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Introduction

Theodore Roosevelt, the 26th President of the United States of America, presided over an American presidential administration during a period of great transformation. This was no coincidence, as the son of a New York City philanthropist and a Southern belle played a large role in the transformation happening in the United States and around the world at the time of, and around, his presidency. Theodore “Teddy” Roosevelt was a family man with very strong values and morals and very rigid belief system which guided his personal life, as well as his domestic and foreign political convictions.

In the late 19th century, the United States was coming to an end of the struggle and the pains that resulted from the Civil War, which took place between 1861 and 1865 and claimed the lives of over half of a million people. The first couple of decades after the Civil War were undoubtedly very difficult for the entire country, especially the South, but by the turn of the 20th century, the United States had seemed to be making a miraculous recovery given the tragedy and bloodshed that had occurred less than a half century ago.

The country was undergoing rapid change, not only dealing with the aftermath of the Civil War, but also experiencing economic, social, and military transformations. Economically, the factory, coalmine, and railroad were helping large business conglomerations replace small independent producers. Immigrants were arriving on the shores in unprecedented numbers, seeking new lives and transforming urban cities.

Americans responded to these changes with a passion for reform centered on the preservation of American self-government. Indeed the United States was becoming much more important in the international sphere and Americans were beginning to feel this transformation. Teddy Roosevelt stood as the embodiment of the reformist aspirations of the American people.¹ He preached reform through personal transformation, insisting that neither economic systems nor class struggles set the course of history.²

¹ Hawley, Joshua David. *Theodore Roosevelt: Preacher of Righteousness*. Yale University Press, 2008, p. xvi

²Ibid, p. xvii

Roosevelt's passion for politics set the course for the most exciting presidency the United States had seen since the Civil War. His aptitude for empirical learning alone was the impetus for important political transformations within just two decades. He challenged the status quo in both domestic and international arenas. Domestically, he set the stage for what would become the Progressive era of American politics; and internationally, he pushed American power to new limits while formulating his own idea of how the world should look and how the United States could live peacefully with other states, while asserting his own growing power on the international stage. This era would not have been possible, had Roosevelt not decided to deviate from traditional party politics and incorporate what he had learned throughout his life into his political beliefs.

Roosevelt was an instrumental character in office for his domestic accomplishments, successfully arbitrating an anthracite coal strike that threatened to freeze the Northeast and pioneering conservation through the first national conservation conference to name a couple, but it is his foreign policy that is the focus of this paper. Roosevelt had a vision for his country perhaps grander than any President who preceded him in office, and this statement will be expanded on both empirically and theoretically.

The geographical make-up of the country was changing throughout the 19th century. By 1900, "approximately 76 million Americans lived in forty-five states and the hardly populated territories."³ Not long before, the West had been a frontier, filled with individuals living lawlessly and pioneers living as his own boss, a proprietor on his homestead. Such a lifestyle was becoming a relic, as speculators bought the land, and people were likely to go work for corporations and wages.⁴ These sudden changes, along with newly acquired territory in the West, were factors in launching the United States onto the global map and stirred the ideas of empire, world order, imperialism, and colonialism into the minds of politicians and businessmen. Balance of powers were shifting not only in North America, but also in Europe and Asia, where Teddy closely followed developments and observed how states interacted with one another, paying special attention to rapidly growing states.

³ McFarland, Philip. *Mark Twain and the Colonel: Samuel L. Clemens, Theodore Roosevelt, and the Arrival of a New Century*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012, p.18.

⁴ Ibid, p. 285

The 19th century was one in which European powers, well known for their colonies abroad, were building their overseas empires. From the end of Napoleon until the rise of Wilhelmine Germany, European powers were busy preserving their empires overseas and preserving a balance of power on the European continent. The United Kingdom was the wealthiest country, but did not have the strongest military. No country in Europe at the time at a military large enough to overrun Europe.⁵ Between 1870 and 1902, the potential of Germany's rise became more evident, but it did not yet have enough wealth to become a potential hegemon.⁶ Europe was also highly prone to war during this time period. Between 1850 and 1945, France and Germany went to war three times, Russia and Germany twice, and Britain and France fought Russia once. Europe had become engulfed in a cycle of insecurity and geopolitical rivalry.⁷ Even though most Americans did not consider their country to be a great power nor consider any intentions of becoming one, an opportunity to do so would come no later than the First World War. Theodore Roosevelt, knowing that the constellation of the international order was on the verge of major change, always kept a close eye on the balance of power in Europe and how overseas empires affected that balance of power.

Roosevelt was a strong believer in a balance of power and the Monroe Doctrine, which essentially placed the Western Hemisphere off-limits for European colonization. Roosevelt believed it was important to defend this policy, so that Britain, the United States' closest ally, could maintain its naval superiority over other colonial powers. Roosevelt knew that if Britain became weak, the "Continental powers would have been only too eager to take advantage of Latin America's prevailing anarchy and weakness to intervene and carve new empires for themselves in the New World."⁸ Roosevelt, and many of the others who shared similar opinions on foreign policy, including Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, an important friend and ally for Roosevelt throughout his life, knew that the Latin American states were so weak and so badly governed during much of the 19th century that without "protection they

⁵ Mearsheimer, John J. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2001, p. 77

⁶ Ibid, p78

⁷ Kagan, Robert *The World America Made*. Random House, 2012, p. 77

⁸ Mead, Walter Russell. *Special Providence: American foreign policy and how it changed the world*. Routledge, 2002. P. 200

would have faced great difficulties defending their independence.”⁹ Strong defense of the Monroe Doctrine and a legitimate realization of the role of the United States in the western hemisphere would become pillars of Roosevelt’s idea of the world order.

The scene had been set for the United States to take a leading role in the world, and that role began with its role in the western hemisphere under Roosevelt. The important question surrounds the shape that this leadership role would take and the effect it would have on the other states in the system. Some politicians of the time, often admonished as greedy expansionists, believed that if the United States was to be an important global power, it had to show that it could at the least control the underdeveloped, newly independent, republics of Latin America. Roosevelt knew that these new republics south of the border and in the Caribbean would not only prove a worthy test of new American power, but also have the potential to shape the way the United States operated in a new world order and checked the power of powerful European states.

In order for the United States to defend its interests in Latin America, it often intervened in states’ domestic affairs to force changes that it deemed necessary. As a new colonial and imperialist power, the U.S. intervened for a multitude of reasons. This thesis will delve into American intervention in Latin America during the time of Theodore Roosevelt and examine its impact on the role of the United States and the world order. This time period encompasses the late 19th century and early 20th century, because Roosevelt was an important voice on foreign policy during his presidency as well as before he ascended to the presidency and after his second term expired. For this reason, Roosevelt’s beliefs, his character, and his influences will be analyzed so that correlation can be drawn between the man and the direction of the world order. Following a short biographical background, this paper will discuss Roosevelt’s foreign policy through his influences and with the assistance of Walter Russell Mead’s different schools of foreign policy. Subsequently, interventions will be introduced and modern theories will be implemented onto Roosevelt’s foreign policy actions.

Through the course of this paper, the reasons why states intervene in other states will be discussed, with a special focus on U.S.-Latin American intervention in the abovementioned period of time. This paper will seek to answer the following

⁹ Ibid.

questions: What are the theories surrounding colonialism and imperialism, and what are the differences between building an empire and constructing a liberal world order consisting of rules and norms? What influenced Theodore Roosevelt at the time to intervene in Latin American states? What role did Roosevelt play in Latin American interventions and the rise of the United States as a global power? Why do states, in general, intervene in the domestic affairs of other states? Most importantly, what was Roosevelt's end goal, in other words, was he trying to establish the United States as an empire or was he attempting to establish a liberal world order with the United States as one of the powerful nations at the helm?

Methods and Data

This thesis consists of qualitative research in the form of document and literature analysis. A vast array of literature about Theodore Roosevelt has been analyzed and select books written by authors Niall Ferguson, Robert Kagan, Charles Kupchan, and G. John Ikenberry will be carefully dissected in order to impose theoretical assumptions that they have developed onto the era of Theodore Roosevelt. The primary method, more specifically, is to extrapolate empire building theory and liberal world order building theory as developed by the four aforementioned authors and apply them to American foreign policy as dictated and planned out by Roosevelt. Through this method I will be explaining one of the most important eras of American foreign policy and one of the most influential characters in American history using tools not developed until decades later.

Throughout the paper, important definitions, such as colonialism, imperialism, hegemony, intervention, paternalism, empire, and liberal world order will be defined. Additionally, different reasons for intervention, including hegemony, paternalism, expansion, humanitarianism, and others will be explored. Ideas of empire and liberal world order will be discussed, examining the writings and theories of political scientists and historians Niall Ferguson, Robert Kagan, Charles Kupchan, and G. John Ikenberry. The first section of this paper will illustrate the ideas of the previously mentioned political scientists. Through understanding their writings and ideas and identifying the main concepts, it will be possible to examine the foreign policy of Teddy Roosevelt from a theoretical standpoint. It is important to begin with an

analysis and background of Theodore Roosevelt, who I maintain was the eminent figure in orchestrating American foreign policy of the time. Through a comprehensive understanding of what influenced him to form his system of beliefs, we can grasp not only a better understanding of the 26th President but also of the beliefs guiding the behavior of the United States at the time. Historical anecdotes and stories will be intertwined into the analysis of Roosevelt's foreign policy, as it is also important to understand in order to visualize the geopolitical landscape throughout the 19th century.

After a background of Theodore Roosevelt, the paper will divide in sections analyzing the concepts of empire and liberal world order. This will be done by taking the important elements of each concept, for example hegemony, institutions, intervention, and imperialism; and then analyzing them in the context of Roosevelt's actions as President in Latin America. Important historical context about the development of a newly independent Latin American states will be intertwined into these sections so as to provide an understanding of the geopolitical landscape at the time. Once the landscapes of Latin America, and specifically the Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, Cuba and Panama are described, I will analyze how Roosevelt intervened in each of these states by applying theories developed and expanded by historians Ikenberry, Kupchan, Kagan and Ferguson. Roosevelt's foreign policy will not neatly fit into the theories put forth by Ikenberry, Kupchan, Kagan or Ferguson, but it is likely that a hybrid foreign policy doctrine will be able to be extracted through this application.

Theories

For the purpose of exploring the foreign policy of Theodore Roosevelt and his concept of the global role of the United States in shaping its international relations, I will borrow the concepts and ideas put forth by four political scientists. Each has a different idea of how the United States, throughout history and still today, affects the existence and structure of a liberal world order. G. John Ikenberry and Charles Kupchan hold different views on the concept of world order not only from one another, but also from the other two political scientists I will examine, Niall Ferguson and Robert Kagan. These historians and political scientists have been chosen for their research, interest, and impact in the subject of American power and its influence on the rest of the world.

If we look at the concept of American power throughout the relatively short history of the United States of America, many different aspects and relations must be taken into consideration. Throughout America's history, the world has been organized in different constellations, sometimes being bipolar, and at times being multipolar. In a bipolar world, two superpowers possess most of the world's power, while in a multipolar world, this power is spread among many different states. The makeup of the international system often determines the actions of individual states vis-à-vis other international actors, whether they be other states, businesses, organizations, or institutions. Important for this paper is the concept of the pursuit of empire, and the pursuit of a liberal world order. It is primarily under these umbrella terms that the concepts of imperialism, intervention, hegemony, and the role of institutions will be examined. This section will introduce the concepts of empire and of liberal world order as worked out by Kagan, Ferguson, Ikenberry, and Kupchan. The concepts will be revisited later in the paper in order to amplify Theodore Roosevelt's idea of international relations.

Empire

It is difficult to prove a simple and all-encompassing definition of the term empire. Niall Ferguson, the British historian and political scientist, chooses to borrow the definition credited to fellow historian Dominic Lieven, who says that an empire is “first and foremost, a very great power that has left its mark on the international relations of an era”, and “not a polity ruled with the explicit consent of its peoples. [But] by a process of assimilation of peoples of democratization of institutions empire can transform themselves into multinational federations or even nation states.”¹⁰ Ferguson subscribes to the wider definition of empire in international relations, and criticizes those who define it narrowly. He believes that an empire can be used to define “an oligarchy at home, aiming to acquire raw materials from abroad, thereby increasing international trade, using mainly military methods, imposing a market economy, in the interests of its ruling elite, with a hierarchical social character”, or a “democracy at home, mainly interested in security, providing peace as a public good, ruling mainly through firms and NGOs, promoting a mixed economy, in the interest of all inhabitants, with an assimilative social character.”¹¹ Following this logic, it is not a surprise that Ferguson classifies the United States of America, since its independence in 1776, as an empire.

Ferguson contends that the United States has acted like an empire ever since it became independent through imposing both direct and, perhaps more importantly in this case, indirect rule over other states. The distinction between direct and indirect rule is important because according to Ferguson, those who deny that a state can be an empire without direct rule over other states and peoples, are in denial about their own empire. Here he is explicitly referring to Americans who often distance themselves from the British Empire and its actions throughout its history. Ferguson writes about empires through a very critical sense of thinking, not necessarily critical of empires, but sometimes blunt and straightforward with his ideas.

Before implementing international relations theory surrounding empire building onto the foreign policy of Teddy Roosevelt, it is relevant and important to first explore the core tenets and assumptions of empire building. Ferguson and

¹⁰ Ferguson, Niall. *Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power*. Basic Books, 2003, p. 10

¹¹ Ibid, p. 11

Robert Kagan are two historians highly capable and qualified to speak on all claims and assumptions of empire building. Ferguson's views on the British Empire provide important and comprehensive insight into his perspective on empires. In his book about the rise and fall of the British Empire, titled *Empire*, he offers his views on what impacts the British Empire had and continues to have on the world. His views also teach that the values and the features of empires and of liberal world orders are not always mutually exclusive.

Acknowledging that the British Empire was flawed and imperfect in more than a few ways, Ferguson asserts that the lasting values and influences the empire left on the world are of tremendous importance. Through their conquests, the British sought to create a world that was organized in a way that they wanted. This point is important because it emphasizes the effort and the blood that went into each of the British colonies, in the end leaving behind a long lasting British influence. The British, Ferguson writes, were able to establish their institutional style with more ease than the Spanish, for example, because they tended to enter areas where indigenous cultures were relatively weak, and economic prospects were bleak.¹² The European colonizers imposed European rule onto the people who they ruled over. Ferguson claims this rule benefitted the colonies by giving them a significantly better chance of achieving enduring democratization after independence.¹³

The United States, at least at the turn of the 20th century, was not in a position of power equal to the British during the height of their empire. However the United States still had a desire to impose their system of rules, values, and beliefs onto those less advanced civilizations. The United States, Ferguson writes, is on a path to becoming equal to the British Empire, and should make adjustments to stay on that path.¹⁴ Ferguson believes that a world in which the United States is an empire is in fact a safer and more prosperous world, as it will have the benefits seen by the British Empire. This is a belief shared by Robert Kagan, who has often been characterized by many as a historian with neoconservative views.

Robert Kagan has been consistent throughout his career as someone who believes for many reasons that the world is in good hands when the United States is at the wheel. No other state has the capabilities to take over the role of the United

¹² Ferguson, *Empire*, p.361

¹³ Ibid, p. 362

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 368

States, and if such a thing was to happen, the international system would more than likely begin to decline. According to Kagan, an American empire is beneficial to international security and to the positive development of states.¹⁵ Kagan holds attitudes about the U.S. influence on the world order resembling Ferguson's attitudes about the British influence. Speaking about the world today, Kagan contends that its success, specifically the great spread of democracy, the prosperity, and the prolonged great-power peace, has depended both directly and indirectly on the power and influence exercised by the United States.¹⁶

Following this logic, American hegemony is far less of a problem than many critics postulate. Niall Ferguson asks the question of whether the term hegemony is merely a euphemism for an empire. He also defines it in a world-system theory fashion, borrowing the idea from fellow historian Immanuel Wallerstein, as "more than leadership, but less than outright empire."¹⁷ Again Ferguson, and also Robert Kagan, defines the term hegemony quite broadly, as it is difficult to distinguish from empire. Ferguson and Kagan hold views differing from Kupchan and Ikenberry concerning the concepts of empire building, how a hegemon behaves and how it shapes the order around it.

Liberal World Order

The concept of a liberal world order in the context of these historians (including the most eloquent and passionate historian of them all, Teddy Roosevelt) is not introduced into this paper in order to debate the existence of a liberal world order, but instead to elucidate differing ideas about what constitutes a liberal world order and what the benefits and/or obstructions are that it contributes to a peaceful international system. When historians speak of the liberal world order, they often mean the international system constructed by the United States and its close allies (Great Britain) after World War II, when the United States emerged as the most

¹⁵ Kagan, Robert, *The World America Made*, p. 8

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid, p. 10

powerful nation with an unprecedented potential to influence other states in the system. None of the historians mentioned in this paper disagree with the fact that a liberal world order was built by the United States with the help of its allies after World War II. G. John Ikenberry and Charles Kupchan do however disagree with Robert Kagan and Niall Ferguson when it comes to analyzing whether the American led international order is a sustainable model for present and future international affairs. It is this disagreement about the role of the United States that will make Teddy Roosevelt, an inquisitive student of international affairs, all the more interesting.

In the debate about a liberal world order, it is important to recognize that the most important piece of the debate is the concept of the alternative to the current order. The most important questions surround the capabilities of other actors to carry their weight if the United States were to decline and no longer lead the international order. Not only do historians and political scientists ask questions about the capacity of other international actors to carry more responsibility and take more leadership, but they also ask questions surrounding the nature of what the order would look like under the greater influence of actors with different ideologies and values than the United States. On one side the alternative to a U.S. led international order is one of aggression, of violence, and one with fewer democracies and less economic growth. On the other side is a world equipped with strong international organizations and institutions prepared to assume the role of leading the international order, with the United States offering its full support and by doing so motivating other states to grant recognition and offer acceptance of the new multilateral, interdependent order.

According to liberals such as Ikenberry and Kupchan, the behavior of the United States during the 19th and 20th centuries is outdated and no longer sustainable or suitable for the contemporary international order. They argue that the days of behaving like an empire, or a hegemon, are no longer necessary in order to assure the safety of not only the United States, but also of its allies throughout the international system. The idea that the United States can now tone back its leadership role is rooted in the belief that the international order is not fragile; in fact it is strong enough to be able to sustain a step back by the United States. Charles Kupchan notes that Western primacy is not durable for the 21st century because over the next several

decades, “the emergence of a more level global playing field will occur.”¹⁸ He argues that while American military superiority will remain unquestioned well into the beginning of the 21st century, the balancing of the economic playing field will give rise to new aspirations by the “rising rest” who will acquire the military capabilities to reinforce their aspirations.¹⁹ The United States will not be able to sustain this rise alone, just as it did not create the liberal world order alone. Without cooperating with the rest of the world and forging consensus in an increasingly interdependent world with both old and new allies; and new rising powers, the primacy of the West will be history.²⁰ Kupchan believes this consensus must be forged while Ikenberry sees this as a given in a multipolar world.²¹

One of the primary tenets of Ikenberry’s ideology is anchored in rules, institutions and an interdependent system. He maintains that “an international system in which power is decentralized among many states offers different challenges for order building than one in which power is concentrated in the hands of one or two states.”²² He points out that it would be wrong to conflate the terms liberal hegemony with empire, as he notes was done by Niall Ferguson. For Ikenberry, a liberal hegemonic order is one in which the leading state operates within the rules and institutions laid out by the leading state for the international system. Ikenberry believes in an established order where the exercise of power by a leading state, “is used to create a system of rules that weaker and secondary states agree to join.”²³ In an empire, Ikenberry says, “the rule of the imperial center is established and maintained through coercion... indirectly where possible, and directly where necessary.”²⁴ The necessary rules, according to Ikenberry, are best structured by international institutions, which have the compliance of the states.

In his book *Liberal Leviathan*, Ikenberry outlines four central claims regarding America’s role in the international order. The first is a characterization of the international order after the Second World War, an order characterized by the United

¹⁸ Kupchan, Charles A. *No One’s World: The West, the Rising Rest, and the Coming Global Turn*. Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 75

¹⁹ Ibid, p. 85

²⁰ Ibid, p. 146

²¹ Gaertner, Heinz, *Die USA und die Neue Welt*, Lit Verlag 2014, p.28

²² Ikenberry, G. John, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order*. Princeton University Press, 2011, p. 75

²³ Ibid, p. 73

²⁴ Ibid.

States fusing hegemonic power with the liberal international order. The US could provide public goods and operate within a loose system of multilateral rules and institutions. His second claim concerns the shape of the international order, explaining unipolar, bipolar, and multipolar systems. The distinction is important to understanding actors and relations in the international system:

“In a bipolar or multipolar system, powerful states ‘rule’ in the process of leading a coalition of states to balance against other states. When the system shifts to unipolarity, this logic of rule disappears. Rule is no longer based on leadership of a balancing coalition or on the resulting equilibrium of power but on the predominance of one state.”

His third claim concerns types of international order, offering distinctions between imperial and liberal hegemonic forms of hierarchy.²⁵ The final section offers insight to the future of a liberal world order but it is in the beginning of the book, where order building is placed in a historical context that helps draw comparisons with the United States under Teddy Roosevelt.

Ikenberry maintains that when powers rise, they seek to build rules and institutions of relations between states, only to see those ordering arrangements eventually break down to transform.²⁶ These rules and institutions constitute “order”, which can take many different forms, from regional to global, centralized and decentralized, to bipolar or multipolar.²⁷ Ikenberry characterizes both the British and American-led orders as hierarchical, in which order is maintained through the dominance of the leading state and states are integrated vertically in superordinate and subordinate positions. However he also sees these orders as being maintained through “consent”, where rules and institutions are agreed-upon, and reciprocal and negotiated agreements exist between states.²⁸

These theories will be employed by applying them to the behavior of the United States in Latin America under President Roosevelt. The next section will demonstrate how Roosevelt acquired his special interest in international affairs and his skillful diplomatic tact when dealing with foreign nations.

²⁵ Ibid, pp. 7-10

²⁶ Ibid, p. 11

²⁷ Ibid, p. 13

²⁸ Ibid, pp. 14-15

Theodore Roosevelt

Upbringing and University

“Doctor, I’m going to do all the things you tell me not to do. If I’ve got to live the sort of life you have described, I don’t care how short it is.”²⁹

- Teddy Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt, Junior, was born on October 27th of 1858 in New York City.³⁰ As a young child and even through his teenage years, Roosevelt suffered from asthma, coughs, colds, nausea, fever, and lack of appetite; but he always held an optimistic attitude that he could overcome his weaknesses.³¹ Young Teddy Roosevelt, or “Teedie”, as he was called as a child, was far more interested in science and nature than he was with politics or business. His “interest in all curiosities and living things” led him to create his own “Roosevelt Museum of Natural History” with live animals and insects in his bedroom.³²

Born into a well-off New York City family, Roosevelt had the opportunities to travel around the world during his upbringing. In the winter of 1868-69 the Roosevelt’s embarked on a Grand Tour of Europe, and young Roosevelt registered a diary entry on each of the 377 days abroad.³³ Despite his young age and setback from sickness during the trip, Roosevelt would recall these moments for the rest of the life, moments that doubtlessly helped him shape his opinions during his political career and that would help him craft proficient diplomatic capabilities and a deeply embedded appreciation for European history and culture. In 1872, the family again sailed off for a world tour, this time featuring Egypt and the Holy Land.³⁴ Also contributing to his worldly knowledge and appreciation of other cultures was his time spent in Dresden, Germany, where he spent a summer with a German family learning

²⁹ Morris, Edmund, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*. Random House, 2010, p. 109

³⁰ Ibid, p. 1

³¹ Ibid, p. 13

³² Ibid, pp. 18-19

³³ Ibid, p. 22

³⁴ Ibid, p. 35

German. Hence, by 1873, young Roosevelt had already gained a global perspective that few of his generation would ever possess.³⁵

Roosevelt began to put the pieces together, taking all of his life experiences to formulate proper philosophical and political opinions when he set off for Harvard University in 1877. Roosevelt's father feared that "his energy seems so abundant that I fear it may get the better of him one way or another."³⁶ The young student occupied himself with activities such as writing, boxing, wrestling, class, and dancing, to name a few. Through rigorous physical activity, Roosevelt was finally able to overcome his childhood ills and weaknesses. He travelled on three separate expeditions to Northern Maine during his time at Harvard, where he trekked and hiked over 20 miles a day in the backwoods country. He was glad to have met the lumbermen, "the roughest human being he had yet encountered", and "got great satisfaction out of his ability to converse, on equal terms, with backwoodsmen as well as Boston Brahmins."³⁷

While still an undergraduate student at Harvard, Roosevelt began to write his own book. The book he started writing came to be known as *The Naval War of 1812*, and would provide great insight into his ideas about war, diplomacy, and nation; and would later become required reading the U.S. Naval Academy. This would be the first of over a dozen books published by Roosevelt, earning him a solid reputation as a historian, strategist, and conservationist.

Through studying Teddy Roosevelt's time at Harvard University and then at Columbia Law School, we are able draw conclusions about where he was first exposed to some of his ideas that would guide his foreign policy later in life. Roosevelt was, as many students of his time and age were, a student of many European thinkers and philosophers. A growing number of Americans had gone abroad to seek "a conservative alternative to the natural rights philosophy that predominated in America."³⁸ Jean Yarbrough, who wrote *Theodore Roosevelt and the American Political Tradition*, writes that Roosevelt was likely influenced by, among many others, two thinkers in particular. The first, a German philosopher, Georg Hegel, and the second, John Burgess, a professor at Columbia Law School

³⁵ Ricard, David, editor. *A Companion to Theodore Roosevelt*. First ed., Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2011, p. 11

³⁶ Morris, Edmund, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*. Random House, 2010, p. 59

³⁷ Ibid, p. 89, (*Boston Brahmin: Boston's elite upper class*)

³⁸ Yarbrough, Jean M., *Theodore Roosevelt and the American Political Tradition*. Lawrence: U Press of Kansas, 2012, p. 19

whose classes Roosevelt attended and who conveyed Hegelian principles through his teaching.

Hegel & Burgess

The influence of Georg Hegel on Roosevelt's philosophical thinking becomes quite clear when examining Roosevelt's views on freedom, war, and the state. The emphasis placed on the individual by Roosevelt has already been mentioned, and was indeed a pillar of how he thought about human nature. For Georg Hegel, "a person is free if and only if he or she is independent and self-determining and not determined by or dependent on something other than himself or herself."³⁹ The son of one of Roosevelt's ranching and cattle herding partners during his time in the Dakotas once remarked of the "'Rooseveltian view of life' as being the upbuilding of a colossal pyramid whose apex was the sky. The eternal stability of the pyramid would be insured only through honest, intelligent, interworking and cooperation, to the common end of all the elements comprised in its structure. Individual elements might strive to build intensively and even high; but never well. Never well, because lacking an adequate base – the united stabilizing support of other elements – they might never attain to the zenith."⁴⁰ While Roosevelt placed enormous emphasis on the quality and attitude of the individual, he added that the individual could not flourish without cooperation. He would direct his foreign policy in a similar way, believing that the United States had to be as powerful as it could, but work with other nations around the world to promote general peace and wellbeing. Hegel once offered suggestions for how people can achieve freedom, among them reforming society that they feel is not adequate, or appreciating that science can help to understand the universe.⁴¹ Roosevelt was instrumental in reforming the civil service system in the United States during his time as Civil Service Commissioner, doing away with a spoils system and installing a system based on examinations and merit. Additionally, as New York City Police Commissioner, he drastically improved the quality of policemen by

³⁹ Mark Mattes, *Georg W.F. Hegel (1770–1831)*, from Nineteenth-Century Lutheran Theologians, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016

⁴⁰ Morris, Edmund, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 204

⁴¹ Mark Mattes, *Georg W.F. Hegel (1770–1831)*

introducing physical examinations and patrolling the streets at all hours to assure that officers were performing their duties.

According to Hegel, “it was war that brought out the ethical difference between civil society and state,” war was also something “that stood for something higher than the protection of individual rights.” Sounding very Rooseveltian, Hegel wrote “war preserved the ethical health of peoples by giving them the opportunity to display their manly virtues and show their indifference to vanity of temporal goods and concerns for the sake of defending something nobler.”⁴² The caveat that war was being fought for a noble cause was very important to Roosevelt. In his autobiography he wrote:

“I abhor unjust war. I abhor injustice and bullying by the strong at the expense of the weak, whether among nations or individuals. I abhor violence and bloodshed. I believe that war should never be resorted to when, or so long as, it is honorably possible to avoid it. I respect all men and women who from high motives and with sanity and self-respect do all they can to avert war. I advocate for preparation for war in order to avert war; and I should never advocate war unless it were the only alternative to dishonor.”⁴³

Hegel’s thoughts on the United States as a nation and the inner workings of government are also akin to Roosevelt’s and appeal to his sense of nationalism as an American civil servant. Roosevelt’s college years undoubtedly made him into a proud American. In his *Philosophy of History*, Hegel portrayed America as the “land of the future,” raising the questions of whether the new democratic and commercial republic had introduced something new and permanent into the world.”⁴⁴ Roosevelt spoke often almost religiously about his sense of pride in America and its people, and the responsibilities of a nation so great:

“We Americans have many grave problems to solve, many threatening evils to fight, and many deeds to do, if, as we hope and believe, we have the wisdom, the

⁴² Yarbrough, Jean M., *Theodore Roosevelt and the American Political Tradition*, p. 21

⁴³ Roosevelt, Theodore. *The Autobiography of Theodore Roosevelt*. Renaissance Classics, 2012, p. 149

⁴⁴ Yarbrough, Jean M., *Theodore Roosevelt and the American Political Tradition*, p. 23

strength, and the courage and the virtue to do them. But we must face facts as they are. We must neither surrender ourselves to a foolish optimism nor succumb to a timid and ignoble pessimism.”⁴⁵

In 1889 Roosevelt’s friend Henry Cabot Lodge worked diligently to find a place for him in the administration of President Benjamin Harrison; and soon after Roosevelt was appointed Civil Service Commissioner. Roosevelt was dedicated to reforming the civil service system. On the subject of a man appointed through the spoils system, Roosevelt wrote, “his attention to the interests of the public at large, even though real, is secondary to his devotion to this organization, or to the interest of the ward leader who put him in his place.”⁴⁶ Roosevelt was set on replacing the spoils system with a system based on merit. This is important because it shows a connection once again between Roosevelt and the teachings of Hegel, who argued that the class of civil servants, comprising the third or universal estate, should apply its rational intelligence to solving the pressing social and economic problems of the time. In keeping with its universal mission, membership in the civil service was open to all, regardless of status or birth, on the basis of competitive examinations. Hegel sought to give trained bureaucrats considerably more independence in regulating industry and commerce and addressing social problems such as poverty.⁴⁷ Roosevelt indeed embraced these ideas, and these ideas were very likely ingrained in him through the lectures of John Burgess, his professor at Columbia Law School.

Most importantly, it is from Burgess that Roosevelt inherited his views on race, nationalism, and patriotism. Roosevelt is sometimes referred to as a racist because of the way he spoke about African-Americans and people who inhabited places like the Philippines, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, and Colombia to name a few. His views on race become relevant later in this paper when Roosevelt’s interventions in Latin America are analyzed. While at Columbia, Roosevelt heard Burgess, a man who studied in Germany and had great respect for the German people and government, speak and lecture about the duties of the Teutonic people. He argued that “Teutonic nations had a duty to civilize the barbaric races of the world,”

⁴⁵ Morris, Edmund, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 480

⁴⁶ Roosevelt, Theodore. *The Autobiography of Theodore Roosevelt*. Renaissance, p. 95

⁴⁷ Yarbrough, Jean M., *Theodore Roosevelt and the American Political Tradition*, p. 22

and to do so it was necessary that all Teutonic nations have a colonial policy.⁴⁸ Political science, as Burgess understood it, confirmed that the duty and the interest of the Teutonic nations coincided in pursuing his policy of benevolent intervention. As president, Roosevelt would offer a similar rationale to justify his policies towards Latin America and especially his actions involving the canal.

Burgess also appealed to and promoted Roosevelt's sense of American nationalism. Burgess believed that the Civil War "showed decisively that something was wrong with the original constitution, though the amendment process allowed American to correct their initial error by strengthening the powers of the national government."⁴⁹ Throughout his Presidency, Roosevelt would invoke his executive power to pass laws that he deemed necessary for the welfare of the American people, and often of foreign peoples.

The idea that highly developed political life did not arise out of thin air, but existed only after the state had passed through several stages of development, was central to Burgess' teaching.⁵⁰ In this sense, America did not suddenly become a nation state, but had successfully navigated these development stages to become the great and transformative nation that it had become. As a highly developed state, one founded by Teutonic peoples, the United States now had a duty to impose civilization on the less developed parts of the world. This idea is one that Roosevelt often invoked throughout his presidency when the United States intervened in the Caribbean and Central America.

Teddy Roosevelt wanted to place himself in the tradition of strong nationalists such as George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and Abraham Lincoln. He often cited these 3 men as his greatest idols and often invoked them so as to associate himself with them. However throughout his presidency, he demonstrates a clear deviation from the views of his idols.⁵¹ The three men who Roosevelt held in such high regard were believers in the original Constitution, and thus believers in the doctrine of natural rights. Roosevelt "would never come out and flatly deny the truth of natural rights, but his insistence in New Nationalism that the state could determine

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 42

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 45

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 44

⁵¹ Yarbrough, Jean M., Lecture at Harvard University
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FF0fpzTaqH0>

the extent of property rights, and later, that the rights announced in the Declaration should be revised in light of changing historical circumstances, owed much to the wholesale attack on natural rights that he learned at Harvard and Columbia.”⁵² This belief is important in the context of foreign policy because as we will see, how Roosevelt’s views about the natural rights of man dictated his attitudes about what the goals and reasons were for American intervention globally. Roosevelt diverged from men such as Washington, Hamilton, and Lincoln, but their differences were far stronger when it came to domestic politics than in foreign affairs. Roosevelt’s character and foreign policy train of thought is further elucidated in the next section through Walter Russell Mead’s codification of foreign policy schools.

Hamiltonian School

“Defenders of the status quo invoked the Jeffersonian principle that minimum power should be shared by the maximum number of people. Roosevelt, whose contempt for Thomas Jefferson was matched only by his worship of the autocratic Alexander Hamilton, believed just the opposite.”⁵³

In his book *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How it Changed the World*, Walter Russell Mead classifies Theodore Roosevelt, as well as Henry Cabot Lodge, into a Hamiltonian group of foreign policy thinkers. It is of course the premise of this paper that at the close of nineteenth and the opening of the twentieth century, the United States found itself with an increasingly active foreign policy under the leadership of self-described Hamiltonians like Roosevelt and Lodge. The Hamiltonian view of foreign affairs operated under the assumption that United States was in fact a new and transformative power, one unfamiliar to the world thus far. This meant that the United States was seen “as responding to a different historical logic from the one that dominated Europe.”⁵⁴ The influence of the Hamiltonian School on Teddy Roosevelt’s foreign policy and vision for the United States will be particularly evident when we examine the intervention in Panama, the

⁵² Yarbrough, Jean M., *Theodore Roosevelt and the American Political Tradition*, p. 43

⁵³ Morris, Edmund, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, p220

⁵⁴ Mead, Walter Russell. *Special Providence*, p. 103

building of the Panama Canal, and the invocation of the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine in more detail.

Another premise of this paper, eloquently illustrated by Mead, is that Roosevelt's foreign policy can count many successes, and since his time, "the United States has made mistakes, but overall its diplomacy has been remarkably successful. The United States not only won the Cold War, it diffused its language, culture, and products worldwide – the American dollar became the international medium of finance; the American language became the lingua franca of world business; American popular culture and American consumer products dominated world media and world markets. The United States is not only the sole global power, its values inform a global consensus, and it dominates to an unprecedented degree the formation of the first truly global civilization our planet has known."⁵⁵ The Hamiltonian foreign policy of Theodore Roosevelt at a time of great national transformation undoubtedly left an important and long-lasting legacy on future American foreign policy and its ability to establish a liberal world order according to its values. The Hamiltonian school can also be examined in juxtaposition with the United States and concepts of empire building and liberal world order building.

Hamiltonian thinkers placed a notable emphasis on the strength of government and system of the United States. It is also important that credit for the source of this strength is properly granted to the Great Britain. While Hamiltonians appreciate the role that Britain played in the world and wholeheartedly admired it, they acknowledged that this role would someday decline and that the United States would need to be there and be capable enough to take over Britain's position. According to Mead, "Hamiltonians have generally supported cooperation with Britain and, when the British Empire fell, were among the earliest and strongest backers of the idea that the United States should take up the British burden."⁵⁶ The British Empire was so admired by Hamiltonians because their empire enabled them to control the seas, and thus control commerce and trade. In this sense, the Panama Canal became especially attractive and significant to American interests. It is the view of Hamiltonians that when commerce operates without disturbances, when "both a satisfied buyer and a satisfied seller" exist, the likelihood of war decreases because war "would hurt

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 10

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 87

economic interests,” “interrupt trade,” and “divert resources from productive to military uses, increasing taxation.”⁵⁷

Hamiltonian foreign policy will be revisited throughout the paper as it pertains to particular motives for intervention. However, I would like to note that it is the opinion of this paper that Theodore Roosevelt does not fit perfectly into the Hamiltonian mold. As previously mentioned, the two differed significantly on domestic policies and on their views of natural rights, but difference also exists at the foreign policy level. In his book, Walter Russell Mead constructs three schools in addition to Hamiltonian; they are Jeffersonian, Wilsonian, and Jacksonian. While Roosevelt best embraces the Hamiltonian school, aspects from the other schools constructed by Mead are also evident and can be incorporated into Roosevelt’s character.

A “Rooseveltian” school of foreign policy would embrace and integrate certain aspects from each of the schools formulated by Mead. Roosevelt veers from the school that he best falls under, the Hamiltonian school, because of the importance placed on economy and finance in Hamiltonian thought and attitudes. An “international financial order that permitted the broadest possible global trade in capital and goods” is a central Hamiltonian goal.⁵⁸ Upon examination of both Roosevelt’s domestic and foreign policies, it is evident that the importance of this goal pinned to Hamiltonians by Mead is greater than it was for Roosevelt. This paper will develop his foreign policy, but from both his domestic and foreign policy the divergence is demonstrably clear. Roosevelt underwent a significant transformation during his political life, one many know as his transformation from a conservative to a progressive. Always a Republican, Roosevelt strayed from those in his own party when he sought to break up trusts that he believed had too much power and exploited the hardworking common man. Pertaining to foreign affairs, Roosevelt was as much, if not more, a believer in the importance of security policy as he was in economics. The expansion of the navy was integral to Roosevelt’s idea of the direction in which to launch the United States, to be as active and reformist at home as it was assertive abroad, to create a strong state and achieve democratic ends with Hamiltonian

⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 103

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 127

means.⁵⁹ Theodore Roosevelt and his friend Henry Cabot Lodge could fall under the category of political imperialists, but many at the time, who would be classified as Hamiltonian, were economic imperialists. In certain cases Roosevelt could also be grouped into this economically motivated category.

Mead writes of the difference in foreign affairs between Hamiltonians and Wilsonians in the sense of the “Hamiltonian quest to build a global commercial order and the Wilsonian view that that order must also be based on principles and democratic government and the protection of human rights.”⁶⁰ Roosevelt, as we will see through American intervention in Latin America, embraces both of these schools when it comes to good government and human rights. In the twentieth century, according to Mead, “growing American power gave more scope for Wilsonian interventions, and American forces engaged in ‘democratic’ and ‘humanitarian’ interventions with increasing regularity.”⁶¹ About Woodrow Wilson, Roosevelt once proclaimed, “he [Wilson] is a good man who has in no way shown that he possesses any special fitness for the Presidency,” also saying, “he has shown not the slightest understanding of the really great problems of our present industrial situation ... He is an able man, and I have no doubt could speedily acquaint himself with these problems, and would not show Taft’s muddleheaded inability to try to understand them when left by himself.”⁶² Roosevelt found Wilson to be more formidable opponent than his once dear friend and Secretary of War William Howard Taft. Wilsonians also seek the prevention of war. Many historians would say that he did not embrace the goal of preventing war, but the issue here lies not with whether Roosevelt was for or against preventing war, but with his interpretation of what constituted a just cause to go to war. Wilsonians also go to war if it is deemed as important enough to do so, as the United States entered into World War I under Woodrow Wilson.

Roosevelt was as much of an American nationalist as any self-described Jeffersonian or Jacksonian. Roosevelt, as a staunch defender of laborers and unions against big banks and conglomerates, would draw the respect and admiration of

⁵⁹ Hofstadter, Richard. *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made it*. Vintage Books, 1954, p. 232

⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 139

⁶¹ Ibid, p. 164

⁶² Morris, Edmund, *Colonel Roosevelt*. Random House, 2010, p. 231

Jeffersonians. Roosevelt is known for invoking an old African proverb: Speak softly, and carry a big stick. Jeffersonians, Mead says, would alter that proverb to say, “speak softly, and carry the smallest stick possible,” keeping Roosevelt’s advice of speaking softly.⁶³ Much like Jeffersonians, and Roosevelt, Jacksonians are committed to preserving the liberties of ordinary Americans.

Roosevelt could have been classified as a Jacksonian because of his strong pride in America’s new role in the world and how it must wield its newfound power internationally, especially in the Western Hemisphere. It is with great pride in his country that Roosevelt handled international affairs. The analysis in the following sections of Roosevelt’s foreign policy will be interesting because of the juxtaposition of empire building and liberal world order building.

⁶³ Mead, Walter Russell. *Special Providence*, p. 192

A Theoretical Approach to Roosevelt's Foreign Policy

“The power to seize the psychological moment is the essence of genius in politics, and if anybody doubts that Theodore Roosevelt is a genius he should reverse himself on this further evidence.”⁶⁴

- Alton B. Parker

The case studies selected for analysis in this paper provide examples and evidence of theoretical considerations by Roosevelt through his exercise of American power in the western hemisphere. Keeping in mind the concepts of the United States building a liberal world order and the United States building an imperial empire, I will analyze the actions taken by Roosevelt in Cuba, Panama, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic. With the help of background information and historical information, it is easier to conceptualize the foreign policy of the time as a combination of late 19th to early 20th century thinking and theoretical approaches to building a role in the world for the United States of America.

The focus will be on establishing arguments based on Roosevelt's foreign policy actions. It will become evident that arguments exist on both sides, meaning that Roosevelt's foreign policy contained elements of both the empire building train of thought as well as that of liberal world order building. However, it will also become evident that Roosevelt sought to use American power to steer the global order into a hybrid liberal world order. Roosevelt is an interesting case study, helped by the position of the United States geopolitically and economically at the time, his foreign policy ideas sought to bring the United States in a new and distinct direction, hoping that it would settle into a comfortable yet powerful global position. However different Roosevelt's ideas and hopes were from his predecessors and successors alike, they were still uniquely American. Robert Kagan insightfully explains the American ideological dilemma as struggling between “universalism, the belief that every human being must be allowed to exercise his or her individual rights, and individualism, the belief that among those rights is the right to be left alone”.⁶⁵ It is through this perspective that Roosevelt's foreign policy, and American foreign policy

⁶⁴ Morris, Edmund, *Theodore Rex*. Random House, 2010, p. 351 (Alton Parker was the democratic challenger to Roosevelt in the 1904 election, quote made in reference to diplomatic handling of Turkey crisis)

⁶⁵ Kagan, Robert, *The World America Made*, p. 12

in general, should be analyzed. If Roosevelt wanted to build an American Empire, then the argument would be made that he wanted to follow in the same footsteps as the British once their Empire fell. Roosevelt did believe that the United States had to take over for the British, but not in the same style. In the opposite hypothesis the argument would be that Roosevelt's foreign policy sets the groundwork that would again be built on by his cousin Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his successors after the second World War and during the Cold War. Regardless of which argument is chosen, the American Empire, if it was one, was much different than the British Empire in that they were far more reluctant to rule over colonies and take on the term of imperialism.⁶⁶

Building a Liberal World Order

The liberal world order, as it has been used in contemporary political science, existed as a result of the world the United States and its allies constructed after the victory over the axis powers in World War II. For the sake of this paper, in which a period of time before both World War I and World War II is analyzed, a specific period of time when Teddy Roosevelt presided over the Presidency, I will use liberal world order as it has been theoretically developed by G. John Ikenberry and Charles Kupchan in a order to elucidate the liberal world order that Roosevelt sought to organize. This has to be done because such a liberal world order did not exist at the time, but actions taken by the United States throughout history can still be analyzed according to the motives behind establishing a liberal world order. Another important point to make in order to avoid confusion about making a comparison between the two different time periods is that the constellation of the international system was neither unipolar nor bipolar during the time of Roosevelt's Presidency. In the first section about a liberal world order, I look at how states, specifically the United States, intervene in the affairs of other states in order to establish and/or preserve a liberal world order consisting of rules and institutions. Subsequently I will examine the concept of hegemony within a rules based liberal world order; and in both areas seek to explain

⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 13

Roosevelt's interventions through the ideological lens postulated by Kupchan and Ikenberry.

Also important to understand the liberal world order is that it must be the product of the efforts made by the West. Kupchan writes about the Western nations that have always been at the leading edge of history, "clearing the way for liberal democracy, industrial capitalism, and secular nationalism."⁶⁷ Kupchan also emphasizes the relationship, or teamwork, between North America and Europe in shaping an international order based on a system of Western values.⁶⁸ Ikenberry shares these views; he writes that a democratic community, or the Western security community leads to the creation of a stable, cooperative, and interdependent core of major states.⁶⁹

Intervention to Build a Liberal World Order

The act of intervention in an effort to build or preserve a liberal world order according to American values and beliefs paints the United States as a benevolent state acting to assist other states in peril, or prevent declining states from being overrun by malicious actors who would act against the will and welfare of the people. When the United States became the builder of a liberal world order after World War II, it was an industrial and military powerhouse. According to Kupchan, this meant, "if sovereignty and liberal democracy were integral to the Western way, then the globalization of the Western order ultimately meant that the rest should also enjoy the rights of self-determination and self-rule."⁷⁰ He goes on to note that "this was not the first time that Washington had tried to wean Europe from colonialism" because Woodrow Wilson had made such an effort after World War I, when he advocated "to end imperial rule in favor of self-determination and democratic governance."⁷¹

However, as Ikenberry points out, it is important to remember that intervention under liberal internationalism faces a dilemma. The dilemma surrounds

⁶⁷ Kupchan, Charles A, *No One's World: The West, the Rising Rest, and the Coming Global Turn*. Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 146

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ikenberry, John G, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order*. Princeton University Press, 2011, p. 252

⁷⁰ Kupchan, Charles A, *No One's World*, p. 71

⁷¹ Ibid.

the question of who speaks and acts for the international community when it is decided that intervention will take place with force across sovereign borders. In today's world, states must make good on agreed universal rights and obligations put forth by international institutions. Ikenberry goes on to say, "When the norms and principles that establish the legitimacy and moral obligation of countries to act outstrip the capacity or willingness of states to act, this erodes the legitimacy of the liberal order that upholds these norms and principles."⁷² The Roosevelt administration was dealing with a different form of liberal world order, because a set of universal rules and norms did not exist. Even today, there is no global government that determines when and where states intervene, so it is up to the states to decide.⁷³ In the late 18th and early 19th century, states had a far greater degree of autonomy and flexibility to decide on where intervention would be the appropriate course of action.

Roosevelt, in many ways, set out to establish a system of rules based on norms and principles, but one he could establish. As will become clear when the Monroe Doctrine and Roosevelt Corollary are analyzed, Roosevelt despised any European interference in any area near the United States, as it represented a possible threat. He was adamant that European powers leave the Western Hemisphere, but he did not commit U.S. foreign policy to a policy of non-interference in other countries in the Western Hemisphere. According to Lawson and Tardelli, intervention in the 19th century served the following purpose: the maintenance of order in the core and the transformation of polities, economies, and symbolic schemas in the periphery. In this context, intervention was used for a variety of purposes, among them to preserve the balance of power.⁷⁴ This interpretation is strikingly similar to how Ikenberry and Kupchan view the purpose of intervention and balance of power.

When the Europeans did finally leave, it brought out what some consider the best and some consider the worst in Roosevelt. Critics accredited many names to them, among them: jingoism, nationalism, imperialism, chauvinism, even fascism and racism. Roosevelt preferred to use the simple and to him beautiful word Americanism.⁷⁵ The following sections will look not only at interventions that took

⁷² Ikenberry, John G, *Liberal Leviathan*, p. 291

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Lawson, G., & Tardelli, L. *The Past, Present, and Future of Intervention*. Review of International Studies 39(5), 2013, p. 1239

⁷⁵ Morris, Edmund, *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, p.474

place during Roosevelt's Presidency, but also other important foreign policy objectives and doctrines that shaped the global role of the United States.

Cuba as a Humanitarian Intervention

At the end of the 19th century, the United States had a new sense of nationalism "predicated upon the notion that it was time for their country to enter the top ranks", it "had built a first-rate economy; it should therefore have an international voice to match".⁷⁶ No one believed more strongly in the belief that with great power came great responsibility than Theodore Roosevelt. He believed that included under this area of responsibility came liberating people who were being oppressed or treated in an inhumane manner. He believed that people in such conditions had a right to self-determination and self-rule.

In the era of the Spanish-American War, human rights, or humanitarian concerns, was not necessarily a sufficient or justifiable reason to go to war. For Roosevelt, however, watching human rights violations and atrocities happen and remaining idle was worse than not doing something to alleviate the situation. Roosevelt's actions here provide an early foreshadowing to a greater emphasis being placed on fighting to prevent human rights violations outside of ones borders. After the two World Wars, human rights became deeply embedded in the international order, and it was liberals who pushed forward the campaign for international recognition of human rights, resulting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948. Theodore Roosevelt's own niece, Eleanor Roosevelt, would be one of the most instrumental figures in leading this human rights revolution after the Second World War.⁷⁷

Roosevelt was appalled at the murderous oppression of Cubans at the hands of the Spanish. He chastised those who disagreed with him, as those who "preferred a 'peace' of continuous murder to a 'war' which stopped the murder and brought about real peace."⁷⁸ While Roosevelt did indeed believe that a war with Spain would give

⁷⁶ Kupchan, Charles A. *The End of the American Era: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Geopolitics of the Twenty-First Century*. Random House, 2002, p. 177

⁷⁷ Ikenberry, G John. *Liberal Leviathan*, p.246

⁷⁸ Roosevelt, Theodore. *The Autobiography of Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 150

Americans something to think about that was not material gain, would bind the country together, and provide valuable experience to the army and navy, he firmly believed that the United States had a humanitarian duty to intervene.⁷⁹

Roosevelt knew that the situation in Cuba was indeed calamitous. He writes in his autobiography that the island had become so dreadful under Spanish rule so as to be a standing disgrace for the United States for permitting them to exist. He wrote that Spain attempted to govern her colonies on archaic principles, leading to circumstances incompatible with the advance of humanity and intolerable to the conscience of mankind.⁸⁰ The Spaniards had tended to conquer already sophisticated, urbanized societies where the effects of colonization were more commonly negative.⁸¹ Reports from the London Times in 1896 outlined the support for the revolution among Cubans, saying that “the flood swelled upward and engulfed the middle and upper classes to such an extent that the sympathy of practically the whole population of Cubans is now on the rebel side.”⁸²

The eventual intervention in Cuba, the Spanish American War, was initially an intervention pushed for and praised by Roosevelt as a humanitarian duty. The intervention was a humanitarian intervention, which is defined by Holsti as the “coercive interference in the internal affairs of another state (although Cuba was not an independent state at the time), involving the use of armed force, with the purpose of addressing massive human rights violations or preventing widespread human suffering.”⁸³ Reflecting back in his autobiography, Roosevelt states that it was “our duty to stop the devastation and the destruction,” and that “when in retrospect it is easier to see things clearly, there are few humane and honorable men who do not believe that the war was both just and necessary.”⁸⁴

Prior to military action, the United States offered humanitarian relief efforts to the struggling people of Cuba, and after the United States victory over the Spanish in Cuba, Theodore Roosevelt made sure that the objective of preventing human rights violations and preventing human suffering remained integral to U.S. policy. The

⁷⁹ Yarbrough, Jean M. *Theodore Roosevelt and the American Political Tradition*, p. 111

⁸⁰ Roosevelt, Theodore. *The Autobiography of Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 150

⁸¹ Ferguson, Niall. *Empire*, p. 361

⁸² Foner, Philip S. *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism*. Vol. 1, Monthly Review Press, 1972, p101

⁸³ Holsti, K. J. “Stephen D. Krasner, Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999. -.” *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2000, p. 740

⁸⁴ Roosevelt, Theodore. *The Autobiography of Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 150

founder of the American Red Cross, Clara Burton, reported in 1897, the “murders of Armenians in Armenia [at the hands of the Ottoman Empire’s anti-Christian crusade] shine mercifully in comparison with what I saw in Havana.”⁸⁵ The Spanish in Cuba opposed any American relief efforts because it damaged their business opportunities. Spanish authorities would thwart relief efforts, or divert supplies for their own use and profit.⁸⁶ Because of the devastating condition of the island, the Cuban Liberation armies greeted the Americans warmly. Theodore Roosevelt was likely the happiest soldier to traverse the jungles and hills of Cuba.

Leonard Wood became Governor of Cuba after the war, so that Cuba would have assistance in rebuilding. His involvement in Cuba was thanks to his recruitment by Roosevelt, and his performance during the war and tenure of two and a half years as Governor had been very successful. As a surgeon, Wood “had transformed Cuba from one of the world’s most pestilential countries into one of its healthiest... as a result, Cuba was free of yellow fever for the first time in almost two centuries.” He had turned Havana into a sanitary city, paved its streets, built new sewer systems, water mains, schools, and conduits for power and communication, and even protected the Cuban economy from exploitation by American entrepreneurs. The task of cleaning Cuba after the war was not easy, as conditions were still extreme; people were starving and dying every day. Wood drew scorn from some Cubans for telling them how to clean properly and take care of their cities, but he did not give in to debate, and eventually the death rate fell, within a month, from 200 per day to thirty-seven. On occasion, Wood even “smashed down doors and publicly horsewhipped respectable citizens for making sewers out of the streets.” Regarding education on the Cuban island, Wood revamped the entire system, as the Spanish system barely accommodated a tenth of the student population and made no attempt at serious education.

In 1900, Roosevelt, who was Vice President under the reelected William McKinley, was extremely satisfied with the work his friend Leonard Wood in reconstructing Cuba. Wood had begun to prepare the country for independence, as this had been the plan before intervention. Elections were organized and a popular self-government was established in Cuba. Roosevelt, Wood, and Secretary of War

⁸⁵ Foner, Philip S. *The Spanish-Cuban-American War and the Birth of American Imperialism*, p. 131

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p. 132

Elihu Root were enormously proud of their contribution to granting Cuba self-independence. In 1901, Leonard Wood, representing the United States, and newly elected Tomas Estrada Palma, along with the Cuban Congress and judiciary, watched as the flag of the new republic went up.⁸⁷

The intervention in Cuba is an interesting case study when juxtaposing empire building and liberal world order building because of its development over the course of the intervention. Initially, the motivation declared and demonstrated by Teddy Roosevelt was both to free people being oppressed by abusive Spanish rule, and to open the door for an island to attain self-rule and independence. From an international relations security standpoint, there is no doubt that Roosevelt preferred to have a friendly independent island nation that could be influenced 100 miles from the border of the United States than a relatively powerful European nation possessing it as a colony. An independent Cuban people could not muster up the military capabilities to threaten the United States, but a European power with a formidable navy and able military men could potentially use the island and thus provide a potential threat.

G. John Ikenberry writes, in a multilateral system of rules and institutions (while the world at the time could be characterized as multilateral, the rules and institutions were lacking), stronger states establish an order where weaker states participate willingly rather than resist or balance against the stronger state. In this case, the weaker state agrees to the order set by the stronger state, “and in return they are assured that the worst excesses of the leading state – manifest as arbitrary and indiscriminate abuses of state power – will be avoided, and they gain institutional opportunities to work with and help influence the leading state”.⁸⁸ Because there was no order at the time that set rules or ceded power to institutions, this order is replaced by the stronger state, the United States. While the intervention in Cuba had its roots in Roosevelt’s efforts to establish such an order, one of reciprocity and peace between the United States and Cuba, actions taken by Roosevelt and other influential politicians at the time demonstrated a diverging narrative. The narrative I am referring to surrounds the American presence on Cuba after its independence was established, and in the section about empire building it will become clear how the

⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 52

⁸⁸ Ikenberry, G John. *Liberal Leviathan*, p. 322

intervention developed and transformed to suit the ideas presented by Niall Ferguson and Robert Kagan. However before arriving at the narrative at odds with establishing a liberal world order, I will provide more examples of how Roosevelt's interventions can be seen as efforts to build and/or preserve this order.

Panama: The Key to Liberal Hegemony

One of the most important objectives in the liberal world order built by the Western democracies after World War II was to champion free trade and reopen the world economy. Kupchan writes that in this era “the United States was determined to eliminate the economic nationalism and protectionism that it saw as having contributed to the onset of World War II, replacing it with an open commercial and financial system that would be managed by international institutions.”⁸⁹ Theodore Roosevelt managed a period in history before an open commercial and financial system managed by international institutions existed, however, during this period there was widespread support for the expansion of free trade and improving commercial and financial systems.

G. John Ikenberry has written extensively on the liberal hegemonic order, where “the lead state establishes agreed-upon rules and institutions and operates – more or less – within them”.⁹⁰ Ikenberry outlines a larger order than simply bilateral agreements; he outlines one that is a political and economic space within the international system. Also important is that this system provides advantages for all parties, even though the hegemon still has advantages. Because the hegemonic state is operating under the same rules as the weaker states, there are many opportunities for collective decision-making.⁹¹ Understanding the role of the United States during the Panamanian independence movement is critical to American hegemonic power in the 20th century.

In May of 1848, President James Buchanan gave instructions to his chargé d'affaires to New Granada, Benjamin Bidlack, to make sure no other nation obtains

⁸⁹ Kupchan, Charles A. *No One's World*, p. 72

⁹⁰ Ikenberry, G John. *Liberal Leviathan*, p. 69

⁹¹ *Ibid*, p. 75

access to the rights for a railroad across the Isthmian.⁹² Ratified in 1848, the treaty guaranteed that “the right of way or transit across the Isthmus of Panama, upon any modes of communication that now exist, or that may be ... constructed, shall be open and free to the government and citizens of the United States.” In return, the United States pledged to uphold the neutrality of and protect the Isthmus.⁹³ Two years later the United States signed a treaty with the Britain, the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, in which both countries agreed not to build a canal unilaterally. The treaty remained in place until 1901, when both sides decided to end the agreement.⁹⁴

In 1869, construction was finished of the Suez Canal in Egypt. The major engineering feat was constructed by a company owned by Frenchman Ferdinand de Lesseps, who became famous because he refused to pay commission to Baron Rothschild and instead financed the canal through public donations from French citizens.⁹⁵ After his success in Egypt, de Lesseps decided to tackle the Isthmian Strait and build a canal there. After receiving a contract to build it, he realized it would be an extremely difficult challenge. By 1889, his company, the Compagnie Universelle du Canal Interoceanique de Panama, was bankrupt and the French government refused to fund it.⁹⁶ The French company found no help from the Americans, who, in principle with the Monroe Doctrine, were not fond of the idea of a French company controlling an isthmian canal.

Theodore Roosevelt was never enthusiastic about the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty. He wrote to Lodge in 1894 that “I do wish our Republics would go in avowedly ... and build an oceanic canal with the money of Uncle Sam,” and as Governor of New York in 1899 he wrote, “I do not admit the ‘dead hand’ of treaty making power of the past. A treaty can always be honorably abrogated.”⁹⁷ When Roosevelt came to office, the official position of the government was to build a canal through Nicaragua, not Panama. The first treaty signed by Roosevelt in office, the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty,

⁹² Collin, Richard H. *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean: The Panama Canal, The Monroe Doctrine, and the Latin American Context*. Louisiana State University Press, 1990, p. 134

⁹³ Muzicant, Ivan. *The Banana Wars: A History of the United States Military Intervention in Latin America from the Spanish-American War to the Invasion of Panama*. Macmillan Publishing Company, 1990, p. 83

⁹⁴ Collin, Richard H. *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean*, p. 136

⁹⁵ Ibid p. 141

⁹⁶ Muzicant, Ivan. *The Banana*, p. 96

⁹⁷ Ibid.

eliminated the British and gave the United States exclusive rights to build in Nicaragua.⁹⁸

A series of events lead to Roosevelt and many others in the United States changing their minds and opting for a canal through Panama. His Secretary of State, John Hay, signed a treaty with his Colombian counterpart and the Hay-Herran Treaty was ratified by the U.S. Senate in 1903, granting the United States a 100 year lease on a six mile wide strip of territory bisecting Panama.⁹⁹ The Colombian Senate rejected the treaty, and President Roosevelt was furious by the news, calling the Colombians “contemptible little creatures,” and saying “you could no more make an agreement with the Colombian rulers than you could nail currant to the wall.”¹⁰⁰

Panama had attempted to secede from Colombia before, but the revolutions were crushed by the United States, who, in line with the Bidlack-Mallarino Treaty, was committed to maintaining peace and neutrality on the Isthmus. In 1903 sentiment for revolution was again hot among the Panamanians, and President Roosevelt’s demeanor, while calm and patient, did not want Colombia “to be allowed to bar one of the future highways of civilization.”¹⁰¹ The United States decided it would not crush the Panamanian revolution of 1903, and instead support it. In breaking its prior allegiance to Colombia, the United States chose a path that promised an immediate canal treaty. The Panamanian revolution was successful and took place without blood shed. Initial bribing of Colombia’s officers combined with American naval presence were important factors in the success of the revolution. The U.S. navy “remained the guarantor of isthmian sovereignty, but Panama, not Colombia, was new sovereign in November, 1903.”¹⁰² Roosevelt claimed that he did not lift his “finger to incite revolution,” but he “simply ceased to stamp out the different revolutionary fuses that were already burning.”¹⁰³ The Republic of Panama was immediately recognized by the United States, and the ensuing treaty between Secretary Hay and Panama’s new Minister Plenipotentiary, Philippe Bunau-Varilla, granted “the United States in perpetuity the use, occupation and control of a zone of land ... for the construction,

⁹⁸ Collin, Richard H. *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean*, p. 175

⁹⁹ Schoultz, Lars. *Beneath the United States: a history of U.S. policy toward Latin America*. Harvard University Press, 2003, p. 164

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Collin, Richard H. *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean*, p. 239

¹⁰² Ibid, p. 268

¹⁰³ Ibid, p. 269

maintenance, operation, sanitation and protection of said Canal of the width of ten miles ... on each side of the center line of the route of the Canal to be constructed.”¹⁰⁴

With American ownership of the Panama Canal, Roosevelt had accomplished three important objectives in line with establishing a liberal world order. First, he supported a movement of self-rule by a people who felt oppressed by and disconnected from their rulers. Second, he established a new republic in Central America with which the United States could establish friendly relations, after a period of strained relations between the United States and Colombia. Lastly, he opened up a hugely important passage for maritime trade, connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and shortening voyages for ships by days.

A Liberal World Order According to the Roosevelt Corollary

During the six Presidencies preceding Theodore Roosevelt, a growing interest in intervention in Latin America is evident on the part of U.S. administrations. This movement begins slowly, with the administration of Rutherford B. Hayes demonstrating no interest in playing an active imperialist role. There were “hints of United States imperialism that would develop over the next two decades, but neither Hayes nor the American people embraced imperialism during his administration.”¹⁰⁵ Hayes did, however, voice his support for an isthmian canal under American control. He was apprehensive toward the Frenchman Ferdinand de Lesseps building a canal, as it would contradict the Monroe Doctrine. He anticipated the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine by warning foreign investors not to look to their governments for protection: “No European power can intervene for such protection without adopting measures on this continent which the United States would deem wholly inadmissible. If the protection of the United States is relied upon, the United States must exercise such control as will enable this country to protect its national interests and maintain the rights of those whose private capital is embarked in the work.”¹⁰⁶ When Theodore Roosevelt introduced the Roosevelt Corollary in his 1904 State of the

¹⁰⁴ Muzicant, Ivan. *The Banana Wars*, p. 136

¹⁰⁵ Hoogenboom, Ari. *The Presidency of Rutherford B. Hayes*. University Press of Kansas, 1988, p. 173

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 189

Union address, this idea was articulated and developed to sound like the United States would take a stand for the fair treatment of people and respect for the rule of law:

“Brutal wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may finally require intervention by some civilized nation. In the Western hemisphere, the United States cannot ignore this duty, but it remains true that our interests, and those of our Southern neighbors, are in reality identical. All that we ask is that they shall govern themselves well, and be prosperous and orderly.”¹⁰⁷

-TR, 1904

Theodore Roosevelt’s decision to intervene in the affairs of states under the guidelines introduced by the Roosevelt Corollary was initially a hesitant and unenthusiastic decision perhaps because European powers were involved. However there were significant forces at play, which had forced Roosevelt’s hand in taking an active role. Roosevelt’s Assistant Secretary of State, Francis Loomis cited “the continuing cycle of anarchy, corruption, and destruction of property and the wish of the majority of conservative property owners, Dominican and foreign,” as reasons for involvement.¹⁰⁸ There were economic factors at play in the Dominican Republic and wealthy investors had a desire to protect their investments; these voices may have held a certain amount of sway over Roosevelt as he was pondering intervention in the Dominican Republic; he was also preoccupied with a reelection campaign at home, a peaceful resolution to the Russo-Japanese War, and acquiring the Panama Canal Zone. Roosevelt did, however, know that it would be imperative to intervene in the Dominican Republic and first in Venezuela as a step to secure America’s new role in the world by defending the Monroe Doctrine and establishing greater American influence in the Western Hemisphere by deterring European interference. Intervention in this context, under the pretense of a liberal world order would also assure that weak states maintained a healthy degree of rule of law not only for their own people and governmental stability, but also for the sustenance of a stable international system. While the first test for the Roosevelt Corollary came in 1904 in the Dominican Republic, the intervention in Venezuela taught Roosevelt important

¹⁰⁷ Collin, Richard H. *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean*, p. 400, Roosevelt quote

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p.395

lessons about diplomacy and the balance of the international system. Both interventions would prove instrumental forming the framework of his corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. Similar to the intervention in Cuba, the case studies that fall under the Roosevelt Corollary can be used by historians to demonstrate that either America's efforts were to establish a liberal world order, or were conducted in the pursuit of building an American empire.

Defending a Liberal World Order in Venezuela

Theodore Roosevelt never explicitly stated his affection for Venezuela or his desire to see the new republic flourish under independence, but he also knew that “Venezuela could offer nothing but territory, or mortgage her revenue in such a way as to place herself in complete political dependence on Germany.”¹⁰⁹ Roosevelt was always aware of the ever-shifting balance of power between European states. In the case of Venezuela, he did not establish a foothold in its sovereign land or take anything for the United States. Roosevelt was preventing Germany from growing too powerful through the preservation of Venezuelan sovereignty. Ikenberry posits that in a bipolar or multipolar system, “there is a diffusion of power among several great powers”, and this is a more secure system because if one great power shifts the system to a unipolar system, that great power will care less about legitimacy and less about obtaining consent from other states.¹¹⁰ In using the case of intervention in Venezuela, my goal is to provide a historical overview of what happened and to explain how Roosevelt acted according to the concepts of defending liberal world order by Ikenberry and Kupchan.

The situation in Venezuela, stated briefly, involved the failure by a Latin American republic to repay European loans, something that occurred again two years later in the Dominican Republic. In this case, Venezuela, “bled white by civil war and corruption, owed some sixty-two million bolivars to an impatient consortium headed by Great Britain and Germany,” and these two powers wanted to make sure they did not look weak in the face of a Latin American republic.¹¹¹ Great Britain and

¹⁰⁹ Morris, Edmund. *Theodore Rex*, p. 178

¹¹⁰ Ikenberry, G John. *Liberal Leviathan*, p. 153

¹¹¹ Morris, Edmund. *Theodore Rex*, p. 177

Germany, acknowledging the interests of the United States in this situation, assured President Roosevelt that they interested only in debt collection, and had no desire to establish any footholds in South America.

Roosevelt sympathized with their frustration as he was not fond of Venezuelan President Cipriano Castro, once stating to the German diplomat Speck von Sternburg: “If any South American country misbehaves toward any European country, let the European country spank it.”¹¹² Roosevelt felt sympathetic because of his fondness for Germany and the German people, having spent time in Dresden as a youth. He also ranked Frederick the Great and Otto von Bismarck among his personal heroes.¹¹³ Thus in the beginning Roosevelt followed a hands-off policy, and when he was informed of the British and German plan to blockade Venezuelan ports, he raised no objections. However once the Germans continued the blockade despite Venezuelan cooperation in arbitration, suspicions arose. As in a boundary dispute 7 years earlier between Great Britain and Venezuela, the Americans were concerned over violation of the Monroe Doctrine and Grover Cleveland was forced to act.¹¹⁴ The threat of a powerful state like Germany, with a strong institutionalized government and formidable military gaining a foothold in Latin America worried Roosevelt not only because of the proximity to the United States, but also because of the potential consequences the new balance of power would have for the international system.

Roosevelt, ever the ardent supporter of a strong naval force, had decided that it would be necessary to monitor the blockade of Venezuela with an American navy force capable of acting if need be. Secretary of State John Hay was informed, to his displeasure, that Britain and Germany would continue their blockade. Roosevelt informed the German Ambassador, Theodor von Holleben, that he had ordered his navy to maneuver the West Indian waters, that he wanted in every way to appear cooperating with the German, but he regretted to say that he would be obliged to interfere, “by force if necessary, if the Germans took any action which looked like the acquisition of territory in Venezuela or elsewhere along the Caribbean.”¹¹⁵

¹¹² Ibid, p. 178

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Dulles, Foster Rhea. *America's Rise to World Power: 1898-1954*. Harper & Brothers, 1955, p. 74

¹¹⁵ Morris, Edmund. *Theodore Rex*, p. 186

Germany obviously had larger ambition in Latin America, which was crippled by the geographical location of the United States and its development into a new power. This showdown in Latin America, a contest between two countries, “was also a contest between two young and determined leaders, Theodore Roosevelt and Kaiser Wilhelm II,” who shared a friendship and admiration for one another, and “neither of whom, despite brilliance or determination, could change the geography of the world, which favored the Americans.”¹¹⁶ Roosevelt did not have to be a genius to understand that the Kaiser’s entire Latin American strategy was built on an assumption of American ignorance or innocence, and was Roosevelt would not concede either of the two. The two leaders were also motivated by different considerations. The Kaiser was attempting to match other European powers who had stronger footholds in other parts of the world. Germany never had an overseas empire that could rival countries like Great Britain, France, Spain, or even Portugal. Roosevelt, on other hand, despite having toyed with ideas of annexing Latin American republics in times of great frustration, never seriously desired an overseas empire for the United States. Roosevelt preferred a peaceful resolution of the dispute that would leave Germany satisfied and Venezuela sovereign. In pursuit of this goal, Roosevelt believed the best solution would be arbitration by the international court in The Hague so that unbiased international mediators could ensure that no injustices or violations occurred.

When Roosevelt insisted that Germany arbitrate its claims with Venezuela, the Germans refused, and upon their refusal, Roosevelt ordered his battle fleet to conduct maneuvers, “with instructions that the fleet should be kept in hand and in fighting trim, and should be ready to sail at an hours notice.”¹¹⁷ Subsequently Roosevelt hosted Ambassador Holleben again and explained that Berlin’s refusal to arbitrate was unacceptable to the United States, and with an unexpected tone of diplomacy, issued a ten day ultimatum to the Germans, after which he would be obliged to order his fleet “to the Venezuelan coast and see that German forces did not take possession of any territory.”¹¹⁸ A week later, Roosevelt decided to grant the Germans 24 hours before he ordered his fleet into position on the coast. Upon this threat, the German Ambassador explained that he had been ordered by the Kaiser to undertake

¹¹⁶ Collin, Richard H. *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean*, p. 103

¹¹⁷ Brands, H. W. *T.R.: The Last Romanitc*, p. 467

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

arbitration. The Reichstag voted to submit to arbitration. Ambassador Holleben, who was perplexed by what he had heard from Roosevelt, consulted another German diplomat who knew Roosevelt well, and assured Holleben that Roosevelt was “not bluffing” when he threatened war.¹¹⁹

At Roosevelt’s behest, the parties submitted the claims to international arbitration at The Hague and the court “upheld the blockaders claim to preferential treatment as regards payment of debts, and, by implication, condoned the use of armed force as a legitimate force of collecting money.”¹²⁰ This decision signaled a reevaluation of the Monroe Doctrine’s hemispheric policy. Roosevelt’s decision to have the dispute arbitrated internationally at The Hague demonstrates his desire he long harbored for stronger international institutions with greater power affinity for a multilateral system, a subject that will be revisited after dissecting American intervention in Panama the Dominican Republic.

Testing a Liberal World Order in the Dominican Republic

“I have about the same desire to annex it as a gorged boa-constrictor might have to swallow a porcupine wrong-end-to.”¹²¹

In 1904 the Dominican Republic, dealing with an ongoing civil war, began to suffer financial difficulties; Teddy Roosevelt had just won his first term as President, since he had first become President upon the assassination of William McKinley. Roosevelt came into the Presidency with strong feelings on foreign affairs. He believed that a “vigorous domestic policy went hand in hand with a more active role in foreign affairs,” as both were “essential elements of national greatness.”¹²² The arbitration at The Hague was an early victory for Roosevelt’s policy of speaking softly but carrying a big stick, but when the financial crisis erupted in Dominican

¹¹⁹ Morris, Edmund. *Theodore Rex*, p. 191

¹²⁰ Muzicant, Ivan. *The Banana Wars*, p. 242

¹²¹ Morris, Edmund. *Theodore Rex*, p. 318

¹²² Yarbrough, Jean M. *Theodore Roosevelt and the American Political Tradition*, p. 179

Republic, he “concluded it was no longer enough to keep the European creditor nations from territorial aggrandizement.”¹²³

The situation in the Dominican Republic became to resemble the situation in Venezuela two years earlier. Another Caribbean nation was unable to pay its debts, and again European powers were impatient creditors. As stated, the Dominican Republic was in a condition of chronic revolution, and foreigners who made loans under such conditions demanded exorbitant interest. Eventually two or three European powers “were endeavoring to arrange for concerted action,” and Roosevelt was informed that the powers “intended to take and hold several of the seaports which held custom-houses.”¹²⁴ Without action, foreign powers would be in partial possession of the Dominican Republic. As the issues all surrounded the customs houses, which were the only means of raising money, Roosevelt secured an arrangement with the governmental authorities to place the custom-houses under American control.¹²⁵ In Roosevelt’s view, intervention in the Dominican crisis was inevitable, “and the only question was whether the United States or a concert of Europe took action.”¹²⁶

In January of 1905, the representatives of both governments signed a receivership agreement. The U.S. took over collection of Dominican customs revenues, disbursing 45% to the republic for ongoing expenses, with the remainder going toward adjusting the debt.¹²⁷ American intervention in this case was granted by the Dominican President Carlos Morales, who knew the European powers would accept no further promises, and admitted the necessity of handing over his country’s collection duties to avoid an international crisis. In the cases of American intervention in the Dominican Republic and Venezuela, the absence of strong international institutions proved to be a hole in the international system almost causing war between great powers.

¹²³ Ibid, p. 180

¹²⁴ Roosevelt, Theodore. *The Autobiography of Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 371

¹²⁵ Ibid, p. 372

¹²⁶ Collin, Richard H. *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean*, p. 401

¹²⁷ Muzicant, Ivan. *The Banana Wars*, p. 244

The Potential for International Institutions in an Early Liberal World Order

Ikenberry and Kupchan both stress that a new liberal world order is unable to exist without international institutions playing an important role because of the multilateral nature of the future of the international system. According to Ikenberry, the post-World War II liberal world order led by the United States was possible for four reasons, three of which will be explained here. First, the order combined the ordering mechanisms of balance, command and consent based on rules-based cooperation. Second, it was a rolling political process that led to intergovernmental bargaining and institution building. Fourth, it was built on a system of reciprocity because the United States could offer assistance without threatening complete loss of regional autonomy, due to the geographical location of U.S.¹²⁸ Kupchan adds that international institutions “are the building blocks of international community and the indispensable instruments that make possible the transformation of realms of conflict into zones of peace.”¹²⁹

Through the completed studies of Roosevelt’s interventions up to this point, we have seen Ikenberry’s criteria through the desire for the Roosevelt wanting to uphold a rules-based cooperation in Venezuela and intervening and paving the path for Cuban independence in an effort to establish a system of reciprocity. The one criteria missing is the building of international institutions capable of being “an antidote to geopolitical competition at the international level.”¹³⁰ The dilemma facing the creation of such institutions, for example the modern day United Nations (UN), World Trade Organization (WTO), or Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), was that states were not willing to cede any meaningful amount of sovereignty to a higher power with the authority to dictate rules and norms. Roosevelt understood this dilemma, and it is because he believed the League of Nations would be too weak to wield any substantial power that he was against its creation. In his acceptance speech of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906, he alluded to such an idea while on the subject of great powers waging unjust and unnecessary war on one another, saying that “It would be a master stroke if those great powers honestly bent on peace would form a League of Peace, not only to keep the peace

¹²⁸ Ikenberry, G John. *Liberal Leviathan*, p. 162

¹²⁹ Kupchan, Charles A. *The End of the American Era*, p. 292

¹³⁰ Ibid.

among themselves, but to prevent, by force if necessary, its being broken by others.”¹³¹

Because a strong enough institution did not exist, Roosevelt believed he could arbitrate disputes himself. He was given the award for negotiating a peace deal between Russia and Japan during his second presidential term, by taking measures into his own hands to act as an arbitrator. Following “the sudden decrease in international tension”, the London *Morning Post* wrote:

“Mr. Roosevelt’s success has amazed everybody, not because he succeeded, but because of the manner by which he achieved success. He has displayed not only diplomatic abilities of the very highest order, but also a great tact, great foresight, and a finesse really extraordinary. Alone – absolutely without assistance or advice – he met every situation as it arose, shaped events to suit his purpose, and showed remarkable patience, caution, and moderation. As a diplomatist Mr Roosevelt is now entitled to take high rank.”¹³²

Roosevelt’s disposition towards international institutions is also exemplified through his insistence that Germany and Venezuela allow their dispute to be arbitrated internationally in The Hague. His insistence in this case also demonstrates the high level of respect he held for foreign countries and international rules and norms, which he acquired through rigorous political studies and extensive world travelling. It often requires an international crisis for people to realize the potential benefits of international arbitration and institutions. Kupchan notes that it took the lessons of 1930s and the shock of World War II to wear down America’s opposition to engagement in international institutions. During the first decade after World War II when the United States was in the early stages of building a new international order, it turned primarily to institutions to realize its vision.¹³³

The reason for the United States reliance upon international institutions in the post war period was that it was confident that the institutions would work in their favor. In doing so it can be a vital player in institutions that will work to its advantage when international disputes arise. Kupchan notes that this strategy requires sacrificing

¹³¹ Morris, Edmund. *Colonel Roosevelt*, p. 50

¹³² Morris, Edmund. *Theodore Rex*, p. 391

¹³³ Kupchan, Charles A. *The End of the American Era*, p. 293

short-term gains for long-term benefits.¹³⁴ While the United States was not as powerful in 1904 as it was 1994, Roosevelt still understood that the international system was in constant flux, and that “ambition, self-interest, and war were not simply the products of foolish misconceptions of which American could disabuse traditional rulers; they were a natural human conditions that required purposeful American engagement in international affairs.”¹³⁵ The most purposeful engagement in international affairs would be through international institutions where the playing field would be equal, where multiple parties would carefully and thoughtfully consider resolutions, and states would be forced to consider the consequences before taking threatening actions. It is through these channels that liberal world order is preserved and all states, whether developing or highly advanced, are treated fairly. It is difficult to analyze how history would look if international institutions had existed before they were constructed, but it is in the absence of a higher power to police the world that Roosevelt felt a responsibility to assume the role.

During the years when the groundwork was being laid for future relationships between the United States and its southern neighbors, it was important to establish friendly relations and mutual respect in the absence of international institutions. Roosevelt understood the importance of establishing such a relationship for geopolitical reasons. It was important to have friends in Latin America so that they would not seek out partnerships with European nations, violating the Monroe Doctrine. Roosevelt sent his friend Elihu Root, who served as Secretary of State and Secretary of War in different Roosevelt Administrations, and a statesman for whom Roosevelt had a tremendous amount of admiration and respect (once writing that he believed Root was the only one with the qualities to succeed him as President)¹³⁶, to Latin America to conduct a “good neighbor” tour. Root’s tour of Latin America established confidence among the new republics that the United States would be a beneficial and reliable partner in the future. He showed more respect vis-à-vis Latin American than other American statesmen had before, and characterized them as refined a cultivated people.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Ibid, p. 295

¹³⁵ Kissinger, Henry. *World Order*. New York: Penguin Press, 2014, p. 248

¹³⁶ Morris, Edmund. *Theodore Rex*, p. 127

¹³⁷ Schoultz, Lars. *Beneath the United States*, p. 194

Creating Order through Nation Building and Paternalism

When the United States was figuring out how it would establish a new order after World War II, the planners and policy architects “generally shared the impulse to restructure the overall international environment rather than just to protect and advance U.S. national interests.”¹³⁸ According to Ikenberry, in pursuit of this effort a great power will seek to “make the international environment congenial to its long-term security and interests through building the infrastructure of international cooperation, promoting trade and democracy in various regions of the world, and establishing partnerships.”¹³⁹ These tenets of a liberal world order could be adapted to periods of history before either World War happened. Many of the foreign interventions launched by the United States under Theodore Roosevelt demonstrate and engage in an effort to make the world a better place.

President William McKinley’s famous speech in 1899 in which he claims to have been guided by God to take control of the Philippines in order to prevent the islands from being oppressed by Spain, taken over by another foreign power, or left to self-government for which they were at the time unqualified, is the foundation for paternalism in international affairs.¹⁴⁰ The feeling of paternalism by a greater state would compel it to be responsible for alleviating the suffering of peoples living in harsh and brutal conditions. Following this logic, it would not be right to allow people to live uncivilized lives without freedom while the civilized world could offer life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Teddy Roosevelt also harbored McKinley’s feelings of paternalism for those he considered savages. It is here where many historians view Roosevelt’s sincere concern for unjust human suffering as simply a pretense for imperialistic intervention conquest.

Teddy Roosevelt proclaimed in 1904 that his attitude toward the weak and chaotic governments of Latin America is not conditioned upon the desire for aggrandizement on the part of the United States, but solely on the theory that it is his duty to police these countries in the interest of order and civilization.¹⁴¹ Roosevelt believed that in order to further the advancement of civilization that some cultures

¹³⁸ Ikenberry, G John. *Liberal Leviathan*, p. 164

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Schoultz, Lars. *Beneath the United States*, p. 89

¹⁴¹ Morris, Edmund. *Theodore Rex*, p. 183

needed to be transformed.¹⁴² In his first campaign speech running for Governor of the State of New York, he shouted: “Our flag is a proud flag, and it stands for liberty and civilization. Where it has once floated, there must be no return to tyranny or savagery.”¹⁴³ These opinions held by Roosevelt lead to the conclusion that he had not considered America’s interventions abroad to constitute an American empire, instead they constituted breaking the shackles of tyranny and savagery and allowing once suffering people to have liberty and freedom. This is one way to look at Roosevelt’s decision to intervene in these case studies, in the context that he was doing out of duty to promoting the betterment of civilization and the maintenance of an order in which the United States and its new, free partners could work together towards peaceful goals.

It was stated earlier that Roosevelt enjoyed the word “Americanism”. This is a fitting word to describe him. Much like the statesman Henry Clay, who years earlier traveled the country preaching a new “National Republicanism”, which merged the practical John Adams’ nationalism with the idealistic Thomas Jefferson’s democracy¹⁴⁴, Theodore Roosevelt also preached a new kind of republicanism that sought to merge nationalism and democracy. In intervention, Roosevelt believed it was important to spread American democracy, because he believed it was the greatest form of government possible.

His rhetoric on paternalism, nation building, and democracy was not as finely tuned in the beginning of his Presidency as it became throughout his tenure. For example in 1900 it was widely accepted that Filipinos could not become citizens without endangering America’s civilization or imperiling its new form of government.¹⁴⁵ Latin American neighbors were seen in a similar light. However the sentiment soon became one of cooperation rather than disdain, and Elihu Root began the transition to the Good Neighbor policy.¹⁴⁶

To Theodore Roosevelt, intervention was about a hemispheric program or acquisition, democratization, and liberation and he believed that it was an American

¹⁴² Collin, Richard H. *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean*, p. 405

¹⁴³ Morris, Edmund. *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 715

¹⁴⁴ Mayo, Bernard. *Henry Clay: Spokesman of the New West*. The Riverside Press Cambridge, 1937, p.354

¹⁴⁵ Schoultz, Lars. *Beneath the United States*, p. 142

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 190-196

duty to spread democracy.¹⁴⁷ This implies that intervention was to be complete after liberation. As Robert Kagan states, “no sooner do they [America] invade and occupy a country than they begin looking for exits.”¹⁴⁸

The United States and Great Britain: Two Different Brands of Empires?

Some case studies appear in each chapter because the American intervention or motive can be interpreted as pursuing a liberal world order or pursuing an empire; these are the analysis of the British Empire, intervention in Cuba and intervention in Panama. The British Empire will be better covered in the empire chapter, but it makes an interesting case. According to Ikenberry, “Great Britain led in giving shape to an international order marked by great power, imperial, and liberal arrangements.” Great Britain, like the United States emerged as a leading power of its day and pushed and pulled other states in a liberal direction, looking after the overall stability and openness of the system.¹⁴⁹

Even Niall Ferguson, who has written about the British Empire in immaculate detail throughout his career, at times offers important points that support the notion of a wider disparity between the American and British “Empires”. While explaining one of the benefits of the British Empire – that it encouraged investors to put their money into developing economies, he draws a comparison between India and Argentina. India, a *de jure* British colony, and Argentina, a *de facto* British colony, received very different investments. A great deal more money was invested into India by the British than in Argentina, which Ferguson attributes to a ‘seal of good housekeeping’.¹⁵⁰ While Ferguson recognizes that many factors are at play when talking about a country’s economic situation, he in particular mentions the imposition of British-style institutions.¹⁵¹

By the time World War II broke out, Great Britain, while still a powerful and globally important state, was no longer comparable to the British Empire of the 18th and 19th centuries. Winston Churchill observed in a sardonic, backhanded

¹⁴⁷ Morris, Edmund *Theodore Rex*, p. 24

¹⁴⁸ Kagan, Robert. *The World America Made*, p. 12

¹⁴⁹ Ikenberry, G John. *Liberal Leviathan*, p. 16

¹⁵⁰ Ferguson, Niall. *Empire*, p. 360

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 361

compliment kind of way that “Americans could always be counted on to do the right thing, but only after exhausting all other alternatives.”¹⁵² This point is proven by Churchill’s reaction to the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7th of 1941, when the Americans were pushed into the war. Churchill “could hardly conceal his excitement” and “jumped to his feet and started for the door with the announcement, ‘We shall declare war on Japan.’”¹⁵³ Churchill valued the ‘special relationship’ shared between Britain and the United States, just like his counterpart Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and just like Theodore Roosevelt. Ferguson explains that this relationship, from its earliest days, “had its own special ambiguity, as the heart of which lay the Americans’ different conception of empire.”¹⁵⁴

This point is elucidated due to the strength it may have in explaining the relationship that the United States had with its “colonies” to that of Great Britain and its “colonies”.

As demonstrated through analyses of American intervention in Panama, Cuba, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic, the United States under Teddy Roosevelt had a different relationship with the states in which it intervened than that of the British. Roosevelt wanted the United States to fill the void left by the decline of the British Empire, but not to impose the same style of empire-order that the British had imposed on its colonies.

Building an Empire

In order to analyze the possibility of Roosevelt using the craft of foreign policy to create an American empire, we have to bring back the definitions and ideas of empire introduced and worked out by Niall Ferguson and Robert Kagan. Utilizing the definition from Liezen, Ferguson proceeds to define an empire as “a polity that rules over wide territories and many people.”¹⁵⁵ He recalls the British Empire and the

¹⁵² Kagan, Robert. *The World America Made*, p. 15

¹⁵³ Ferguson, Niall. *Empire*, pp. 342-3

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 353

¹⁵⁵ Ferguson, Niall. *Colossus: The Price of America’s Empire*. Penguin Books, Allen Lane, 2004, p. 10

territories over which it ruled throughout its history, for example the argument that “large parts of the British Empire in Africa and Asia were ruled indirectly – that is, through the agency of local potentates rather than British governors.”¹⁵⁶ He also alludes to Argentina, where British did not formally govern, “but the merchant banks of London exerted such a powerful influence on its fiscal and monetary policy that Argentina’s interdependence was heavily qualified.”¹⁵⁷ The British Empire is to Ferguson the most useful case to study in order to evaluate the question surrounding the existence of an American empire. The British Empire will be the first case in this chapter.

The British Empire

At its height, the British Empire “governed roughly a quarter of the world’s population, covered about the same proportion of the earth’s land surface and dominated nearly all its oceans,” it was the largest Empire to have ever existed.¹⁵⁸ The United States, of course was born out of the British Empire. Niall Ferguson holds that Americans are taught what he calls the “creation myth”, or the premise that the United States was conceived after a revolution, a struggle for liberty, against an evil empire. The reality, however, according to Ferguson, is that the American War for Independence was actually a civil war, and soon after seceding from Britain, America began acting like an imperial power.¹⁵⁹

The assertion that the British Empire was a force of good for the world is one that would align with Roosevelt’s beliefs and actions. Niall Ferguson argued that the benefits of the English language and literature, a functioning banking system, common law, Protestantism, representative assemblies, the idea of liberty and even team sports were brought to Britain’s colonies and contributed to their development.¹⁶⁰ Theodore Roosevelt ventured to Africa after the expiration of his second term in office and had the chance to see what was part of the British Empire in

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ferguson, Niall. *Empire*, p. xii

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 89

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, p. xxv

Northern Africa. Seeing the presence of the Empire in these lands, he was sure that all the North African lands were better off as imperial protectorates. He not only admired what the French had done in Algeria, but also believed that the British should continue to govern Egypt, if only to keep out of the hands of Kaiser Wilhelm II.¹⁶¹ While Roosevelt “marveled at the material and moral improvements brought about by twenty eight years of British rule,” he was also dismayed at the quality of the current army regime, “some of whose officers reminded him of the worst caricatures of Kipling,” and were arrogant Englishmen.¹⁶² These beliefs are evident through Roosevelt’s foreign policy actions. As President he did not hesitate to send gunboats to the Mediterranean to protect American interests, or send the Great White Fleet around the world to showcase American naval power and at the same time quell any potential threats. Roosevelt’s ardent belief in the benefits and the necessity of Manifest Destiny, the Monroe Doctrine, and his corollary, the Roosevelt Corollary, which he annexed to the fundamental groundwork of the Monroe Doctrine, demonstrate this belief. He also knew that when the British Empire became weaker, the United States had a responsibility to assume the role of the fallen empire, albeit in a different shape with different aspirations.

In his book, *The World America Made*, Robert Kagan also weighs in on the ambivalence of Americans when it comes to the notion of an American Empire. His claim is that the British had few if any moral qualms about ruling other peoples, they believed that they had vocational rule and maintained a professional imperial service and a permanent colonial office. The Americans, on the other hand, Kagan also considers imperialists, but reluctant, conscience-ridden, distracted, half-hearted imperialists.¹⁶³ He goes on to say that the American imperialistic style was not to maintain colonies, or at least to hold the intention to control colonies or other states, but instead to station forces in foreign lands until the affairs have been properly managed. In this sense, Kagan, like Ferguson, contends that Americans are in denial when they do not acknowledge that they are actually in the business of foreign intervention and occupation.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ Morris, Edmund. *Colonel Roosevelt*, p. 34

¹⁶² Ibid, p. 37

¹⁶³ Kagan, Robert. *The World America Made*, pp. 12-13

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 13

The Manifest Destiny of an Empire

“Yet it [Manifest Destiny] was more than an expression: it was a whole matrix, a manner of interpreting the time and space of ‘America.’ Seen from that angle it belonged to the peculiar fusion of providential and republican ideology that took place after the Revolution, a most dynamic combination of sacred and secular concepts. Visions of the United States as a sacred space providentially selected for divine purposes found a counterpart in the secular idea of the new nation of liberty as a privileged ‘stage’ for the exhibition of a new world order, a great ‘experiment’ for the benefit of humankind as a whole.”¹⁶⁵

The question of how Manifest Destiny embraced Niall Ferguson’s American Empire or Robert Kagans’ idea of where America should stand in the global order is a point from which we can expand in America’s expansionist history. After a brief history of Manifest Destiny, it will be demonstrated that the idea of Manifest Destiny was indeed an important backbone to the behavior of a superpower. The Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, who himself was a supporter of the idea, would provide no deviation from the goals for the United States outlined through Manifest Destiny.

The idea of Manifest Destiny had not yet been fully refined and completed, but many American politicians were already feeling the fervor of expansionism. The subsequent Presidencies of William Henry Harrison, which lasted only 1 month, and John Tyler, did not do much in terms of Latin American relations. President Tyler, however was an ardent supporter of annexing Texas to the union, and did so in 1845, to the chagrin of the Mexican government.¹⁶⁶ The issue of annexing Texas was not however a simple sectional battle. It had two currents, one surrounding the issue of expansion, and the other surrounding the issue of slavery, and whether Texas would be slave-free or slave-owning State. Regarding territorial expansion, which was already a powerful independent political force in early Jacksonian America, by the 1830s expansion had become a dominant ideology, and in the 1840s it would have its

¹⁶⁵ Stephanson, Anders. *Manifest Destiny: American Expansionism and the Empire of Right*. Hill and Wang, 1995, p. 5

¹⁶⁶ Peterson, Norma Lois. *The Presidencies of William Henry Harrison & John Tyler*. University Press of Kansas, 1989, p. 258

own name, Manifest Destiny.¹⁶⁷ Tyler's successor, James Polk, became an expansionist leader and was willing to wage war against Mexico for more territory, namely New Mexico and California.¹⁶⁸ Polk also brought about "an amazing and bloodless conquest of territory in the Pacific Northwest."¹⁶⁹ In declaring war on Mexico, Polk declared:

"After reiterated menaces, Mexico has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our territory and shed American blood upon American soil. She has proclaimed that hostilities have commenced, and that the two nations are now at war. As war exists, and, notwithstanding all our efforts to avoid it, exists by the act of Mexico herself, we are called upon by every consideration of duty and patriotism to vindicate with decision the honor, the rights, and the interests of our country."¹⁷⁰

The vote to declare war on Mexico identifies the peak in expansionist sentiment and the 1840s "served as a convenient rationale – a sort of justification of bold adventures in behalf of the expansion of the United States ... Indeed, the United States had been providentially blessed by being presented with the opportunity to appropriate new expanses of space; a sort of geographical predestination was pushing the nation westward."¹⁷¹

The United States was indeed using its advantageous geographical position to behave as an empire. According to Robert Kagan, the United States owes its existence to the principle of interference, and "has always been a good deal less concerned about the sovereign inviolability of other nations. It has reserved to itself the right to intervene everywhere and everywhere."¹⁷² When a state operates in a way where it decides to forcefully remove a tyrant, without the consent of other powers, or the Security Council in post-UN times, this is the behavior of an empire. According to Robert Kagan, the United States has operated like this throughout its history, from John Quincy Adams to George W. Bush.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁷ Schoultz, Lars. *Beneath the United States*, p. 25

¹⁶⁸ Bergeron p. 59

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 134

¹⁷⁰ Schoultz, Lars. *Beneath the United States*, p. 28

¹⁷¹ Ibid, p. 65

¹⁷² Kagan, Robert. *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order*. Vintage Books, 2003, p. 136

¹⁷³ Ibid, p. 139

While Kagan didn't use the word empire in this sense, Niall Ferguson had. In Ferguson's words, "like Rome, it [the United States] began with a relatively small core – the founds states' combined area today is just 8 percent of the total extent of the United States – which expanded to dominate half a continent."¹⁷⁴ Expansion is a necessary process for an empire, and throughout the 19th century "the new Republic simply continued the old British practice of treating traditional native hunting grounds as terra nullius, free, ownerless land."¹⁷⁵

Between 1875 and 1914, about one quarter of the world was claimed as colonies. The United States, though an economic powerhouse at the time, was in this respect still outside the ranger of serious players.¹⁷⁶ The meaning of Manifest Destiny ranged from westward expansion after independence from Great Britain, to the role of the United States in the world. This role, according to Woodrow Wilson in 1919, was to set "a responsible example to all the world of what free Government is and can do for the maintenance of the right standard, both national and international," and "to be a mediator of peace," and "light of the world."¹⁷⁷ Theodore Roosevelt concluded that the root of Manifest Destiny was belligerent, but it was a practical way of looking at territory. Unlike the decadent northeasterners, whose commercial policies had turned them into a "timid bourgeoisie," oriented more toward Europe than the West, the Americans already living west understood the significance of territorial expansion for national greatness. Roosevelt wrote a biography of Thomas Hart Benton, a Missouri statesman, and "the most typical representative of the Western and ultra-American."¹⁷⁸ Roosevelt admired Benton's dedication to Manifest Destiny and national greatness. As will be discussed later, Roosevelt believed control of the Panama Canal was vital to the fulfillment of Manifest Destiny. In fact, the architect of Mt. Rushmore, Gutzon Borglum, who knew and admired Roosevelt, selected him because he thought the canal fulfilled Manifest Destiny and made the United States into a world power.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ Ferguson, Niall. *Colossus*, p. 34

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, p. 35

¹⁷⁶ Stephanson p.73

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 117

¹⁷⁸ Yarbrough, Jean M. Theodore Roosevelt and the American Political Tradition, p. 55

¹⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 1

A Doctrine to Defend an Empire

The Monroe Doctrine came about in the first half of the 19th century, in the middle of Manifest Destiny. In pursuit of Manifest Destiny, the United States was expanding across “ownerless” lands, but if they wanted real empire, or hegemony, it had to be free of interference from other foreign powers.

The British Empire had different concerns than the American Empire; they had to protect themselves from different threats. For the majority of the British Empire’s lifetime, it had existed primarily unchallenged by any major threats. As stated by Ferguson, “The last years of Queen Victoria were a time of imperial hubris: there simply seemed no limit to what could be achieved by British firepower and finance.”¹⁸⁰ However the coming times would change feelings about the British Empire from arrogance to anxiety, as rising adversaries and disgruntled subjects began to signal the coming of the end of British dominance. The United States had better safeguard its Empire, if it were to have one at all.

The wave of revolutions spreading across Latin America in the 19th century and the consequential recognition of new republics had a far-reaching impact. In an address in 1821, President Monroe merely stated his “hope that the Spanish government would accept the impossibility of suppressing the revolutions in Latin America and recognize the new republics.”¹⁸¹ Formal recognitions on the part of the United States followed soon after. Around the same time, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams was telling British counterparts that Britain should “leave the rest of this continent to us,” and Russian counterparts that the United States would contest the right of “Russia to any territorial possessions on the continent of North America.”¹⁸² Adams also told the British minister to the United States that “the whole system of modern colonization was an abuse of government, and it was time that it should come to an end”; President Monroe added in his annual message to Congress that “as a principle, in which the rights and interests of the people of the United State are equally involved, that the American Continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered

¹⁸⁰ Kupchan, Charles A. *The End of the American Era*, p. 222

¹⁸¹ Cunningham, Jr., Noble E. *The Presidency of James Monroe*. University Press of Kansas, 1996, p. 150

¹⁸² *Ibid*, p. 151

as subjects for future Colonization by any European Power.”¹⁸³ The United States, however, at the time did not have an adequate military force to support its claim on the Western Hemisphere.

James Monroe’s address to Congress in 1823 contained two passages that would come to be known as the Monroe Doctrine. In those passages, he laid down the basic principles of U.S. foreign policy, that the “New World should henceforth not be considered subject to future colonization by any European power and any attempt by a European power to extend its political system to any part of the Western Hemisphere would be viewed by the United States as a manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward it and as dangerous to its peace and safety.”¹⁸⁴ The doctrine was fundamentally a proclamation over the Western Hemisphere by the United States, and its use throughout history has been to promote U.S. interests and dominance more than to exclude European intervention. In the nineteenth century, U.S. interests in Latin America became about “securing stable and reliable trading partners”; this objective, as we will see, came hand in hand with political intervention.¹⁸⁵ Monroe’s successors, especially his direct successor, the nationalist and man who played an important role in forming the Monroe Doctrine, John Quincy Adams continued this policy and built up the importance of the role of the United States in the Western Hemisphere. The Monroe Doctrine remained a pillar of U.S. foreign policy throughout the nineteenth century and its principles were invoked most visibly and a most important time at the turn of the twentieth century under President Roosevelt.

Between the Monroe Doctrine and the rise of Theodore Roosevelt, American administrations treated relations with Latin America in different ways, some placing more importance on the region than others. A summarization of this time period is important to fill in the gaps between the Monroe Doctrine and Theodore Roosevelt. Following the formative years of the Monroe Doctrine under the leadership of Monroe, Clay, and Adams, President Andrew Jackson paid less attention to the new republics south of the United States. Jackson and his Secretary of State and successor to the Presidency Martin Van Buren gave first priority to Great Britain, France, and Spain, due to their important roles as markets for U.S. exports. Jackson and his followers in general showed contempt and a lack of enthusiasm for revolutions and

¹⁸³ Ibid, p. 152

¹⁸⁴ Johnson, John J. *A Hemisphere Apart*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990, p. 85

¹⁸⁵ Meade, Teresa A. *A History of Modern Latin America*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, p. 128

intervention, but did little to prevent the revolution in Texas and ended up recognizing a Texas independent of Mexico. The administration did not materially expand trade in Central or South America, except for an increase in trade with Mexico.¹⁸⁶

Strong defense of the Monroe Doctrine was difficult; one of the main reasons for this was the size of the American navy. By 1881, “every major European power and several Latin American ones possessed navies superior to that of the United States.”¹⁸⁷ Under President Arthur, the United States began an effort to resolve this weakness. Under President Harrison and Secretary of the Navy Benjamin Tracy, the U.S. finally began to flaunt a powerful navy. In 1892, during a crisis involving Chile, the United States used its navy to force Chile to yield to its demands, much to the pleasure of the young Theodore Roosevelt.¹⁸⁸ During the Spanish-American War, the build up and role of the navy was critical to the American effort. After all, the Monroe Doctrine was little more than national pride dressed up as a sphere of interest policy, and unless the U.S. finally put substance behind its hemispheric claims, a strong European power could suddenly supplant a weak European power on America’s doorstep.¹⁸⁹

Theodore Roosevelt was President McKinley’s Assistant Secretary of the Navy and played an instrumental role in the Spanish-American War primarily through his ideology of naval warfare and security. A year before the beginning of the war, Roosevelt confided to naval officer William Wirt Kimball that there were two good reasons for the upcoming war: “First, America had both an interest and humanitarian duty to intervene on behalf of the Cubans, and second, war with Spain would give Americans something to think of which isn’t material gain, while at the same time providing the army and navy with valuable combat experience at little risk. Unlike the Civil War, this conflict would bind the nation together in a spirit of shared sacrifice and struggle in the service of lofty ideals.”¹⁹⁰

There are many lessons to be learned from the British Empire. The Monroe Doctrine could be viewed as a safeguard to protecting an empire by keeping other

¹⁸⁶ Cole, Donald B. *The Presidency of Andrew Jackson*. University Press of Kansas, 1993, p. 132

¹⁸⁷ Doenecke, Justus D. *The Presidencies of James A. Garfield & Chester A. Arthur*. University Press of Kansas, 1981, p. 146

¹⁸⁸ Socolofsky, Homer E, and Allan B Spetter. *The Presidency of Benjamin Harrison*. University Press of Kansas, 1987, p. 151

¹⁸⁹ Brands, H. W. *T.R.: The Last Romantic*, p. 309

¹⁹⁰ Yarbrough, Jean M. Theodore Roosevelt and the American Political Tradition, p. 111

empires at bay. According to Ferguson, the principal threats to British rule were not national independence movements, but other empires.¹⁹¹ Ferguson believes that had the British Empire continued to rule its overseas territories and avoided conflict with other imperial powers, it would not have fallen how and when it did. He contends “the Empire was dismantled not because it oppressed subject peoples for centuries, but because it took up arms for just a few years against far more oppressive empires.”¹⁹² After all, Ferguson describes the French, Belgians, Germans, and even the Japanese and Russians as being far more oppressive empires than the British. Kagan would agree with these points about the British Empire. He contends that the by the late 19th century the British control of the seas combined with the balance of power in Europe had provided security and prosperity. He goes on to say the world was closer because of what we today call globalization, and peace was maintained for the most part. Yet the outbreak of World War I brought “the age of hyper-nationalism, despotism, and economic calamity.”¹⁹³ In this respect, the Monroe Doctrine’s goal to keep European powers away from America was a good idea, because America could continue to operate and expand its empire without distractions from other powers.

Roosevelt’s quick actions to invoke the Monroe Doctrine and resolve any dispute between the western hemisphere and a European power could be seen as an effort to keep America focused on the important groundwork of building its empire first in its backyard. He jumped quickly to arbitrate any claims and appease the European powers at the price of giving an unfair deal to new Latin American republic if it meant peace would be maintained.

The Precondition of Intervention for American Hegemony – Definitions

“Today the United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition. Why? It is not because of the pure friendship or good will felt for it. It is not simply by reason of its high character as a civilized state, nor because wisdom and justice and equity are the invariable characteristics of the dealings with the United States. It is because, in addition to all

¹⁹¹ Ferguson, Niall. *Empire*, p. 294

¹⁹² Ibid, p. 296

¹⁹³ Kagan, Robert. *The World America Made*, p. 6

other grounds, its infinite resources combined with its isolated position render it master of the situation and practically invulnerable as against any or all other powers.”¹⁹⁴

- Richard Olney, 1895

In this section, I will look at how Roosevelt’s interventions in the chosen case studies fit into the idea of a hegemony outlined historically by Niall Ferguson, and how the motives and results fit into Robert Kagan’s idea of a world driven by American hegemony. In order to do this, different elements of intervention will be discussed in this section. These include interventions based on economic concerns, expanded trade, and access to markets; intervention based on the desire for territorial expansion; and attitudes toward intervention.

Hegemony

I would like to append Ferguson’s definition of hegemony with one taken from an essay by Dennis Florig, where he operates with the Gramscian definition of hegemony. Florig explains that the concept of hegemony has come to have various meanings. The Gramscian definition conceives hegemonic power as being based on coercion and consent. In this context, leadership of a political system requires both hard and soft power. That means that military and economic coercion combined with ideological and political coercion are used in conjunction to influence other states to accept the hegemon’s rules.¹⁹⁵ Through analyzing empire building vis-à-vis liberal world order building, the basis of American hegemony will be established. The question surrounds the Roosevelt’s concept of hegemony and whether or not he sought to establish American hegemony through coercion and consent.

Colonialism and Imperialism

“We may be certain of one thing: whether we wish it or not, we can not avoid hereafter having duties to do in the face of other nations. All that we can do is to

¹⁹⁴ Secretary of State Richard Olney’s message to Great Britain, July 20, 1895, quoted in Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *Major Problems in American Foreign Policy: Documents and Essays, Vol. 1: to 1914* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1978), p.246. Quoted from Clayton et al., p 231

¹⁹⁵ Florig, Dennis. “Hegemonic Overreach vs. Imperial Overstretch.” *Review of International Studies*, vol. 36, no. 4, 2010, pp. 1103–1119., doi:10.1017/S0260210510000197.

settle whether we shall perform these duties well or ill. Let us further make it evident that we use no words which we are not prepared to back up with deeds, and that while our speech is always moderate, we are ready and willing to make it good.”¹⁹⁶

In order to talk about American intervention in terms of imperialism and colonialism, these terms must first be defined. In this paper, I will use the definitions of imperialism and colonialism as laid out by Robert Young (2001). While both of these terms involved forms of subjugation of one by another, there is a distinction to be made; and while imperialism is far more relevant to this paper than colonialism, it is still important to draw the distinction.

Colonialism functioned as an activity on the periphery, economically motivated, while imperialism operated as a policy of state, driven by grandiose projects of power.¹⁹⁷ Imperialism, historically, was typically driven by ideology from the state and concerned with the assertion and expansion of state power. Imperialism is also susceptible to analysis as a concept while colonialism is more difficult because it was more of a practice. Colonialism was also motivated by the desire for living space or the extraction of riches.¹⁹⁸ Those whose primary aim was to settle elsewhere rather than to rule others also embraced the practice of colonialism. The process of colonialism was conducted primarily before the twentieth century, for example by the British Empire in the Americas, Australia, and in India.

Imperialism is better defined as the exercise of power either through direct conquest or through political and economic influence that effectively amounts to a similar form of domination. Both involve the practice of power through facilitating institutions and ideologies.¹⁹⁹ According to Young, “unlike colonialism, imperialism is driven by ideology and a theory of sorts, in some instances even to the extent that it can operate as much against purely economic interests for them. Whereas exploitation and settler colonies were established according to pragmatic needs, and generally run according to the interests of business or settlers, imperialism was a very inefficient form of economic exploitation.”²⁰⁰ While many scholars maintain that imperialism was economically inefficient, economic gain was one of, but not the most

¹⁹⁶ Address of Vice President Roosevelt, Minnesota State Fair, Minneapolis, Sept. 2nd, 1901

¹⁹⁷ Young, Robert J.C. *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction*. Blackwell Publishing, 2001, p. 16

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 19

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 27

²⁰⁰ Ibid.

important, motives for American imperialistic conquests during the Roosevelt administration.

The wide breadth covered by the term imperialism becomes notably evident when reading its different interpretations. Niall Ferguson organized a table in order to demonstrate the different ways that imperialism could service a nation. He explains first that imperial power can be acquired by more than one type of political system, ranging from tyranny to democracy, the objectives can range from security to collection of rents to expansion, and that it can be implemented by more than one kind of functionary, from civil servants to elites. He adds that there are many varieties of imperial economics systems, “ranging from slavery to laissez-faire”, and finally that it is not a given that the benefits of imperialism go automatically to the elite. The United States, Ferguson argues, is an imperial power with a lot in common to the Roman model of empire, in which “citizenship was obtainable under certain conditions regardless of ethnicity.”²⁰¹

The Exercise of Indirect Control over Cuba

Niall Ferguson’s conception of empire has already been defined in this paper as a great power that exerts both direct and indirect control over foreign lands. He maintains that the United States has been exercising indirect imperial control since its conception after 1776. He admonishes those who believe that real imperialism “means direct monopoly control over the organization and the use of armed might, direct control over the administration of justice and the definition thereof [and it] means control over what is bought and sold, the terms of trade and the permissions to trade.”²⁰² This he provides as evidence that Americans are in denial of the fact that the United States has behaved in an imperial manner characteristic of an empire. Ferguson claims that Cuba is a fine example of this exercise of both direct and indirect control.

At the time of Cuba’s second war of independence against Spain in 1895, many Americans, despite feeling uneasy about the situation in Cuba, hoped direct intervention could be avoided. Theodore Roosevelt’s attitude towards war, as has

²⁰¹ Ferguson, Niall. *Colossus*, p. 12

²⁰² Ibid, p. 8

been touched on already, was more complex than his bellicose letters or many historians suggest. As an early advocate of intervention in Cuba, he felt that “the price of his advocacy was participation in the war, especially risking his life.”²⁰³ He was not like most of the elite from the Northeast, he believed that fighting in wars was the responsibility of all classes, not just the young or the poor, and always harbored the will to go to war and a responsibility because his father had paid his way out of serving during the Civil War. While President Cleveland was declaring American neutrality, Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge were arguing for intervention. Roosevelt and Lodge favored Cuban independence over continued Spanish misrule. They believed anything was better than the continuance of Spanish rule. Becoming Assistant Secretary of the Navy in 1897, Roosevelt continued to fight for Cuban independence, once saying “There is absolutely but one possible solution of a permanent nature to that affair, and that is Cuban independence.” He felt so strongly about the cause that he could barely restrain himself.²⁰⁴

Theodore Roosevelt had his heart and mind set on going to war in Cuba. When Congress authorized the raising of three National Volunteer Cavalry regiments, Roosevelt lobbied the Secretary of War on his own behalf and was eventually made lieutenant-colonel of a regiment. His colonel in regiment, which came to be called the Rough Riders “because the bulk of the men were from the Southwestern ranch country and were skilled in the wild horsemanship of the great plains,” was Leonard Wood, a physician who would oversee Cuba’s transition upon the completion of the war.²⁰⁵ In addition to the ranch men, the Rough Riders consisted of “a number of first-class young fellows from the East, most of them from colleges like Harvard, Yale, and Princeton,” and many of whom were friends of Roosevelt and athletic champions.²⁰⁶ Roosevelt’s regiment fought with notable valor and finesse throughout the war, and he made sure that they felt his appreciation, at one point allowing eleven hundred pounds of beans to be deducted from his salary so that he could provide food for his men. The Rough Riders had been in service in Cuba only four months, and

²⁰³ Collin, Richard H. *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean*, p. 506

²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 507

²⁰⁵ Roosevelt, Theodore. *The Autobiography of Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 156

²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 163

afterward Roosevelt remarked “there are no four months in my life to which I look back with more pride and satisfaction.”²⁰⁷

On the heels of the victory over the Spanish in Cuba, the United States had effectively removed the Spanish Empire from the Western hemisphere. As a major power in the region, the United States asserted its authority throughout the hemisphere. With the victory in Cuba, and the subsequent acceptance of the Monroe Doctrine by Britain following events in Venezuela and the Dominican Republic, the United States became unchallenged in the Western hemisphere.²⁰⁸ Cuba was an important final step in ridding the North American continent of Europeans. Theodore Roosevelt had decided, even before his Presidency, but resolutely during, that European expeditionary naval forces to keep the pace and restore order in the West could no longer be tolerated. In order to prevent Europeans from undertaking such efforts, Roosevelt hoped that the newly independent republics of the Caribbean, Central, and South America would not succumb to chaos, inviting European powers to restore order and establish footholds in the Western hemisphere.

The U.S. could not continue to occupy Cuba, but had to come up with a “mechanism whereby the United States could grant formal independence but maintain control over people whom they considered unfit for self-government.”²⁰⁹ Out of this thinking came the Platt Amendment, its “preamble authorized the President ‘to leave the government and control of the island of Cuba to its people as soon as a government shall have been established under a constitution which, either as a part thereof or in an ordinance appended thereto, shall define the future relations of the United States with Cuba, substantially as follows...’ The heart of the ‘as follows’ was Article 3, which restricted the independence of the Cuban government by granting the United States ‘the right to intervene for the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty.’”²¹⁰

The Platt Amendment was strategically beneficial to the United States for two reasons, the first being that it allowed intervention to safeguard stability and prevent eager European imperialists from preying on weak republics, and second, under

²⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 182

²⁰⁸ Hilaire, Max. *International Law and the United States Military Intervention in the Western Hemisphere*. Kluwer Law International, 1997, p. 3

²⁰⁹ Schoultz, Lars. *Beneath the United States*, p. 148

²¹⁰ Ibid.

Article 7, it provided the United States with “lands necessary for coaling or naval stations at certain specified points.”²¹¹ Under this article, Guantanamo Bay was sold to the United States, which it still controls to this day. These lands, important as they were because of their geographic proximity to Nicaragua, where ongoing debates and efforts were being made to build an interoceanic canal, allowed the United States to in a way own the waters surrounding the new Caribbean republics. In this way, with the United States granting itself the power to “straighten out things if they get seriously bad,” American hegemony had been formalized.²¹²

The Platt Amendment also demonstrated that the U.S. could be an empire with indirect power over other sovereign states, much like the British. The U.S. even had a military base now in Cuba, not to mention strict control over the island's foreign policy. The United States demonstrated business and strategic interests when deciding to maintain indirect control of Cuba through the Platt Amendment. The amendment also “precluded any bilateral arrangement between Cuba and a rival foreign power, thus giving the United States an effective veto power over the island's foreign policy.”²¹³ Roosevelt, while steering the United States in a new direction in the world order, was also adhering to traditional American foreign policy. He could not grant Cuba independence and then believe in the goodness of “hands-off” policy. In this sense, the American hegemony that came from Cuba's independence, was built on first consent, and then later through aspects of coercion.

Robert Kagan comments on the nature and ideology of the American people: “To be an American is to believe in and be committed to what Americans, and only Americans, like to call ‘our way of life’.”²¹⁴ It is to the standard of these American principles that most Americans hold outsiders. Kagan goes on to mention that even “John Quincy Adams, in the same speech in which he warned against seeking monsters to destroy²¹⁵, urged the peoples of Europe to follow the American example and mount revolutions against centuries-old monarchies: ‘Go thou and do likewise!’”²¹⁶ It is this attitude that led men like Theodore Roosevelt to believe that the American way was the most righteous and noble and way therefore others should

²¹¹ Ibid, p. 149

²¹² Ibid, p. 151

²¹³ Ferguson, Niall. *Colossus*, p. 55

²¹⁴ Kagan, Robert. *The World America Made*, p. 11

²¹⁵ John Quincy Adams's Warning Against the Search for "Monsters to Destroy," 1821

²¹⁶ Kagan, Robert. *The World America Made*, p. 12

strive to achieve the American way of life. It was thus unthinkable that an empire like the United States could allow Cuba to carve a path totally uninfluenced by the United States.

Empire by Canal

The idea of a canal across the Isthmus of Central America was important to both US Presidents dating back beyond Zachary Taylor and Millard Fillmore. The dream, however, would not be realized until Theodore Roosevelt began construction five decades later. At the time of Taylor and Fillmore, the process of building a canal was too complicated and permissions were not easy to attain. Instead, railroad rights were granted and work was begun on railroads across Panama and Mexico. These two Presidents set a strong moral precedent towards Latin America, as both were aggressive defenders of the rights of the U.S. and promoters of its advantages wherever feasible, “but neither man believed in taking advantage of another nation’s weakness or in following any policy that could not be morally defended.”²¹⁷

In 1904 Senator Mark Hanna of Ohio, an influential politician during Roosevelt’s presidency, believed that the Panama Canal was merely a crossroads of American commerce, and the oceans but highways for American ships. Mark Hanna learned in life that industry created wealth, and wealth subsidized good government.²¹⁸ Many politicians of the day shared Hanna’s view on economic gain and wealth, and the President was no exception. However, Teddy Roosevelt (reading a study of Indo-European ethnicity at the time, in Italian) possessed a much more cosmopolitan curiosity than did Mark Hanna.²¹⁹ Roosevelt’s interest in American imperialistic conquest was rooted deeper in political motivation than it was in economic gain, but there is not doubt that the United States profited through the creation and control of the Panama Canal.

The United States became involved with Latin America in a more complex and intricate manner at the end of the nineteenth century than it had ever before. At the time of Roosevelt’s Presidency, “the domestic economy emerged as a political

²¹⁷ Smith, Elbert B. *The Presidencies of Zachary Taylor and Millard Fillmore*. University Press of Kansas, 1988, p. 223

²¹⁸ Morris, Edmund. *Theodore Rex*, p. 311

²¹⁹ Ibid.

issue capable of generating intense and sustained public opinion,” and capable of influencing the contours of Washington’s policy toward Latin America.²²⁰ According to most colonial historians, the use of force abroad by colonial powers to “remove impediments on economic activity in foreign territories for their nationals was a routine imperial policy.”²²¹ Under this assumption, American involvement in Latin America was aimed primarily at the protection of economic stakes in turbulent regions on behalf of private groups.

It is not difficult to justify American involvement in Central America on economic grounds, as in the early 1900s, the “U.S. market share was well over 60 percent” in Panama, Venezuela, Haiti, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic.²²² Most historians therefore attribute American involvement in Latin America to the following motives: debt settlement and the security of American investments against dissident leaders. In this respect, American actions “followed more or less historical patterns of intervention because debt collection was recognized as a legitimate form of military involvement by international law in this period.”²²³ In two Latin American cases did a country default on its ability to repay the claims of foreign (European) citizens; they were 1902 in Venezuela and the Dominican Republic beginning in 1903. Roosevelt interfered in both cases, operating under the pretenses that came to be known as the Roosevelt Corollary; and in the case of Panama, Roosevelt was determined to open one of the most important highways for trade in the world.

According to Niall Ferguson, a liberal empire is “one that enhances its own security and prosperity precisely by providing the rest of the world with generally beneficial public goods, not only economic freedom but also the institutions necessary for markets to flourish.”²²⁴ In Ferguson’s view, taking control of the Panama Canal fulfilled each of these criteria.

Robert Kagan would look at American control of the Panama Canal through a different perspective than Ikenberry or Kupchan. According to Kagan, economic order does not fall into a place through coincidence. He goes on to characterize the

²²⁰ Schoultz, Lars. *Beneath the United States*, p. 83

²²¹ Aydin, Aysegul. *Foreign Powers and Intervention in Armed Conflicts*. Stanford Security Studies, 2012. EBSCOhost.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ferguson, Niall. *Colossus*, p. 25

United States in the 20th century as a nation that perceived its wellbeing as intimately tied to a liberal free-trade international economy and thus having had the will and power to create and sustain it.²²⁵ The existence of a liberal world order, according to Kagan, is an imposition by the most powerful state in the system; and this state must believe that it will benefit from such a system.²²⁶ Teddy Roosevelt decided to use the U.S. Navy as protectors of the Panamanian independence movement, and almost immediately after declaring independence, Panama was recognized by the United States. Very soon after, a new canal treaty was signed. Roosevelt believed the United States would not only benefit from such a canal, but had a responsibility to lead the construction of the canal.

Intervention in Panama was not solely about sovereignty and the building of the Panama Canal was of course not only about improving trade routes for the world. Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge were aware that control of the area was important to national security and defense. Ferguson and Kagan know that those politicians used Panama as a way to cement American hegemony through a strong defense. In *Colossus*, Niall Ferguson quotes Henry Cabot Lodge speaking of the canal as the “outwork essential to the defense of the continental citadel.”²²⁷ The United States more or less controlled the waters from Florida down to Venezuela, and all ships that passed through it. Roosevelt used military force to obtain rights to the canal using the U.S. Navy to back the Panamanian coup against Colombia and establish Panama as an independent state.

The canal provided the United States with immense geopolitical benefits. Sailing around the horn of South America was not only a long a grueling trip for trading ships, but also for military ships.

Hegemony as a Euphemism for Empire in the Western Hemisphere

“So they have; and so have all others. The weak and the stationary have vanished as surely as, and more rapidly than, those whose citizens felt within them the

²²⁵ Kagan, Robert. *The World America Made*, p. 37

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ferguson, Niall. *Colossus*, p. 54

lift that impels generous souls to great and noble effort. This is only another way of stating the universal law of death, which is itself part of the universal law of life ...

While the nation that has dared to be great, that has had the will and the power to change the destiny of the ages, in the end must die, ... [it] really continues, though in changed form, to live forevermore.”²²⁸

-Teddy Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt had articulated an idea of world order in which the United States was the guardian of the global equilibrium.²²⁹ As President of the United States, Roosevelt was confronted with policy issues throughout the world. While Latin America is most pertinent, is it also important to think about his foreign policy in the region in tandem with developments in Asia and Europe. The industrious Rooseveltian era of foreign policy could boast the voyage of the famous White Fleet of the US Navy on a “round-the-world tour to demonstrate the nation’s new and modern battle fleet”; arbitration of the Russo-Japanese War, and settling differences among European powers over Morocco by sending delegates to Algeciras, Spain, in 1906.²³⁰ The foreign policy pursued by Roosevelt was based largely on geopolitical considerations, and according to them, the United States would play an essential and providential world role. Playing this role, the United States would “maintain peace by guaranteeing equilibrium, hovering offshore of Eurasia, and tilting the balance of power against any power threatening to dominate a strategic region.”²³¹ The United States had to establish hegemony in its own backyard if it were to have the capability of sticking its nose in regions as far as Asia.

Roosevelt thought in terms of “an international consortium of great powers, working cooperatively to advance civilization – a dream shattered when those same great powers all but destroyed civilization themselves in 1914.”²³² In this sense, Roosevelt would have conceded American hegemony for the goal a great power arrangement, but none existed. Elucidating this point, Robert Kagan writes:

The subordination of the individual nation-state to the collective will of all nations, the supplanting of nationalism by an international cosmopolitanism, the replication on the international scene of the legal and institutional restraints of American life – these goals remain as enticing to people today as they have to generations past. The only difference is that in the past, America sought to erect such

²²⁸ Morris, Edmund. *Theodore Rex*, p. 24

²²⁹ Kissinger, Henry. *World Order*, p. 303

²³⁰ Mead, Walter Russell. *Special Providence*, p. 4

²³¹ Kissinger, Henry. *World Order*, p. 247

²³² Kagan, Robert. *The World America Made*, p. 94

a world at a time when U.S. power was rising. Today, such a world is meant to compensate for an American power allegedly in decline.”²³³

In Latin America, Roosevelt did not have a situation that could be easily compared to other parts of the world. Latin America required the immediate interest of the United States due to its geological proximity. Therefore Roosevelt pursued a more vigorous, if not aggressive foreign policy. The United States granted Cuba independence, but “there had never been any intention of withdrawing from the Caribbean upon the conclusion of hostilities with Spain.”²³⁴ Three actions existed to demonstrate this intention. The first is evident through the American control of a naval base in Cuba and the Platt Amendment, granting the United States to intervene in Cuba, should the government be threatened. The second is control of Puerto Rico, which was taken from Spain after the Spanish-American War and remained a colonial possession. Third is the immediacy of the construction of a canal across the Isthmus. All of these actions were deemed to be vital in the interest of national security, and established American interests and presence in the Caribbean.

Niall Ferguson maintains, however, that the United States struggled to make good on its claim to hemispheric hegemony. In trying to extend American values, both economic and political, beyond the frontiers of its borders, its grip became weaker.²³⁵ He claims that a paradox existed because the imperial grip of the United States proved firmer when it was confronted with the bigger challenge of global power later on.

As Vice-President under McKinley, Roosevelt was sure in his conviction that world duties were an inevitable and welcome consequence of America’s aggrandizing power.²³⁶ Roosevelt looked to his country’s backyard to secure America’s role as a hemispheric hegemon free from the threat of European aggression. Writing in his autobiography about the Monroe Doctrine, Roosevelt maintained that in countries that were strong competent enough to assert it for themselves, the United States had no responsibility. Countries such as Argentina, Chile, Brazil and Canada fell under the list of countries not requiring American enforcement of the Monroe doctrine. He also said, however, that if a country like

²³³ Ibid, p. 95

²³⁴ Dulles, Foster Rhea. *America's Rise to World Power*, p. 72

²³⁵ Ferguson, Niall. *Colossus*, p. 60

²³⁶ Morris, Edmund. *Theodore Rex*, p. 24

Canada “should be overcome by some Old World Power, which then proceeded to occupy its territory, we would undoubtedly, if the American Nation needed our help, give it in order to prevent such occupation from taking place.”²³⁷

Roosevelt cemented America’s hegemony in the Western hemisphere by beginning construction of what he would consider the greatest feat of his Presidency, the Panama Canal. Roosevelt’s motivation to finally begin building the canal after years of debate and stalemate between politicians, companies, and countries, was not primarily economic, as many would be inclined to believe. Roosevelt, an impassioned student of naval warfare from an early age, believed that the canal was necessary to American naval power and capabilities in the case of war. Opening the Panama Canal under American ownership, which was a very important point, allowed the American navy “enormous advantages compared with the navies of other powers” and also allowed the navy to “project power into both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans much more easily – and cheaply – than any other state.”²³⁸ The canal would make it possible for the U.S. to assume a more engaged role in international affairs; the decline of the British Empire had made that role necessary. Roosevelt saw the importance of the canal and thus was determined see for himself the construction of this momentous waterway. Because of his determination, many have criticized the means through which Roosevelt achieved the right to begin construction of the canal across Panama, but others look back at his actions as strokes of diplomatic ingenuity, and the cementing of American hegemony.

Concluding Remarks

“During the seven and a half years that I was President, this Nation behaved in international matters toward all other nations precisely as an honorable man behaves to his fellow-men. We made no promise which we could not and did not keep. We made no threat which we did not carry out. We never failed to assert our rights in the face of the strong, and we never failed to treat both strong and weak with courtesy and justice; and against the weak when they misbehaved we were slower to assert our rights than we were with the strong.”²³⁹

²³⁷ Roosevelt, Theodore. *The Autobiography of Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 370

²³⁸ Mead, Walter Russell. *Special Providence*, p. 122

²³⁹ Roosevelt, Theodore. *The Autobiography of Theodore Roosevelt*, p. 367

Through researching Theodore Roosevelt and analyzing the theories surrounding empire building and constructing a liberal world order, I have come to the following substantial conclusions about Roosevelt's concept of the role he wanted the United States to play in the world: While he incorporated aspects and motives from both the empire building and liberal world order building theories, he held steered away from the path of an American Empire, opting to incorporate more ideas of liberal world order; he was driven by a uniquely American form of hope and determination; and he always had the larger global picture in mind when executing foreign policy decisions.

Roosevelt's Liberal World Order

Roosevelt was constantly aware of and concerned with the international balance of power. The balance of power has historically provided a foundation for international law and rule-based order and according to Ikenberry there are two reasons for this. The first is through solving the power problem through the quality an equilibrium of power between major states, because an international system organized around a balance of power restricts the ability of any one state to dominate the whole system. The other reason is that states themselves sought law and rules to strengthen their position and capacities within an international order.²⁴⁰ Roosevelt set out to maintain peace by guaranteeing equilibrium and tilting the balance against any power threatening to dominate a strategic region.²⁴¹ In doing so, Roosevelt was able to take the reins of the United States of America, a rising power, and handle them with great finesse and design.

In addition to recognizing that an underlying balance-of-power acts as the system of checks and balances within the international system due to the stable equilibrium created, Ikenberry argues that if the major powers being held in check are democracies, power disparities are of less significance.²⁴² Theodore Roosevelt may not have been as adamant that powers, either weak or great, be totally democratic, but was insistent that states, especially in the Western Hemisphere, be democratic. If

²⁴⁰ Ikenberry, G John, *Liberal Leviathan*, p. 284

²⁴¹ Kissinger, Henry, *World Order*, p. 247

²⁴² Ikenberry, G. John, *Liberal Leviathan*, p. 258

Spain had been democratic and treated its colonies in a humane way, allowing them democratic freedoms and liberties, American intervention in Cuba may not have taken place.

Not only did Roosevelt desire a balance of power in United States' own neighborhood, but he also sought to assure that a balance of power existed in other parts of the world. He utilized the U.S. Navy to hover off the shores of Asia to make sure that no one power was growing too strong. He also understood the importance of a balance in Europe, where wars had been waged for centuries. Despite a great admiration and respect for German culture, society, and language, Roosevelt held no qualms about the prospect of attacking Germany over the Venezuelan dispute, and was fully supportive of waging war against Germany during the First World War due to the potential of Germany's rising power disrupting the balance of power. Walter Russell Mead writes that the Monroe Doctrine, strongly supported and amended in a way by Roosevelt, was crucial in securing an American safety and security that depended on a balance of power in Europe.²⁴³ Roosevelt built off this doctrine and created a unique foreign policy for the United States in order to ensure its own security and the maintenance of a balance of power around the world.

American Hope and Determination

Roosevelt and his “Americanism” shaped a new era not only of domestic politics, but also of international politics. His drive to impose American values on civilizations that were not as developed as the United States or Europe were sometimes viewed with dismay because of jingoism, imperialism, or racism. He believed, however, that in order to establish a liberal world order of rules and norms, there had to be more democratic powers that functioned like those nations of the world that were most civilized.

He did unfortunately believe for example that equality would come for non-whites when they acquired the civilized characteristics of whites,²⁴⁴ but this motivated his foreign policies to civilize parts of the world that had not yet caught up. However, as Jean Yarbrough writes, “all too often, Roosevelt linked the progress of civilization

²⁴³ Mead, Walter Russell, *Special Providence*, p. 62

²⁴⁴ Morris, Edmund, *Theodore Rex*, p. 53

with explicitly racial themes, and this is what makes his narrative objectionable."²⁴⁵ He ironically supported killing the Indians while insisting that qualities such as generosity were the marks of a civilized state. He did dampen this narrative as he became President and became a Progressive.²⁴⁶ This train of thought, as explained in this paper, was likely due to this education and influence by Burgess and by Hegel.

This "Americanism" is a key concept within the theories set forth by both Ferguson and Kagan. Both authors write in their books about how Americans view the world, how America tends to believe it is above international law, and how America acts selflessly, but usually only when their interest is served. In the American style, according to Ferguson, sooner or later everyone must learn to be like the Americans, self-governing and democratic - at gunpoint if necessary.²⁴⁷ Kagan points out that Americans see war as a legitimate, even essential tool of foreign policy.²⁴⁸ Roosevelt was not a warmonger, but pioneered what Kagan writes about the American opinion of war. On the subject of armaments, Roosevelt wrote: "There is every reason why we should try and limit the cost of armaments, as these tend to grow excessive, but there is also every reason to remember that in the present stage of civilization a proper armament is the surest guarantee of peace – and is the only guarantee that war, if it does come, will not mean irreparable and overwhelmingly disaster."²⁴⁹ Thus the American way is to view wars that are important to the safety or the interests of the United States as necessary wars. That is not to say that all wars waged by the United States are detrimental, but only that the United States only decides to safeguard the balance of power because Americans also have something to lose.

A Global Perspective

This paper has made the argument that Theodore Roosevelt intended to use the power and position of the United States of America to establish a maintain a liberal world order based on a system of rules and norms. However this was a different liberal

²⁴⁵ Yarbrough, Jean M., *Theodore Roosevelt and the American Political Tradition*, p. 83

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ferguson, Niall, *Empire*, p. 343

²⁴⁸ Kagan, Robert, *The World American Made*, p. 9

²⁴⁹ Roosevelt, Theodore, *Autobiography*, p. 147

world order than the widely recognized to have been established after the Second World War, as the circumstances were quite different. In Roosevelt's vision, the United States played a leading role, as a power with the capability to ensure a balance of power. There was no adversary as there was post-1945, instead the goal was to simply preserve lasting peace while using intervention at times to "civilize" underdeveloped nations. Robert Kagan wrote that the United States is a tolerable, misguided hegemon because of aversion to the responsibilities of ruling others and a reluctance to yield power.²⁵⁰ Charles Kupchan wrote that the United States should devolve more of its power to its partners and pressure them to shoulder more burdens that the U.S. could not handle (in modern day).²⁵¹ Theodore Roosevelt, living and ruling over a time in which the United States had vast potential, believed that there was no reason for American to shirk her responsibilities abroad.²⁵² In domestic politics, Roosevelt believed that what is needed in popular government is to give plenty of power to a few officials, and to make these few officials genuinely and readily responsible to the people for the exercise of that power.²⁵³ This paper contends that Roosevelt believed the same when it came to international politics, that in order to maintain a sustainable and beneficial liberal world order, powerful nations such as the United States had to play by the rules and norms it would help to establish and listen to the concerns of others in the international system. This way, responsibility was not shirked, as the fortunate helped the less fortunate, and accountability remained, as both the fortunate and less-fortunate would be part of the same world order.

²⁵⁰ Kagan, Robert, *The World America Made*, p.61

²⁵¹ Kupchan, Charles, *No Ones World*, p. 179

²⁵² Roosevelt, Theodore, *Autobiography*, p. 113

²⁵³ *Ibid*, p.59

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Appendix

Theodore Roosevelt 1858-1919: Chronology - Documents - Bibliographical Aids. Oceania Publications, Inc., 1969. Page 64 – Roosevelt Corollary

Secretary of State Richard Olney’s message to Great Britain, July 20, 1895, quoted in Thomas G. Paterson, ed., *Major Problems in American Foreign Policy: Documents and Essays*, Vol. 1: to 1914 (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1978)

Abstract – English

The idea for this paper was developed to analyze the role that the foreign policy of U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt played in the way that the United States anchored itself as an important global power at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Empirical and theoretical methods were necessary in order to perform this analysis. This paper includes historical and biographical research as well as theoretical analysis, because historical research is necessary if modern theories are to be implemented on past events.

The system of international affairs was beginning to change shape 150 years after the Westphalian system came about, especially with the ascendance of the United States of America into the global arena. In light of this ascendancy, it became a primary objective of this paper to implement modern international relations theory onto the actions taken by the United States during this transformational period. The objective then became centered around the man who was the principal actor in the foreign policy actions taken by the United States, President Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt's enthusiasm and aptitude for foreign policy affairs and relations between states made the task of implementing modern theory on to his foreign approach a feasible and fascinating task.

The two theoretical foreign policy doctrines were chosen because of the presumptions they make about world order and their suitability in relating to the era in which Roosevelt was President. This era consisted of numerous interventions, many of which held considerable potential of shifting the balance of power. The interventions examined in this paper all took place in Latin America. The two theoretical doctrines used in the analysis of these interventions help to classify the type of power that the United States was. The interventions in Latin America by the United States under Theodore Roosevelt also demonstrate the direction in which Roosevelt wanted to take the United States and the rest of the international system.

The theories chosen examine the discourse of world order through two separate visions. In the first, world order is achieved when strong states seek to acquire vast empires, acquiring colonies overseas and exerting both direct and indirect control over their subjects. In this system, the stronger states use their power to maintain a stable world order. The works of Niall Ferguson and Robert Kagan are used to expand on this vision. In the second, world order is more easily maintained through a liberal world order, where strong states seek to establish a system based on rules and norms to which all states in the system must adhere. The works of Charles Kupchan and G. John Ikenberry are used to better comprehend the liberal world order.

With the theoretical and empirical knowledge garnered through extensive research, the two could be fluently combined to analyze the extent to which the theories could be used to categorize Theodore Roosevelt's foreign policy actions. This is not only done through looking closely at American interventions in Latin America, but also by exploring Roosevelt himself; more specifically, his influences, his values, his beliefs and his character. It is important to his paper to assert that that looking at only one of these two areas would not be sufficient in providing substantial evidence that Roosevelt and the United States together were beginning to shift the global order. Both areas had to be studied and then combined to establish not only the style of world order the United States was attempting to create, but also how Roosevelt was the chief architect moving the whole system in this new direction.

Abstract – Deutsch

Die Idee für dieses Arbeit wurde entwickelt, um die Rolle zu analysieren, die die Außenpolitik des US-Präsidenten Theodore Roosevelt in der Weise gespielt hat, dass sich die Vereinigten Staaten Ende des 19. und Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts als wichtige globale Macht verankerten. Empirische und theoretische Methoden waren notwendig, um diese Analyse durchzuführen. Dieses Arbeit beinhaltet historische und biographische Forschung sowie theoretische Analyse, denn historische Forschung ist notwendig, wenn moderne Theorien auf vergangene Ereignisse angewendet werden sollen.

Das System der internationalen Angelegenheiten begann sich 150 Jahre nach dem Zustandekommen des westfälischen Systems zu verändern, insbesondere mit dem Aufstieg der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika in die globale Liga. Angesichts dieses Aufstiegs wurde es zu einem Hauptziel dieser Arbeit, eine moderne Theorie der internationalen Beziehungen auf die Maßnahmen der Vereinigten Staaten während dieser Transformationsperiode anzuwenden. Das Ziel konzentrierte sich dann auf den Mann, der der Hauptakteur der außenpolitischen Maßnahmen der Vereinigten Staaten war, Präsident Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelts Begeisterung und Begabung für außenpolitische Angelegenheiten und Beziehungen zwischen Staaten machte es möglich, die moderne Theorie auf seine Außenpolitik zu übertragen.

Die beiden theoretischen außenpolitischen Doktrinen wurden wegen ihrer Annahmen über die Weltordnung und ihrer Eignung für die Zeit, in der Roosevelt Präsident war, gewählt. Diese Ära bestand aus zahlreichen Interventionen, von denen viele ein erhebliches Potenzial zur Veränderung des Machtgleichgewichts bergen. Die in dieser Arbeit, untersuchten Interventionen fanden alle in Lateinamerika statt. Die beiden theoretischen Doktrinen, die in der Analyse dieser Interventionen verwendet werden, helfen, die Art der Macht zu klassifizieren, die die Vereinigten Staaten waren. Die Interventionen der Vereinigten Staaten in Lateinamerika unter Theodore Roosevelt zeigen auch die Richtung, in die Roosevelt die Vereinigten Staaten und den Rest des internationalen Systems führen wollte.

Die gewählten Theorien untersuchen den Diskurs der Weltordnung durch zwei verschiedene Perspektiven. In der ersten Phase wird die Weltordnung erreicht, wenn starke Staaten versuchen, riesige Reiche zu erwerben, Kolonien im Ausland zu erwerben und sowohl direkte als auch indirekte Kontrolle über ihre Subjekte auszuüben. In diesem System nutzen die stärkeren Staaten ihre Macht, um eine stabile Weltordnung aufrechtzuerhalten. Die Werke von Niall Ferguson und Robert Kagan werden verwendet, um diese Perspektive zu erweitern. In der zweiten wird die Weltordnung leichter durch eine liberale Weltordnung aufrechterhalten, in der starke Staaten versuchen, ein System aufzubauen, das auf Regeln und Normen basiert, an die sich alle Staaten des Systems halten müssen. Die Werke von Charles Kupchan und G. John Ikenberry werden verwendet, um die liberale Weltordnung besser zu verstehen.

Mit dem theoretischen und empirischen Wissen, das durch umfangreiche Forschung gewonnen wurde, konnten die beiden fließend kombiniert werden, um zu analysieren, inwieweit die Theorien zur Kategorisierung des außenpolitischen Handelns von Theodore Roosevelt verwendet werden können. Dies geschieht nicht nur durch eine genaue Betrachtung der amerikanischen Interventionen in Lateinamerika, sondern auch durch die Erforschung von Roosevelt selbst, insbesondere seiner Einflüsse, seiner Werte, seines Glaubens und seiner Persönlichkeit. Es ist wichtig, dass in diesem Papier behauptet wird, dass es nicht

ausreichen würde, nur einen dieser beiden Bereiche zu betrachten, um substanzielle Beweise dafür zu liefern, dass Roosevelt und die Vereinigten Staaten zusammen beginnen, die globale Ordnung zu verändern. Beide Bereiche mussten untersucht und dann kombiniert werden, um nicht nur den Stil der Weltordnung zu etablieren, den die Vereinigten Staaten zu schaffen versuchten, sondern auch, wie Roosevelt der Hauptarchitekt war, der das gesamte System in diese neue Richtung brachte.

Lebenslauf

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Kenntnisse

Sprachen	Englisch und Deutsch; Spanisch (Fließend); Italienisch und Portugiesisch (Grundkenntnisse)
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Private Interessen

Mérida, MEXIKO
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Wien, den 04.12.2018