

France and the US - Politics and Society to 1914

French History Historical Figures and DNL Vocabulary

Jules Ferry (1832-1893): a Republican and anticlerical deputy who adopted various school laws (1881-1882) and drove the politics of French colonialism.

Leon Gambetta (1838-1882): a lawyer who opposed the Second Empire and in 1870, as Interior Minister, organised the defence against the Prussian invaders.

Adolphe Thiers (1797-1877): a member of the government under the July Monarchy and Second Republic. He was opposed to Louis-Napoleon and as head of executive power in 1871, managed the negotiations with the Prussians and crushed the Commune. He was chosen as President of the Republic (1871-1873).

Anarchism: revolutionary school of thought which rejects all social and political authority.

Anticlericalism: hostility towards the intervention of the Church in public affairs.

Communards: participants of the Paris Commune.

Conservative: supporters of the return of monarchy in the 1870s.

Secularity (secular): the principal under which the State does not favour any religion and ensures the freedom of conscience.

US History DNL Vocabulary

American exceptionalism: the idea that the US has a unique mission to transform the world, for example in the way that Abraham Lincoln stated in the Gettysburg address (1863), that Americans have a duty to ensure, "government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Assembly line: a series of workers and machines in a factory by which a succession of identical items is progressively assembled (e.g. Ford car assembly lines).

Big Stick Policy: refers to President Theodore Roosevelt's foreign policy: "speak softly and carry a big stick; you will go far." The idea is based negotiating peacefully but also having strength in case things go wrong (e.g. by maintaining a strong navy).

Dollar Diplomacy: policy pursued particularly during President William Howard Taft's presidential term (1909-1913) was a form of American foreign policy to minimize the use or threat of military force and instead further its aims in Latin America and East Asia through the use of its economic power by guaranteeing loans made to foreign countries.

Gilded Age: an era that occurred during the late 19th century, from the 1870s to about 1900. It was a time of blossoming prosperity and rapid economic development and growth in the United States of America.

Great White Fleet: popular nickname for the powerful United States Navy battleships which completed a journey around the globe from 16 December 1907, to 22 February 1909, by order of United States President Theodore Roosevelt. Its mission was to make friendly courtesy visits to numerous countries, while displaying new U.S. naval power to the world.

Isolationism: the doctrine that a nation should stay out of the disputes and affairs of other nations. The United States practiced a policy of isolationism until World War I and did not pursue an active international policy until after World War II.

Monroe Doctrine vs Roosevelt Corollary: the Monroe Doctrine was a United States policy which opposed European colonialism in the Americas. It began in 1823, when US President James Monroe stated doctrine in his State of the Union Address. The Roosevelt Corollary was an addition to the Monroe Doctrine articulated by President Theodore Roosevelt in his State of the Union address in 1904 after the Venezuela Crisis of 1902–1903. The corollary states that the United States will intervene in conflicts between the European countries and Latin American countries to enforce legitimate claims of the European powers.

Open Door Policy: refers to the United States policy established in the late 19th century that would allow for a system of trade in China open to all countries equally. It was used mainly to mediate the competing interests of different colonial powers in China. Under the policy none would have exclusive trading rights in a specific area.

Robber baron: a derogatory metaphor of social criticism applied to certain late 19th-century American businessmen who were accused of using unscrupulous methods to get rich, (e.g. Cornelius Vanderbilt).

Spheres of influence: a diplomatic term denoting an area in which a foreign power or powers exerts significant military, cultural, or economic influence. This concept became recognized in international law during the "scramble for Africa" in the 1880s, when the great powers carved up the continent for commercial exploitation. Later it was applied to the Far East, notably in China.

Tenement: run-down and often overcrowded apartment house, especially in a poor section of a large city

Trusts: refers to monopolies or near-monopolies in the United States during the Second Industrial Revolution in the 19th century and early 20th century (e.g. John D. Rockefeller's oil trust).