American Civilization

TD

6 periods:
- Colonial
- War of Independence
- Expansion
- Civil War - 1860-1870
- The Gilded Age - 1877-1917
- WWI / Great Depression

Colonial

- Christopher Columbus, 1492.
- The British wanted to bring as much gold as the Spanish did, but when they got to Virginia there was no gold. They had to find another way to make money: and that was tobacco.
  1607: Jamestown: plantation of tobacco. The population who created Jamestown was undesirable in England (people from the street, the poor, who went to jell,...). Half the colony died of starvation. Captain John Smith said they need to work, of they wouldn't eat (Marshall law?).
- 1620: The Massachusetts Bay Company. There is a money aspect, it's a company. But especially a religious aspect: Pilgrims, Puritans (religious, Protestants/Calvinists), religious fanatics at the time. Puritans idea were the bases of the future American Ideology. They left England for religious freedom for themselves, they were persecuted by the Anglican church and the Catholics. They started by going to Holland because there were other Puritans there, but they left Holland too because they were so extreme in their belief that even other Calvinists in Holland were too liberal for them. So they went to America, part of England as an English Colony, which mean they had the permission of the King, who wanted to get rid of these troublemakers. The fact that they were extremely radical, created a devastating clash with the Indian communities. (There is a link with the Jews (about the Old Testament), they think being the chosen ones.) The Indian represented the Devil for them, as they were so wild. Before the Puritans came, a disease cleared the area by killing a lot of Indians, so the Puritans saw a sign that God did that for them. For the Spanish or the French it was different, they didn't mind co-living with the Indians.
  In the Indian mind, you can't own a land, it's God's Nature. So when they said to the Whites they could take the lands, they didn't realized that the Whites meant to have it forever as their own, so when the Indians came back to hunt or something, the Whites thought they were breaking the deal. With such a difference, Whites and Indians couldn't live together. The Puritans even dehumanized the Indians, but some of them wanted to convert them to Christianity. In the 1640s, there was a Civil War in England between the King and Puritans. So during the Colonization period, from 1620 to 1690 (for Massachusetts), there was a war back in England, and they felt guilty about their brother fighting for their religion, but fighting the Indians or trying to convert them made them feel less guilty.
  Mayflower = name of the boat the Puritans came with. The Puritans were supposed to go to Jamestown. But because of a storm, they landed not in Virginia but in Massachusetts : where they
was no royal representative. There weren't only puritans on the boat, more than half weren't. So as there wasn't any structure, they decided to create their own Government, so they were going to elect one person to lead them, for the good of the colony.

For the Indians at the time, there was already Democracy. They chose their own Chief.

**About homework:**
Read the text → Identify problems, misunderstanding, reactions,...

**Maps**
(each thick line is a new expansion)
Starting by: Virginia = “the thirteen colonies” by the English.
1783, after the Revolutionary war, the colons gain the second line of expansion: the United States started.
1803, the expansion keeps going to Louisiana that they purchased from France.
1818, North Dakota ceded by Great Britain.
1819, Spanish Cession (of Florida), progressively from 1810, 1813 and finally 1819.
1845, Texas Annexation.
1846, Oregon Country ceded by Great Britain.
1848, Mexican Cession.
1853, Gadsden purchase (South Arizona & New Mexico).
1867, Alaska taken from Russia.

**Text of the Mayflower compact, 1620.**

Only men signed, only men counted, considering themselves the chosen people of God. Anne Hutchinson was a puritan woman who started interpreting the Bible, so she was banned as the men felt insulted by a woman like that. The Puritans was really Patriarchal.

Christianity = based on the Bible, belief on the Christ.
Catholicism (Catholic church)  
Anglican church  
Church of England | Reformation  
Protestantism | (Martin Luther)

The Church of England and the Anglican Church (same thing) separated from Catholicism.

The Puritans came from Protestantism, they are the most extreme, thought the Church of England was too much alike with the Catholic church. So they are called Separatists. They're also called Pilgrims (pèlerin - religious/spiritual quest), meaning that they're on the spiritual journey. They want to build a “city on a hill” because they're the pure people, and this city has to shine to save humanity. They chased what were “witch” or “devils” for them.

→ Salem came from Jerusalem.

**J.Hector St.John de Crevecoeur, Letters from an American farmer (1792)**

He's the author: these letters are “persona” (he's inventing the characters), in order of showing his ideas → it's called Epistolary fiction (myth in a sense).

His main purpose is to define American identity. It’s crucial at this time because it's the birth of the nation, it needs an identity.

**Ideas:**

- Described as a sort of Utopia. Returning to this idea of “pure age” before society waste it, the Golden Age. Arcadia → bucolic paradise. Very patriotic text, he's talking about America as a perfect Society. The puritans saw themselves as a beacon illuminating the world, and here the author seems to join this idea except it's not religious but economic and religious (l.156).

- A new race of men: melting pot. The “races” excluded are the slaves, Indians, blacks,... Only the whites, the melting pot is just one made of European: French, Dutch, Spanish, German, English,... But even if the Indians are taken off of the pictures, there's quite a big mention of Indians: most of them negative, but at the end some positives. For the Europeans, the Indians and the Blacks are not considered human so they could feel better about what they did to them, “it's not a big deal 'cause they're not even humans”.

- L.23: he's opposing before and after (wild and woody to cultures, houses, roads).

- L.50: “we're a people of cultivators” → it's not about businessmen but farmers. The proximity to the land is very important. There is so much lands, so much abundance, it's inexhaustible: that's why America is so special, everything had been exhausted in Europe, not in America. Farmers are the most important image here.

- Europeans are described as “plants” that couldn't “grow” anymore, evolve, so they are “unrooted” and “transplanted” to America, and the America will turn them into better “plants” The problem is that if the land is so rejuvenating, how can we say that the Indians are barbarians? The place where they've lived is the place where we think it's rejuvenating. The ideal American is going to be the Quaker farmer, because the Quaker had been able to keep its noble European self (the science of ancient societies), but also been able to come back to the simplicity of nature through farming. They intends to tame (= domesticate something that's wild) the wildness to farms, communities. They rid of the “artifice”, the bad part of Europe. The opposite of the Quaker are the hunters (they're not working hard in the fields, so they have time for sins). Indians were cultivators (corn, beans,...) but for the Ideology they left that out.

- At the end of his book, Crevecoeur is actually going to change his mind: how could the Europeans could chose to live with the Indians, the the Indians never wanted to join the Europeans? There is something wrong here, there is contradictions with the ideology.

The main idea is that human characters (personality) and human institutions (democracy, religion, economic institutions, social institutions, government...) are the product of the environmental where they find themselves. The American land is amazing, and once they would have learn to transform it, they would be exceptional, different from Europeans (“American Exceptional ism”). Nature is playing a role here (so the tricky part is about the Indians).

**The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776**

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America

* One of the purpose is to give justification for separation – list of grievances against the King.

* The recipient (destinataire) is the World, it's addressed to “mankind”, requires power → France is one of these powers. Submitted to a “candid world”.
* “Laws of Nature & Nature's God”: the Kind has been devastated of authority → attack on the divine right of Kings. Protestant Reformation: 1517 Martin Luther. Spiritual independence: they don't need a Pope or anything to be connected to God. Newton in 1686 wrote *Principia*, in which he wrote his discoveries: Humans have reason because they understand the laws of God threw the laws of Nature. It's the reason why they can decide for themselves and do not depend on the King anymore, there is a deification of Nature. 1689 Locke wrote *Treatise on Government* to justify the Glorious Revolution of 1688, when the King lost his authority in England and Parliament is in power, birth of Constitutional Monarchy. Locke wrote about “natural rights philosophy”, man is part of a natural world order. Compact theory: the duty of Government is to insure that individuals [...]. Human Reason (from Nature, Newton's idea) is going to be the only law. Link between God, Nature and Reason. They couldn't attack the Democratic institution of the Constitutional Monarchy, so they attack the King.

* Did everybody in the colonies want to separate from England? Only 30% of the population in the colonies agreed with the rebellion. 30% were against it, and around 30% undecided. Maybe rebels with the Declaration are trying to bring undecided people to them.

**Two sides:**

Federalists: Hamilton, Washington. → Want a strong central government. Afraid of Democracy, Hamilton sounded like a dictator, he's afraid that the poor take the power over.

Anti-federalists: Jefferson → Weak central government and strong state government. They were the most Democratic. They're in favor of agriculture, and local government.

It's going to take a long time for those two to work out an agreement.

**George Washington, extract from Farewell Address, 1796**

Federalist text wrote by Hamilton. There are different ideologies at this time:

- Democratic Republicans (Jeffersonian) developed in the 1790s
  → There is a link between the Democratic Republicans and the Anti-Federalists.
  → They want agrarian economy; weak central government; power to the states + individuals; close ties with France; no central bank
- Federalists (Hamiltonian) developed in the 1780s
  → Washington is part of this, even if he can be considered independent.
  → These guys want the opposite. Strong central government; national bank; industry / commerce; weaker state government; close ties to Britain

* In the world during the 1790s:
  - Britain and France are at war → obvious problem of unity for the US whom some want close ties to France and other to Britain.
  → Factionalism (/) (opposing ideology in political factions).
  → The speech is a foreboding of the civil war in coming.

Federalists = North East.

Democratic Republicans = Rural areas: South & West.

* Isolationism: not getting involved in Europe conflicts. The US want a commercial relationship with Europe without any political aspect implied, but it's not going to be something which could work forever.

In this last part (4th paragraph) he's basically saying “we're a young republic, we can't afford to go against a major Empire”.

The idea of no being politically involved: where is it going? When commercial interest clash,

**Contradictions in the American history**

- 1776-1781: Articles of Confederation in 81 = first attempt to Constitution
- 1786-87: Shay’s Rebellion (big battle in Massachusetts because they need money and imposing taxes on farmers – the people who are crying freedom are repressing the poor that's a contradiction) → During the Constitutional Convention (adopted in 87) → battle in the states for ratification.
- 1791: The Bill of Rights, to protect individual freedom.
- 1794: The Whiskey Rebellion (too much taxes on everything in the production of whiskey)
- 1796: Washington - Farewell Address
- 1798: Alien + Sedition Act → Basically sedition means rebellion. It becomes illegal to speak against the government and the President, which is a contradiction towards the Bill of Rights (freedom of speech).

**Presidents:**
- Washington (Federalist / Independent) 1789 – 1797
- Adams (also a Federalist) 1797- 1801
- Jefferson (finally a anti-Federalist) 1801 – 1809

**President Monroe's 7th annual message to Congress, December 2, 1823 (extracts)**

The North West = The Oregon territory.
This territory is wanted by Russia, Great Britain, and the Americans, attracted by the Fur trade. The Americans also want an access to the ocean by the river. This will last until 1845.

**States becoming independents**
1821 revolutions – Mexico (declared his independence from Spain), Colombia
1823 revolutions – Peru, Brazil
Texas, Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico and California were part of Mexico before the 1821 revolution. Only Texas remains afterward.
→ Texas has a special history: Texas was a state of Mexico, 1825-1835
American came in Texas: Houston, Texas, was founded by Sam Houston. Austin, Texas, founded by Stephen Austin. But Americans who lived here had conditions: speak Spanish, no slaves, loyalty to Mexico, becoming Catholics,... So people rebelled and proclaimed Texas as an independent state. There has been a war, and Texas became “the lone star Republic”. This was the case until 1845.

**Florida**

Problems with run-away slaves: there are slaves in Georgia, who escape from Georgia to Florida because it's Mexican, there are no slaves there.

**The war of 1812**

US vs GB, GB loses the war. Secretary of state (Foreign affairs) in American administration was
John Quincy Adams (he wrote the text). He was not in a friendly disposition with GB, he ended the war without treating GB with special conditions. When he talks about “the continent” he talks about North & South America (the US, the North-West territory, South America, central America, from Mexico to Chile, Caribbean islands), excluding Canada (which was a British Colony at the time).

The question of Freedom

This is a problematic question: it means different things. Ulterior motive.

1823: Monroe Doctrine: sets the precedent for US relations with its Southern neighbors → “southern brethren (= brother in a spiritual sense)”.

1901: Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine: for Theodore Roosevelt, “not only we want Europe to stay out, but we're planning to go in” (open imperialist policy, all the way through Wilson. Ex: Haiti, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Colombia, ...).

1933: Good neighbor policy: “If you owe us money and won't pay back we're going to take it with the Navy and control you”

Continuity between Monroe and Roosevelt → two president's doctrines defining the foreign policy of America.

Events in Europe:

Spain & Portugal → Problems with consequences of Napoleon's reign.

The Monroe doctrine

Basically telling to Western power (England, Spain, France,...) to stay out of Latin America. United States has a right to control Mexico, the Caribbean, Cuba, South America,... US considered that this is their sphere of influence, Europe should stay out of it.

Abraham Lincoln, Letter to Horace Greely, 1862; Abraham Lincoln, Address delivered at the dedication of the cemetery at Gettysburg, PA, Nov. 19, 1863

He wants to restore the union.

Slavery issue:

- There is myths around Lincoln who free the slaves. But he wasn't an abolitionist. He wanted to keep slaves for economic reasons.
- Two different economic theories:
  Slave labor: Democrats
  VS free wage labor: New Republicans = democracy capitalism, see slavery as a type of Feudalism, backward economic theory → opposite of slavery
- It was economic interest which led the South to keep slavery, or they wouldn't have money to win the war.
- Lincoln only frees slaves in the states fighting against the Union in order not to anger the people fighting on his side who were slave owners too, but he knew that after the was slavery would disappear.
- Lincoln explains that there is war to re-unify the states. Slavery ended at the end of the war in 1865, with the 13th Amendment.
**1860 election of Lincoln.**
Republican plank (set of policies, promises from the politicians).

**American Territory and Ideology**

- American Interests, 1897
  - 1860-1890 (the closing of the frontier, basically last Indian wars)
    - Economic (industrial/agricultural) output. United States is producing so much that they need to extend and find other markets to dump some of its production.
    - All the big nations were powerful thanks to their navy → they think to do the same.
    - 1888 – The Berlin Conference (the Meeting of the Thieves, European powers dividing Africa among themselves).
  - The Anglo-Saxon mission, 1885 / American redemption of the world, 1900 / American world empire, 1902
  - Charles Darwin, 1840s: evolution, animals who can adapt themselves in environment will be the ones who survive.
  - Herbert Spencer → Social Darwinism, apply on:
    - Humans: Survival of the fittest (= strongest, healthiest)
    - Institutions: Christianity, Democracy, Capitalism
    - Societies: Human societies are going to be characterized by hierarchy
      - Northern European superiority → Anglo-Saxon: all of the Northern European races and German and Great Britain. Ideology of superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race over all of the other people).
      - Catch phrase about White men superiority: “The White Men's Burden” from *The Jungle Book*, R. Kipling. → Meaning that it's the burden (= fardeau) of the Whites to teach inferior/ignorant people their values (Christianity).

**Andrew Carnegie, Wealth, American Review, No. CCCXCI, JUNE, 1889**

Robber Barons, extremely wealthy at the time, “The Gilded Age”:
- Carnegie – Steel
- Rockefeller – Oil
- J.P. Morgan – Banking

→ Economic inequality is good. If you're rich you're naturally selected to be the fittest. Government cannot take your money and give it to someone who's poor.

If government can't help the poor, how are they going to survive? → Philanthropy (“Gospel of Wealth”, it is the duty of the rich men to give/donate/contribute some of his wealth for his community by opening schools, libraries, museums, art galleries,...), which is not the role of Government but of individual wealthy men. These people were establishing foundations, which are still active today, this is part of the American system.

1901-1917: Progressivism, reform movements (social workers, political leaders,...) opposed to the Social Darwinism.

Gilded = Illusion.
TO KNOW

* Causes for the Civil War
* Reconstruction (67-77) (military occupation in the South by the Northern army) → why does it end? Dispute in 77 about the president election.
* Post-war legislation:
  - Civil Rights Act 1865
  - Free Reconstruction Amendments 13, 14, 15

Woodrow Wilson, War Message to Congress, 2 April, 1917 (extracts); George Norris, speech before the Senate, April 4, 1917; U.S. 65th Congress

* Bush actually used this “War message” about the Irak war.
* Financial interests (economic) to the war:
  - weapons' dealers
  - newspapers
  - banks
* Everything is linked: American history isn't just things which happen individually.
  - 1880s → 1900s: SD / New Imperialism, Spanish / American War 1898
  - 1880s = The Gilded Age (Robber Barons, creation of trusts) → denunciation of extreme wealth → extreme poverty → social unrest (rebellions, strikes, unions, labor movement, anti-capitalist parties like socialists, anarchists, communists) : very present at the beginning of the 20th century.
  - Because of this social unrest → 1901-1919 → The Progressive Movement – reform movement (T. Roosevelt). When a country goes to war, it's also because there is domestic problems. We don't talk about it but it's there.
  - Dollar Diplomacy, covering this period:
    T. Roosevelt → Rep → 1904
    Taft → Rep → 1908
    Wilson → Dem → 1912
    Wilson → Dem → 1914 – Peace Candidate (“we're not going to get involved in the war”) → The American government is going to insure its domination (on Nicaragua, Mexico, Haiti,...).

For example : In Nicaragua is was a dictatorship, and the dictator Sandino wanted to free its country from the American domination, so Wilson, the « peace candidate », sens him its marines.

- 1917 (big date to remember): Russian Revolution →
  The poorest / Bolsheviks (communists) against the aristocracy / the Tzar Nicolas.
  Wilson feared that the same situation begin in the US. So Wilson send weapons to the Tzar to help fighting the revolution → anti-democratic movement.
- 1917-1918: anti-war movement, linked to anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist. Coalition of forces: it's not just anti-war but also linked to ideologies.
  → Espionage Act → 1917 → If you interfere with the draft (=conscription into the army) (means anti-war actions) → $10 000 fine / 20 years imprisonment.
→ Sedition Act → 1918 → If you speak out against the US government or the flag → jail.

* Wilson in history is a problematic figure. Between what he said (pro-democratic) and what he did, there is a huge gap: First Red Scare (1919) → intense repression of the left, socialist, workers (IWW, International Workers of the World, important union), anti-capitalist. People say that's why there is no left party in the US today → Wilson destroyed it.

* The Charles Schenck Affair, linked to Wilson. Charles Scheck was arrested under the Espionage Act → He was anti-war, so he was arrested and found guilty, he was even taken to Supreme Court: will the Supreme Court will condemn Freedom of Speech? Oliver Wendel Holmes said that we can't protect free speech every time: if you're at a movie theater and you stand and start speaking loud, that's free speech, but should you be protected? He decided that it was a clear and present danger, so Schenck was to be condemned.

**Our American System, Speech by President Hoover – October 22, 1928**

**The 1920s:**

* Superficial wealth, false sense of security. At the end there was going to be a Depression.
* There is no Democrat until 1931, the Republican party dominates. Hoover was a Republican.
* Economic freedom, economic success of rugged individualism.
* For Hoover, everyone is responsible of his own success or failure.
* Social security = retirement pension, it isn't link to health care.
* The populist movement = populism. Farmers and labor movement.
→ desire for change, for reforms.

→ The 1920s are a business decade. The businessmen and the factories are the center of the American life: beginning of consumerism. But wages don't increase and so there is less and less consumers. Overproduction in the agricultural and industrial sector would be one of the cause of the Great Depression.

* There was a farming crisis in the 1920s, people went to town to find a job.

“**The Only thing we have to fear**” Franklin D. Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933

The public is the American population. With this speech he's trying to “cheer up” the people, giving a new breathe → restoring hope. The speech is looking at encourage people not to despair, have faith,... It's needed in this period of crisis, which has started two years ago: the situation was drastic. So Roosevelt is trying to infuse courage.

25% of unemployment. As a solution for unemployment he talked about Public Work programs (building). Financial problem: banks are another issue he has to deal with. The Banking system collapsed in the early months of 1933 because people took all their money out, they didn't trust the system anymore. To Roosevelt, “there must be a strict supervision of all banking and credits and investments” → he's going to create acts like the Emergency Banking act, which will pass in one day (usually it can takes months on even years before an act pass, which show the emergency of the situation). But that doesn't solve the problem of people taking their money out of the banks, for that he closed the banks two days after his speech (if you close the banks you can't withdraw your money). That gave him time to come up with a solution.
Agricultural problem: the prices are low, there is a surplus of agricultural commodities (corn, wheat, cotton,...); farmers can't make a living. To fix this problem he's going to attempt three things:

- Destroy/burn crops, which is drastic and contradictory as people are starving, it's the crisis.
- There is a lot of pigs, so he kills a lot of baby pigs.
- As the latter solutions aren't going to be successful, he's going to pay farmers not to plant.

Why would a farmer find himself in a city looking for work? Because he lost his farm, the bank took it → a lot of farmers aren't owner of their farms, they borrowed money: they put their farms on mortgage so if they can't reimburse the bank will take their farms.

He acknowledges that trade is important, in paragraph 14. But they need to address the immediate problems, then they look at trade. The first New Deal: the 3 Rs → Relief (from your suffering), Recovery (Economic), Reform. This looks at people, economy and politics (capitalism).


**The Bill of Rights: text and key words**

What would have happened if the Bill of Rights hasn't been accepted? The Constitution would not have been notified.

The Bill of Rights is the first ten amendments, which represent protection for individual civil rights (especially the first 8 actually). Today there is 27 amendments.

**Problematic amendments**

**First Amendment**

Congress cannot advocate a religion. But in Court, we swear on the Bible. There is a contradiction that was not contested, it's cultural.

Freedom of Speech: “I can say or write whatever I want”, but there is laws like the Sedition Act. Unacceptable free speech: anti-war speech → if the speech puts the population in danger, so it is not protected under the First amendment. On the press they couldn't publish anti-federalist articles.

**Second Amendment**

At the time (in 1791) it was necessary, there was a general atmosphere of insecurity, there was not enough money to pay the soldiers. As the government couldn't protect the people against any kind of threat, they should be allowed to bear their own arms. There were many militias (Minute Men), who gave themselves the rights to bear arms and use them to defend their “cause”. There were catastrophic events from lunatics, with massive weapons, which ended up in massacres.

Example: David Karesh (Waco, Texas), who owned a property and thought he was Jesus Christ: he was overly armed, and his people (the Davidians) wanted to defend their liberties and properties: Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms. He refuses to give up and stood off for a few days when the government surrounded his property. It ended up with the property taking fire. During the Civil Arms movement there were a lot of group (like the Black Panthers) who claimed it was their rights. The all problem with this is also that arms isn't defined.

**Eighth Amendment**

The Death Penalty is an issue. People trying to outlaw that penalty. It was abolished in several states but not because of the Eighth Amendment, but because Blacks had twice as much chances to be sentenced to death as Whites.
Common law

If you have two same crimes in the same circumstances, both sentences should be the same.