of expansionism was about solving internal economic problems, as historian Emily Rosenberg wrote, "economic need, Anglo-Saxon mission, and the progressive impulse joined together…in promoting foreign expansion" (Rosenberg, 1984, p.42). Social Darwinism may not have been the primary reason for expansionism, but it was allied with it (Lafeber, 1963, p. 97). Progressive Teddy Roosevelt believed that economic expansion would extend U.S. Anglo-Saxon ideas and virtues to other nations of the world, freeing them from their barbaric ways (Williams, 1972, p. 63). Some Progressives, such as Roosevelt and Beveridge, considered themselves part of the elite expansionism fostered by Social Darwinism (Rosenberg, 1984, p.41). At this point, one can see the conflation of economics with Social Darwinism and other ideologies in the development of a hierarchy of nations and the mobilization of markets.

The role of Social Darwinism in U.S. expansionism was essential. The policy makers for the United States came from largely elitist groups who believed in Social Darwinism and the implied racism associated with it. As the United States' dominant group they, "felt confident of their own superiority" (Rosenberg, 1984, p.40). To historian Richard Hofstadter it was a question of what they thought was survival of the fittest and produced the result of ensuring a belief in a "group assertiveness and racial destiny to justify the ways of international competition" (Hofstadter, 1944, p. 202). It made acceptable to the U.S. elite the search for overseas markets that would absorb its excess production. U.S. society believed in economic natural selection and thus chose to make a positive out of economic expansionism (Hofstadter, 1944, p. 201).

3. Gender and Class

While this dissertation is not primarily concerned with gender as a critical factor in the Dominican resistance to the U.S. occupation from 1916-1924, it is instructive to review the effect of gender (a cultural construct) upon U.S. foreign relations before, during, and after the Spanish-American-Cuban war of 1898. Gender was a significant shaper of U.S. politics, and by extension foreign policy, before 1924. Gender notions influenced the ways in which Americans viewed political power and its exercise. The nation's social and political systems relied on the perception of manliness (Hoganson, 1998, p. 7). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, U.S. leaders believed that an aura of manliness would return to U.S. foreign policy because of a move to acquire power and influence in the Caribbean (Derby, 2006, p. 27).

Muckraking newspapers wrote about declining masculinity in the United States as a way to generate influence upon political leaders, a clear indication of the power of newspapers as a political tool.

This was manifest in the use of U.S. newspapers and journals (*The New York Times, The Nation, The New Republic*) by Dominicans and U.S. citizens as a means of opposition during the occupation of the Dominican Republic, particularly after World War I was over. Political and social leaders used the print media to either support or reject U.S. imperialism, depending upon their particular position. In either case, the media was a cultural tool used to influence U.S. public opinion.

The issue of how culture is used, and manipulated, to influence U.S. foreign policy is evident in the gendered notions that existed in its society and culture. Government leaders attempted to utilize the concept of "manliness" to encourage U.S. citizens to support the war effort during World War I. Those wishing to encourage public participation and preparedness used gendered images as propaganda (McKillen, 2008, p. 388). The media and U.S. government also utilized gendered words and images to feminize the cultures and governments in the Caribbean. As Kristin Hoganson notes, gender is a "cultural arrangement," and has important implications for the conduct of foreign policy (1998, p. 205). The intervention in the Dominican Republic occurred less than one year before the U.S. entrance into World War I and the occupation continued past the end of the war. The near simultaneous use of culture and images to mobilize the U.S. public to action is uncanny as politicians successfully used American masculinity (or its absence) as a means of focusing the public on the pursuit of empire (McKillen, 2008, p. 394). In the case of the Caribbean nations, and specifically the Dominican Republic, the use of manliness and gender was integral to the positioning of those nations as being less masculine. The assertion of an image of U.S. masculinity was the counterpoint to the feminization forced upon Caribbean nations and their people by the U.S. government and image-makers.

Culture affected relations between the Latin American countries and the United States in terms of the way expansionists viewed the countries they were about to bring into the U.S. orbit. The issues of race and gender were critical in convincing the people back home in the United States that intrusion into the internal and external affairs of Latin American nations was justified. The news released to the U.S. public feminized and infantilized the people of target nations. The purpose was to convince the public of both nations of the good intentions of the United States. As Andrew Rotter writes, masculinity and femininity are social constructs and often they apply to nations or peoples without regard to reality (Rotter. 2005, p. 12). In the case of the two nations, U.S. public figures made denigrating comments regarding Dominican and Latin American culture. Many in the U.S. public perceived those comments to be accurate, providing a justification for approval of their nation's actions. The flawed notion that Caribbean nations were of dubious character and masculinity was a fundamental part of many of the interventions and occupations in the region. When it came to true masculinity, and thus the right to sovereignty and self-definition, the United States kept that privilege to itself (Findlay, 1998, p. 140). The infantilization and feminization of the Dominicans implied that the country was unstable and dysfunctional in its internal politics, creating a validation for intervention.

Another cultural construct – class – has a significant impact on politics, and thus foreign policy. As with gender, class as a cultural factor in U.S. foreign policy is relevant. It supports the notions of historians who recognize that class attitudes are often extremely important to the development of foreign policy. Those who make policy do so in accordance with their own beliefs and mores. Typically, during the period of intervention and occupation in the Dominican Republic, the makers of foreign policy in the United States came from the upper classes, both economically and socially. Actual foreign policy usually conformed to the prejudices and biases that such a group might have (race, gender, class, etc.) (Hoganson, 1998, p. 200). The cultural constructs of race and class, and their manifestations (Social Darwinism, eugenics, muckraking, etc.), also should be recognized as having a great deal of influence on foreign relations. One such indication is the reference that future Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan made about Haitians in 1912 saying, "Dear me, think of it! Niggers speaking French." (Guilderhus, 1986, p. 15). Such comments are representative of racist predispositions at play in the Haitian and Dominican interventions.

4. Racism

Similar to gender and class as cultural constructs (and as such supportive of culture as an influence in U.S. foreign policy), of race was an important component of foreign policy. Racial prejudice was a common trait among white people in the United States in the nineteenth century, and it certainly existed in the upper echelons of government, including the decision-making positions of the State Department. The United States denied Cuba the right of self-government (when nominal independence came to fruition, it came with the stipulation that the Platt Amendment be part of the new Cuban constitution) for racist reasoning in the wake of the Spanish-American War (Hoganson, 1998, p. 44).

It was not difficult to extend that racial prejudice to another nearby island nation only sixteen years later, the Dominican Republic.

A comparison of the military occupations of Haiti and the Dominican Republic in the 1910s reveals an implied racist connection. The racism of U.S. officers and men was a significant factor in the occupations of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. It was not just the explicit racism of those men but also the background of racism in the United States that influenced interventions. U.S. interventions and occupations in the Caribbean in the early twentieth century were a new wave of economic and cultural expansionism, with no two instances carrying exactly the same characteristics (Renda, 2001, p. 12). The timing of interventions was different. The composition of the populations of each nation was different. The cultures were also different. There was a commonality to most of them – the treatment of object populations as inferior because of the color their skin.

Ingrained in the minds of many U.S. decision-makers was a racist and paternalistic attitude, as U.S. leaders looked at foreign relations "through lenses clouded by racial and cultural prejudices…" (Plummer, 1992, p. 8). It is logical to make the extension from Haiti and apply it to virtually any Caribbean nation. The United States viewed all of these nations as possessing racially inferior populations, which was evident in the way in which they treated the inhabitants of those nations during occupation. Paternalism, an outgrowth of domestic race relations in the United States, was the basis for U.S. foreign policy and the interventions in the Caribbean. According to historian David Schmitz, the U.S. State Department exhibited a consistent and "unembarrassed paternalism" toward Latin America in the years between World War I and World War II (Schmitz, 1999, p. 29). The culturally related concepts of age, class, and race are integral to the development of a paternalistic policy. Racism and other culturally constructed attitudes of the government leaders and the American people helped shape the attitudes of U.S. policy-makers toward Haiti and the Dominican Republic (Renda, 2001, p. 13). The concept of "whiteness" was essential to paternalistic expansionism, and was applicable in both nations (Renda, 2001, p. 65).

The importance of relative racism in foreign policy is apparent in the Haitian and the Dominican Republic interventions. The Dominican Republic, with a relatively lighter skinned population, and its abutting neighbor Haiti, which had a populace that was more dark-skinned and overtly African-American, were treated differently during occupation It is important to note that the occupation of Haiti began in 1915 and lasted until 1934, while the Dominican occupation was much shorter running from 1916 to 1924. There were many more racist references about Haitians by U.S. military and public media than racist comments about the Dominicans. The racism by U.S. military and political leaders resulted in a Haitian culture debased by that contact, as native Haitians were socially and politically marginalized (Plummer, 1992, p. 101). The racist commentary about Haiti by U.S. officials, combined with the much longer occupation of Haiti (compared to the Dominican Republic) illustrates the importance of relative racism in U.S. foreign policy. Nonetheless, U.S. officials believed the Dominicans were more fit than the Haitians because of their lighter skins, but still viewed the Dominicans as their own racial inferiors.

One may observe a generally similar reaction in U.S. interactions with other countries in the Caribbean. U.S. citizens saw lighter skinned people as more obedient, while they perceived darker skinned people of the Caribbean as more rebellious and unruly, notes Eileen J. Findlay (Findlay, 1998, p. 140). By signifying that most U.S. citizens (and of course their leaders) were superior because of their whiteness and moral and political authority, the racial hierarchy was defined. According to historian Michael Hunt, many historians now conclude that the cultural construct of racism was a fundamental part of U.S. foreign policy in the early part of the twentieth century (Hunt, 2009, p. 52).

5. Manifest Destiny

Prior to the turn of the twentieth century, the United States was a nation primarily focused on events within the geographic confines of the North American continent. Sporadic attempts to influence or to acquire control in Nicaragua, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic, and economic penetration of Asia occurred but the United States was more interested in affairs closer to home. It concentrated on completing the conquest and assimilation of the North American West. Manifest Destiny and American exceptionalism played a significant role in U.S. expansion on the North American continent. American exceptionalism supported the expansionism that was the root of U.S. foreign policy by 1900 (Welles, 1928, p. 617). The idea that many people around the world stood to benefit from inclusion within the U.S. cultural and economic sphere of influence was related to this notion (Castigliola and Patterson, 2004, p. 11). For U.S. policy makers, given the above cultural beliefs, it seemed quite natural to turn toward the Caribbean and Central America when westward expansion was complete. The stated purpose was to quell unstable situations and share U.S. economic and cultural advantages.

U.S. expansionism was rooted in the concepts of Manifest Destiny, American exceptionalism, and the Frontier Thesis. Frederick Jackson Turner, in his essay about the Frontier Thesis, laid the groundwork for overseas expansion by the United States. There were indications as early as the 1890s that the U.S. needed to expand overseas because the U.S. frontier no longer existed. The industrialization of the United States and the search for new markets was a significant prod to expansion, particularly after the Panic of 1893. As the nation began to look beyond its own borders, it also altered its liberal beliefs to suit the desire for further expansion (Rosenberg, 1984, p.15). As William Appleman Williams writes, one must consider that the concept of Manifest Destiny became "the world view of many Americans," creating a foundation for the expansionist advances of the United States in the Caribbean in the early twentieth century (Williams, 1955, p. 380). It is almost certain that in many cases the ideas of Manifest Destiny and the closing of the American frontier were a convenient cover for those who saw either political or economic opportunity in overseas expansion. Progressives wished to ameliorate slow economic conditions within the United States, and overseas markets were one way to do it. As men who came of age in an era dominated by those cultural constructions, they began to assume positions of leadership in the government and brought their preconceptions and prejudices with them. It was inevitable that one could see their beliefs, such as Manifest Destiny, reflected in U.S. foreign policy.

American exceptionalism is the belief that the United States is/was a unique nation and culture, and that it functioned as example for the world (Rosenberg, 1984, p.3). This concept was an excuse for the maltreatment of many groups within the United States, especially Native Americans. The political elite were empowered and felt that it would be acceptable to apply the policy outside the United States. Those leaders believed in the concept (or used it to justify their activities) that God had selected those Protestant whites from the eastern part of the country to occupy the wide-open lands of the North American continent. They were the chosen ones and possessors of a very special mission to spread the word of God and their culture to others. Because of that mission, savages and those opposed to "progress" deserved removal or the prospect of being overwhelmed (Sanford, 1974, p. 2). U.S. decision-makers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century believed that those concepts applied to the people and nations of the Caribbean and Latin America.

Sumner Welles, a vitally important person in the Dominican intervention period, underscores the significance of Manifest Destiny. Welles wrote that if not for the Civil War, the U.S. trend toward expansionism might have taken the United States even farther south into Latin America than it went (Welles, 1947, p. 117). This is a very illuminating comment from a U.S. State Department official who had substantial influence upon foreign policy. Welles was the head of the Latin American desk at the State Department during the latter part of the occupation period in the Dominican Republic. His comments lend a great deal of credibility to those who believed that the concept of Manifest Destiny was a major factor in U.S. expansionism in Latin America. Welles quotes Albert J. Beveridge as saying, "God has made us the master organizers of the world to establish system where chaos reigns …He has made us adept in government that we may administer government among the savage and senile peoples … This is the definite mission of America" (Welles, 1947, p. 118). Beveridge was a U.S. Senator from 1899 to 1911 and reflected the beliefs of many U.S. imperialists. Sumner Welles did not agree with Beveridge's point of view as he wrote that, "there can be no enduring international order that is not based upon voluntary cooperation between peoples (Welles, 1947, p. 120)." Based upon Beveridge's citation of a "mission," it is clear that at least some (and likely many) U.S. political leaders believed in Manifest Destiny.

Manifest Destiny and the expansionism that occurred in the Caribbean were different in nature from that of the U.S. westward expansion and consolidation. Manifest Destiny in the west was a republican effort that was concerned with integrating the frontier into the American political system (but excluding Native Americans), while the spread of U.S. power in the Caribbean was nationalism cloaked in U.S. exceptionalism. The expansion outside the United States did not intend to integrate Dominicans (or other Caribbeans) as U.S. citizens. The U.S. continuation of expansion and conquest in the Caribbean simply evolved into a new type of Manifest Destiny, one that rested on the notion of the United States as a unique nation with a mission to share its superior culture with Latin Americans. Manifest Destiny was an example of U.S. selfishness in which those who made sacrifices (Native Americans and Latin Americans) were the "supposed" beneficiaries of U.S. activities (Merck, 1963, p. 256). Those overwhelmed by U.S. expansion at least had the implied "advantages" of inclusion in the U.S. sphere of influence, and the resulting benefits that might accrue to them. For some U.S. citizens, this notion made the transition from expansion easier for them to accept.

It is also necessary to appreciate that most Latin Americans believed that United States was expanding based on the notion of Manifest Destiny and the quest for new markets, and they expected the smaller nations in the region to suffer because of U.S. expansionism (Bernard, 1928, p. 668).

An important aspect of the Manifest Destiny ideology was its Puritan/Protestant roots, juxtaposed with the Roman Catholicism practiced in most of Latin America. Many in the United States abhorred the idea of working with Catholics overseas and felt that Catholicism diminished Latin Americans. Believers in Manifest Destiny connected the real world with the sacred world, supposed that it lent credence to their beliefs, and created a reasonable creed. In theory, the concept originated with God and created a sacred obligation on the part of Protestant Americans to complete their destiny and share the benefits with those who were less fortunate (Smith, 1996, p. 42).

The expressed religious facets of Manifest Destiny were integral to its application. Some U.S. citizens, such as the prominent minister Reverend H. W. Bellows, believed that there was no reason to stop the expansion at the western coast of North America. He commented that the "Spanish race" must fade in front of the expansion of the Anglo-Saxon United States (Stephanson, 1995, p. 56). One can perceive from this statement that it was not just about Latin Americans; it was about Roman Catholic Latin Americans. U.S. Anglo-Saxons had long feared the Roman Catholic religion. Many citizens of the United States continued to discriminate against Catholic immigrants in the nineteenth century because they practiced a different religion and had different values. Similarly, the differences between Latin American and U.S. cultures in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries underscored the sense of "exceptionalism" that the Anglo-Saxon elite held. The fact that the Caribbean nations were largely Catholic in religion thus stamped them as inferior (Smith, 1996, p. 46).

An ironic twist during the nineteenth century was that in the course of territorial acquisition, the United States occasionally insisted upon paying for land it coerced from others (Stephanson, 1995, p. 23). One can rationalize that the payment for territory absolved the United States of moral or ethical transgressions. The Roosevelt Corollary later provided a slightly different moral basis for acquiring protectorates in the Caribbean and Central America - that of creating control in unstable nations. The point of Manifest Destiny as expressed by the person who put a name on it, John O'Sullivan, was to "overspread and to possess the whole continent." This overt statement of intention underscored the expansionist nature of the doctrine. Sullivan also made the comment that democracies must make their conquests (or acquisitions) by "moral agency," hence the payment to other nations for the territories they did not want to surrender (Stephanson, 1995, p. 54). An example of that was the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ending the Mexican-American War. Because of the treaty, the Mexican republic gave up what became the southwest part of the United States (California, Arizona, New Mexico, etc.) to end the war. In return, Mexico received the relatively paltry sum of fifteen million dollars from the United States. Despite the low price, it gave many U.S. citizens comfort knowing that they had purchased the territory, not "stolen" it.

6. Social Darwinism

At the beginning of the twentieth century, much of U.S. elite society embraced a notion of an identifiable racial hierarchy, with western Europeans and their descendents at the top, followed by Euro-Latin Americans, eastern Europeans, Orientals, Native Americans, and blacks (Schmitz, 1999, p. 21). Anglo-Saxon nations branded Latin Americans as being lower in the hierarchy by virtue of their race mixing, religion, and their culture - a position reinforced by many newspapers and political leaders (Hunt, 1987, p. 58). The theory of Social Darwinism underscored the feelings of exceptionalism experienced by many in the United States, and laid the foundation for the expansionist attitudes of the first two decades of the twentieth century. By the standards of modernity at the time (industrialism, military power, etc.) and by virtue of Social Darwinism, they believed they occupied a superior position (Hunt, 1987, p. 79). Conversely, in the eyes of expansionists, the relative lack of modernity in Latin American nations labeled them as inferior.

With the end of the Spanish-American-Cuban War of 1898, the approach that most of the U.S. public and their leaders took toward foreign expansion changed significantly. The United States had suddenly emerged in the eyes of many as an economic and geo-political world player. The rise of an "Anglo-Saxon" superiority associated with Social Darwinism propelled the United States into paternalistic relationships with other nations (Hofstadter, 1944, p. 183). The 1898 acquisition of the Hawaiian Islands as well as control exercised over the spoils of the war (Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and *de facto* control of Cuba) moved the United States into overseas possessions. Interventions in the Caribbean were different – they were not colonies but rather economic protectorates. The U.S. had developed a unique approach toward what were its new responsibilities.

This policy helped to assuage any guilt felt by citizens of the United States at the new expansionism that included a commitment to the task of "carrying the white man's burden" (Welles, 1928, p. 617).

The phrase, "white man's burden," reveals the racist views of the U.S. society and its leaders and the gendered concepts integral to paternalism, but not all of the U.S. public believed in it (Murphy, 2009, 249). Many anti-imperialists stood squarely in opposition to the cultural construct of racism and "the white man's burden." An important qualification is that there was absolutely no sense of unanimity among the anti-imperialists other than opposing imperialism. Different people had different reasons for their beliefs; some aligned with the anti-racist opposition to imperialism; some focused upon the need to stay true to original republican principles; others concerned themselves with the feminization and denigration of victims of U.S. expansion (Murphy, 2009, 254).

Social Darwinism underscored the dominant U.S. elite's confidence in itself and its policies. It translated into governmental confidence in its abilities, assumed rights, and perceived responsibilities overseas (Rosenberg, 2003, pg. 40). Social Darwinism applies to the intervention in the Dominican Republic in a way similar to that intended in the Roosevelt Corollary, paternalism toward weaker nations. With the political turmoil in the Dominican Republic in 1916, some leaders in the United States proposed that the United States had not only the right but also the responsibility to intervene and set the situation right. In dealing with recalcitrant nations such as the Dominican Republic, it was justifiable to many of the political, cultural, and social elite of the United States to employ force to bring their version of enlightenment and benevolence to the "backward nations" of the Caribbean (Rosenberg, 2003, pg. 42). The government supported Anglo-Saxon superiority and social survival of the fittest at home in the United States. The natural progression for the elites was to conclude that it should also apply in foreign regions, especially the Caribbean.

The formulation of Social Darwinism began in the nineteenth century but the concept was still relevant in the twentieth. In fact, it was not only germane but also important in the development of U.S. foreign policy. The main function of Social Darwinism and other similar theories was to reinforce the concept that existing racial and social hierarchies were a "natural" phenomenon, making it easier to foist the concept upon the U.S. public (Stephanson, 1995, p. 83). One of the most influential Social Darwinists was William Graham Sumner of Yale University. The basis for his beliefs was the "industrious, temperate, and frugal man" of the Protestant ideal as the person to be emulated and respected (Hofstadter, 1944, p. 51). Such beliefs were integral to the later foreign policy decisions of Presidents Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, as well as other policy-makers. The existence of the Roosevelt Corollary is indicative that President Roosevelt expected Latin Americans to conduct themselves and their politics in what he, and like-minded people, considered a responsible manner. Sumner also believed that the culturally constructed principles of Social Darwinism (as an evolved cultural point of view) negated the basic egalitarian principles of American ideology (Hofstadter, 1944, p. 59). This evolution thus justified and legitimized the foreign policy approach of the U.S. government in the twentieth century, particularly in the Caribbean and Latin America.

President Theodore Roosevelt opinions about foreign relations formed in his early years, and they were shaped by Social Darwinism. He grew up in an environment influenced by Darwinism and educated at two bastions of white superiority - Harvard College as an undergraduate and later at Columbia University Law School (Burton, 1965, p. 103). The influence of Social Darwinism upon U.S. foreign policy under Roosevelt is manifest by the fact that Roosevelt was president when the first receivership began in the Dominican Republic and in his creation of the Roosevelt Corollary. Roosevelt's feelings of racial and moral superiority were evident in his words and backed up by his actions. While the early (1905-1907) financial intervention in the Dominican Republic was not a blatant example of military imperialism, it still exhibited the attitudes that Roosevelt derived from his cultural foundations. It was his opinion that the United States and other imperial powers had rights and duties regarding those groups or nations less attuned to the Anglo-Saxon way of conducting society and government (Burton, 1965, p. 104). Roosevelt was completely convinced that it was the responsibility of the western (white, Anglo-Saxon) nations to police those areas of the world (Burton, 1965, p. 105). The perceived superiority of western culture was sufficient in Teddy Roosevelt's mind to justify the occupation of areas inhabited by those less capable. They were all of one ilk to him – Dominicans, Venezuelans, Columbians and others (Burton, 1965, p. 115). In sum, they were all inherently inferior according to the culturally constructed beliefs of Social Darwinism.

The irony of U.S. expansionism is that the supposed backwardness of its targets was reason enough for many anti-imperialists to oppose U.S. ventures abroad. One of their planks was that many of the "colored" people who inhabited the new empire were too inferior for inclusion in the U.S. system (Rosenberg, 1982, p. 45).

John W. Burgess, a prominent political scientist, wrote that an influx of "Teuton" (white) blood was likely to improve Latin Americans. He considered such men as superior and people who had "acknowledged the duties of civilization and are bent on discharging their duties" (New York Times, 11/4/1906, p. 16). On the other hand, if Latin Americans were to enter into the sphere of the United States, the effect would be the dilution of the more pure Anglo-Saxon strain with that of darker-skinned and inferior human beings. A political scientist and professor at Columbia University, Burgess stated that, "it is the white man's mission, his duty, and his right to hold the reigns of political power in his own hands for the civilization of the world and the welfare of mankind" (Smith 1996, p. 49).

Many members of the Progressive movement supported the U.S. overseas expansion, including President Roosevelt. Roosevelt agreed with the theories promulgated by Charles F. Pearson that the "white" race was of a higher intelligence but not suited for the tropics (Merck, 1963, p. 244). Roosevelt, in response to Rudyard Kipling's poem "The White Man's Burden," wrote to Henry Cabot Lodge that it made "good sense from the expansionist point of view" (Schmitz, 1999, p. 23). The domestic reform agenda of the Progressive movement extended overseas. The prejudice that was commonplace among U.S. leaders and the U.S. public provided a sufficient basis for the forceful acquisition of economic and/or political control over Caribbean nations (Smith 1996, p. 52).

The most important U.S. leader during the intervention period of the 1910s was Woodrow Wilson. He expressed his feelings about Anglo-Saxon superiority when he noted that imposing democracy upon inferior peoples was unfair to them because they were in the "childhood of their political growth" and not yet sophisticated enough to handle the responsibility (Schmitz, 1999, p. 24). Wilson's paternalism and ideas of racial superiority were not surprising for someone who reached adulthood in the South amidst the influence of Jim Crow laws (Hunt, 1987, p. 130). His apparent racism was not a trait that he had recently acquired before becoming president; it was a matter of intellectual and social habit acquired early in life and carried with him into adulthood (Manela, 2007, p. 16).

Wilson subscribed to the concepts that Teddy Roosevelt expressed in his Corollary that sought to expand law, order, and constitutional democracy. As Wilson said in 1914, "I am going to teach the South American republics to elect good men" (Ninkovich, 1999, p. 52). This implies a belief by Wilson that the South American republics were culturally underdeveloped and unable to make good decisions. The spread of democracy was the goal of Wilson but it also implied an innate sense of superiority. For President Wilson, there were clear-cut limits to the extension of democracy. Extending it to cultures that he perceived as not prepared for it was not an option for him as such societies required a period of tutelage to raise them to a level of democratic competence (Smith 1996, p. 53). The thoughts of Wilson's Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, were exceedingly blunt when he wrote of, "races, peoples, or communities whose state of barbarism or ignorance deprives them of the capacity to choose intelligently their political affiliations" (Manela, 2007, p. 24). Lansing added that he was convinced of the dangers of putting the idea of democracy into the minds of "certain races." Clearly, there were people in the Wilson administration who doubted that the principle of self-determination should apply to all peoples, particularly those whose alleged ignorance prevented them from effectively employing it (Manela, 2007, p. 24).

The Warren G. Harding administration had comparable ideas. Charles Evans Hughes, Secretary of State under Harding, referred to what he perceived as differences of temperament and manners between the people of the United States and Latin American countries, with the implication that Latin Americans were inferior. This was a prejudice shared by many in the Harding State Department, who received a warning from Francis White (chief of the Latin American Division) after Harding's inauguration that they should not expect much from Latin American diplomats and their countries because of their Latin temperament and low racial quality (Schmitz, 1999, p. 28).

The theory of eugenics developed from the ideology of Social Darwinism. Eugenics was a controversial subject in the later part of the nineteenth century. The eugenics movement encouraged the scientific improvement of society's hereditary makeup by urging "fit" individuals to reproduce themselves, and discouraging individuals thought to possess undesirable genetic makeup from passing on their genes (Stepan. 1991, p. 1). Social Darwinism evolved and gave way to a more "scientific" look at the inequality of peoples - eugenics. Charles Darwin's cousin, Francis Galton, laid the basis for the eugenics movement during the same period that Social Darwinism was becoming increasingly prominent among U.S. elites (Hofstadter, 1944, p. 161). Many in the United States accepted it to be a more evolved way of looking at the relative abilities and status of people and nations, and a way to improve the human race.

The association of eugenics with Social Darwinism resulted in a perception that white Anglo-Saxon Protestants were the best example of those who were fit to lead. This coincided with what the leaders of the U.S. government espoused (Stepan. 1991, p. 32). What it represents is the implied notion that there are fit and unfit individuals (and by extension fit and unfit nations), thereby reinforcing notions of racism in society, politics, and foreign relations. Cartoons and pictorials from newspapers and journals during the last part of the nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth century reflect the belief in the United States that Latin America (and the Dominican Republic) was backward and "racially degenerate" (Stepan. 1991, p. 32). Leaders in the United States had concluded that Latin America had produced a decrepit and unstable population that was not yet capable of the type of twentieth century progress that more "advanced" (white) nations were. Consequently, they were in need of the guidance that the United States could provide.

7. Ideology

By examining the relationship of culture with the formulation of public and governmental policies, one can see that culture coalesced to form ideologies that were integral to the foreign policy of the United States in the early twentieth century. Ideology is in some ways formed by the integration of, "symbols, values, and beliefs," thus a product of cultural influences. Racism, paternalism, gender and other concepts formed the basis for policies that were part of the expansionist impulses of the United States in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and elsewhere in Latin America (Hunt, 1987, p. 12).

When analyzing the backgrounds of decision-makers in U.S. foreign policy in the early twentieth century, one finds that they were usually white males with at least some degree of wealth (Hunt, 1987, p. 13). Leaders such as Charles Evans Hughes, Teddy Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson came from backgrounds of financial substance. It is logical to assume that these leaders acquired many of the prejudices and biases that were common to people within their social and economic classes. When these few people created policy, they were expressing their own culture and ideology as that of the United States. This elite group presented a public message that justified their actions, and related their ideology to that of the nation as a whole (Hunt, 1987, p. 15).

Ideologies are the essential basis for the policies that foreign policy-makers use to create a framework for relations with other nations (Ninkovich, 199, p. 5). It is clear that culture that exists in a nation shapes the ideologies of those nations. If a nation's dominant internal culture is sexist or racist, then it is quite likely (and possibly inevitable) that the nation's foreign policy will reflect that. What is notable about U.S. foreign policy in the first three decades of the twentieth century is that it had similarities to those of other nations, especially Great Britain. This duo of nations often justified their leadership in the world by talking about the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon "race" (Hunt, 1987, p. 30). This ideology was integral to control of colonies (Great Britain) and economic dependencies (United States).

During the course of the intervention and occupation of the Dominican Republic (as well as other countries), there was a need for a outline to justify those activities. There was also a need to create an image of a reasonable action in the Dominican Republic to project to the rest of the world (Hunt, 1987, p. 16). On the heels of the interventions in Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti, it was important to the United States to have what it could project as a justifiable reason for intervention. In these instances, ideology focused the scattered strands of public and political awareness to create a more unified basis for actions taken. The elites who made foreign policy decisions created guidelines out of a mélange of opinions. Elites shaped those opinions to conform to their desired end, often based on the cultural constructed biases of the people and themselves.

8. Dominican Culture

The fabric of Dominican culture significantly influenced how other nations perceived them (especially the United States). It also altered the way in which they resisted the U.S. occupation. An extremely stratified social and economic system existed within the nation prior to, and after, the occupation. In 1916, the country possessed a population of less than one million people that subsisted on an agricultural economy; there was a large gap between the rich and poor. The small number of economically advantaged Dominicans generally lived in urban areas, along with the urban poor. Outside the urban areas, the vast majority of the population was poor, usually uneducated, and employed as seasonal agricultural workers or peasants. Race also divided Dominican society. Lighter-skinned individuals were far more likely to have upward social mobility than darker-skinned Dominicans. The profits that accrued in the country resulting from the production of sugar and other agricultural products largely ended up in the hands of foreign investors. Those few benefits that did not flow to foreign businesspeople went mostly to the wealthy and educated Dominican elite (Calder, 2006, p. xxxix).

The colony that became the Dominican Republic underwent a different pattern of development than most Spanish-American colonies. It was the first Spanish colony in the Americas, founded as Santo Domingo by Christopher Columbus in 1492. Initially the existence of gold on the island made it an important asset but eventually the gold wore thin, the population turned to subsistence agriculture, and it faded in importance to the Spanish Crown. In the early nineteenth century, Santo Domingo fell under the control of its neighbor Haiti for three and one-half decades until 1844 when it won its independence. The nation voluntarily agreed to re-annexation to Spain in 1860 due to economic problems and an attempt by U.S. adventurers to claim an island off the coast as a source of guano (Moya Pons, 1995, p. 200). Dominicans began a war of liberation from Spain in 1863, and regained their independence in 1865. The fact that Dominicans had to undergo colonization and control under the Spanish, Haitians, and the Spanish for a second time likely heightened their sensitivity to occupation by a foreign power. The economic disparities that existed in 1916 originated in the first Spanish colonization and continued into the twentieth century.

After earning their independence, society in the Dominican Republic remained stratified. There was a significant economic and cultural gap between the rich and poor because of that stratification. Occupation, education, and race divided the Dominicans. The wealthy occupied the most important positions in the government and business. Those positions generally required some formal education, which excluded the vast majority of the population. Race was also an important determinant as to where one fell in the social spectrum. Those with important positions in the government and business usually possessed lighter skins, thus reinforcing the gap between the elite members of society and the subordinate group (Calder, 2006, p. xl). All the cultural constructions that existed in Dominican society served to ensure that those who dealt with the governments, media, and public of other nations were the Dominican elites.

Between the second break from Spain in 1865 and the United States occupation, political fragmentation was rife in the Dominican Republic, with only two significant periods of political stability. One was the presidency of Ulises Heureaux from 1886 to 1899. The other was the presidency of Ramon Caceres from 1905 to 1911. Even during those two periods political upheaval threatened to erupt at any time. Those periods of stability were uneven in benefits to the Dominican people. Under Heureaux, corruption was rampant, resulting in a mortgaging of the Dominican customs receipts to provide funds for the government. Caceres' term was less corrupt. Following Caceres' assassination, political instability was the dominant situation from 1911 to 1916. As much as U.S. leaders did not like the political chaos, it was a part of Dominican culture. The United States periodically inserted itself into Dominican politics from 1905 to 1916, making its functioning even more erratic. U.S. political interventions weakened the legitimacy of the Dominican government (Derby, 2006, p. 20). Although Dominicans both enjoyed and suffered from their political disarray, they certainly preferred it to the military government later installed by the United States.

The combination of historical aversion to occupation, social hierarchy, and political anarchy in the Dominican Republic contributed to the later development of the political and intellectual opposition to the occupation. The dominant position that the educated Dominican elite possessed gave them the status necessary to interact with outside governments and media. The in-fighting that characterized Dominican politics and the Dominican sensitivity to interventionism by outside sources were the foundation for both the insurrection that occurred in the rural areas and the political resistance led by Francisco Henriquez y Carvajal and others.

In the aftermath of the initial intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1916, the Dominicans had several avenues by which they could respond to U.S. expansionism. One option was to undertake a guerilla war, which occurred in the eastern part of the country. The war required a major commitment from the United States, in terms of troops and cost, from 1917 to 1922 but it was not the determinant in forcing the United States to withdraw. Like other nations of Latin America that faced or suffered the effects of U.S. imperialism, they had other options. They could unify to face the United States, they could seek protection from European or Latin American nations, or they could rely on international law and world opinion to turn away the imperialism (Smith 1996, p. 90). In essence, the Dominicans took a little from each category and fashioned their own unique response to U.S. aggression. The opposition of the political and intellectual leaders of the Dominican Republic mobilized support from a multitude of sources and was successful in influencing the U.S. government toward withdrawal of its military from their nation. The Dominicans effectively used a variety of means to achieve their goal of freeing their nation from U.S. domination.

Conclusion

The U.S. interventions in the Dominican Republic and other Caribbean are clear manifestations of the influence of culture on U.S. foreign policy, and the resistance in those intervened nations was a result of their own internal culture. Manifest Destiny and Social Darwinism (and related racism) were the main impacts on U.S. foreign policy and they had their roots were intertwined in the long history on that nation. Their influence can be seen in the conquest of the North American and the war with Mexico in 1846, lasting throughout the 19th century and into the early 20th century with the interventions in the Caribbean Basin. Theses ideologies were used to sanction and justify U.S. actions in interventions throughout a significant portion of the 20th century. Politically and intellectually the Dominicans responded in to U.S. intervention and occupation in the only way they were able. They had their own political, intellectual, and social cultures that formed the basis for their resistance against a much stronger and powerful oppressor based on their own national and social development. They used the tools of the militarily weak developed during their nationhood to resist the overwhelming pressure and power of the United States.

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