

SESSION 7

AMERICAN EMPIRE: AMERICANISM AND AMERICANIZATION



IMPERIAL CONFESSIONS

Barack Obama, 2010:

“no nation should be better positioned to lead in an era of globalization than America—the Nation that helped bring globalization about” (White House, 2010, pp. ii, iii)

David Rothkopf (1997, p. 39):

“For the United States, a central objective of an Information Age foreign policy must be to win the battle of the world’s information flows, dominating the airwaves as Great Britain once ruled the seas”.

Zbigniew Brzezinski (1997, p. 14):

“America stands supreme in the four decisive domains of global power....culturally...it enjoys an appeal that is unrivalled, especially among the world’s youth—all of which gives the United States a political clout that no other state comes close to matching. It is the combination of all four that makes America the only comprehensive global superpower”.

Henry Kissinger, 1973:

“The United States has global interests and responsibilities. Our European allies have regional interests”.

***Washington Post*, 1898:**

“A new consciousness seems to have come upon us—the consciousness of strength—and with it a new appetite, the yearning to show our strength....Ambition, interest, land hunger, pride, the mere joy of fighting, whatever it may be, we are animated by a new sensation. We are face to face with a strange destiny. The taste of Empire is in the mouth of the people even as the taste of blood in the jungle.”

SOME FACTS OF EMPIRE

- 24 foreign governments installed by the CIA from the end of WWII to the end of the Cold War
- the US covertly intervened in at least 81 foreign elections
- 1798 to 2015, almost non-stop military deployments
- 1898 – 1925: 33 US military invasions and occupations in Central America and the Caribbean

N-USA & G-USA

A hypothesis from
Force Multipliers (2015)



N-USA



G-USA

AMERICANIZATION: BEFORE GLOBALIZATION

- The dual critique of Americanization/Westernization
- “The liberation of Rome”
- Renato Carosone: “new armies wearing blue-jeans”
- Rammstein: forced to join America’s circular dance

“America never went to war with a country that had a McDonald's”

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=eMIiZX8kwwc

“Maybe we should slap down five or six McDonald's on this strip, then the people would be happy”





“The hidden hand of the market will never work without a hidden fist—McDonald’s cannot flourish without McDonnell Douglas, the builder of the F-15. And the hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley’s technologies is called the United States Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps”. (Thomas Friedman, 1999/3/28)

AMERICANIZATION BECOMES “GLOBALIZATION”

→ Henry Luce, 1941, Life magazine, “*The American Century*”

“Whereas the geographical language of empires suggests a malleable politics—empires rise and fall and are open to challenge—the ‘American Century’ suggests an inevitable destiny. In Luce's language, any political quibble about American dominance was precluded. How does one challenge a century? US global dominance was presented as the natural result of historical progress, implicitly the pinnacle of European civilization, rather than the competitive outcome of political-economic power. It followed as surely as one century after another. Insofar as it was beyond geography, the American Century was beyond empire and beyond reproof”

“‘globalization’ was made in America and was built around U. S. interests and ideologies, but it was also established from the beginning of the twentieth century rather than simply at its end” (p. 4)

Smith, Neil. (2003). *American Empire: Roosevelt's Geographer and the Prelude to Globalization*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. Pp. 20, 4.