
History 1301
U.S. to 1877

Unit 3 - Lecture 1

~

Jacksonian America

Jacksonian America:

- Era of the Common Man:
 - Belief that affluence and property was in reach for all (White) men
 -
 - Growth spawned social, political and economic chaos
 - Egalitarianism was a push against the Eastern Elites
 -
- American Character: From contemporaries
 - “M Factor” or “Movement, Migration, Mobility”
 - Frontier Experience (Frederick Jackson Turner)
 -
 -
 - Alexis de Tocqueville *Democracy in America* (1835)
 -
 -
 -
 - Contemporary generalizations:
 - Personality: Self-confident / practical / Shrewd, Complainers about “them” and the damages done to “Us” / Loved Scandal and loved to believe the worst
 - conformists to fashion / Drinking and eating to excess
 - Values: Generosity and Do-gooders / Socially cruel especially toward blacks / Violence / Joiners / Hypocrites especially about Blacks and Indians / Prudish in public / Worlds most Materialistic people

Jacksonian American (Continued)

- Social Complexity
 - America was (seen both by themselves and Europe) as “Different” and “Republican” (Egalitarian)
 -
 - Affluent by European standards – only paupers were in cities
 - - Wealth and Culture lines established, sub-divided and delineated
 -
 -
 -
 - Western cities grew rapidly (Tree stumps in basements)
 - Aristocracy of wealth
 - Egalitarian Farmers
 -
 -
- Mass Politics:
 - Belief in the Middle Class
 -
 - Working or earning valued
 - Eastern elites on top / Blacks & Indians on bottom
 - Politics were a “Morality Play”
 -
 - Heroes and villains
 - Local salaries were small so rich held office

Jacksonian Politics:

- Expanded electorate:
 - Starting in Midwest it became all white males
 -
 - Presidential electors chosen through popular election versus state legislatures by 1828
 -
 - Increasingly Democratic - political office holders began to be paid & secret ballot
 - -
 -
 -
 - Spoils system gave common man access to power
 - Conventions vs. congressional caucuses
- 1828 Election:
 -
 - The election of 1828– “Era of the Common Man”
- Jackson as president:
 - Equal protection, equal benefits – actually an attack on the rich “*People’s Tribune*”
 - Spoils system – enforced turnover of office-holders
 -
 - Restrict Washington’s power
 - Supremacy of Union over States - Nullification

Nullification Crisis:

- The Crisis:
 - Tariff of 1828 – Tariff of Abominations
 -
 - Peggy Eaton – the “Eaton Affair” (1828 – 1830)
- John C Calhoun
 - South Carolina Aristocrat & professional politician.
 -
 -
 -
 - Theory of Nullification:
 - Jefferson & Madison – Virginia & Kentucky Resolves
 - Federal Gov’t a creation of the states – final arbitrators of constitutionality
 - Sectional protection - South was in a “permanent and hopeless minority” - economic and slavery issues
- Martin Van Buren:
 -
 -
- Tariff of 1832
 - SC summoned state Nullification convention
 - nullified Tariff of 1828, 1832 and forbid the collection of duties
 - Jackson got “Force Bill” through congress and sent troops / Navy
 -
 - SC Nullification conv met to repeal nullifications

Indian Removal:

- American attitudes:
 - “Noble Savages” became just savages
 -
 -
 -
 - In the way for expansion – limited the common man
 - Lower land price & squatters’ rights escalated conflict
 - Gov’t created “super tribes” for ease of negotiation
- Removal Treaties 1817 – 1830
 -
 - Removal Act 1830 Better for them, better for Whites
- Black-hawk war 1831-2 in “Northwest” – Illinois and Michigan
- Southern need for cotton land drove Europeans against “Five Civilized Tribes”
 -
 - Cherokee attempt to use Supreme Court 1832 but Jackson didn’t support court
 - Various treaty / non treaty Cherokee factions vie for power 1830 – 1835 / Gov’t recognized treaty only
 -
 -
 -
 - Seminole War of 1835 – some stayed in Everglades
- Opened entire country east of Mississippi for white settlement and development

Jackson and the Bank:

- - Sound currency based on deposits of the United States – dominated regional and local banking
 - 80% privately owned / 29 Branches
 -
- Soft money –
 -
 -
- Hard money
 - Coin – specie – only real money with value –
 -
- Bank Crisis
 - Jackson saw BUS / Biddle as Eastern Elite control of entire US
 - Webster and Clay supported bank and Congress passed renewal of charter in 1832 for Jackson to Veto – became the key issue of 1832 Election
 - Clay and National Republicans lost to Jackson / Van Buren
 - - Two Sec of Treasury resigned before Taney did it
 - BUS calls in loans to cover and starts recession
- - Sided with entrepreneurs over established companies – well-being of the community
 - Expansion of economic democracy – destroying old monopolies

Two Party System in 1830s:

- “King Andrew I”
 -
 - Nullification and Bank were seen as personal vendettas
 -
 - Machine party politics organizing to electoral victory
- Democrats:
 - Gov’t should be limited except when it worked to increased social aspirations and economic power
 -
 - Against monopoly and privilege
- Whigs:
 - Expanding the power of the Fed Gov’t to encourage industrial and commercial development
 -
 -
- Both more interested in winning elections than philosophy
 -
 -
 - Southern Planters tended to Democrats against Industrial and Commercial northerners
 - Whigs had Clay, Webster and Calhoun – not effective National leaders
 -

Post-Jackson

- Van Buren
 - Panic of 1837 – followed banking crisis
 -
 - State banks had to call in loans to cover Fed govt payouts to state ... easy credit loans were shaky and fell
 -
- William Henry Harrison 1840
 -
 - died within a month of taking office
- - Squatter “preemption” – gave squatters the right to buy 160 acres at lowest price before land could be sold to others
 -
 - Vetoed internal improvement bills
 -