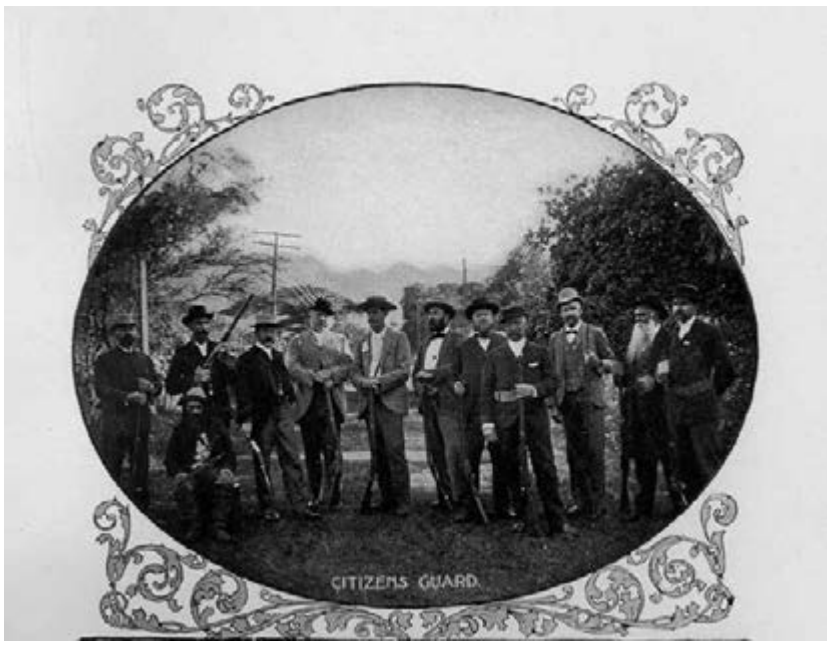
19 The United States Becomes a Colonial Empire

The campaign for the annexation of Hawaii gained new momentum after McKinley's inauguration on 4 March 1897. One of his appointments (made at Lodge's request), making Roosevelt Assistant Secretary of the Navy, would have far-reaching consequences. Roosevelt, an early advocate of the annexation of Hawaii and much more resolute than his chief, Navy Secretary John D. Long, would make a significant contribution to the aggressive turn American foreign policy would take. In Hawaii circumstances had also changed. There, Harold M. Sewall, a 'Cleveland appointee', had taken the place of the deceased Willis as American ambassador. Sewall was as much an expansionist as Lodge and Roosevelt were and in retrospect would sing the praises of the person who had preceded him as consul in Apia and, in May 1886, on his own initiative had annexed the islands (Sewall 1900: 11). With similar speed as Cleveland had blocked annexation,

Figure 28 Hawaii citizen guard 1895



Source: Musick 1898

McKinley proceeded to accomplish it. In June he asked Congress to agree to an annexation. As Dulles (1938: 189) would write, McKinley 'took up the Hawaiian question so promptly and so vigorously that within a little more than three months of his inauguration a new annexation treaty had been signed'.

These developments unnerved people in Great Britain, where there was also some unease about 'the persistent unfriendliness of America', and in its Australasian colonies.[1] One of the reasons was that Hawaii was seen as a key coaling station for shipping between Australasia and Canada; which had only grown in significance with the construction of the Canadian transcontinental railway. London decided that, in view of the many international complications it was involved in, the best policy was to proceed with caution; but in New Zealand, Prime Minister Richard Seddon, a dedicated proponent of territorial expansion of the colony, suggested that Great Britain should join forces with Japan to prevent the United States from moving forward in Hawaii and other parts of the Pacific (Hiery 1995: 14).

Commerce also figured prominently in McKinley's considerations. For him, a decisive argument in favour of annexation was the strategic position of the archipelago for American trade with China and Japan, which was growing and would increase still further over time. To him annexation 'was "the inevitable consequence" of "three-quarters of a century" of American expansion into the Pacific' (LaFeber 1998: 5).

The Japanese spectre

New international factors had also come into play – Germany and Russia taking possession of the Bay of Jiaozhou and Port Arthur. In public opinion, trade with Asia, the territorial integrity of China and an American annexation of Hawaii became interlinked (LaFeber 1998: 365-7). Occasionally, the old spectre of a British annexation was also dusted off, but the new threat perceived to the American position in Hawaii was Japan. The fears Japan evoked in the United States were inspired more by the image the country was acquiring than by actual facts. Japan had just made its mark by defeating China, but its politicians and military still felt that Japan was not yet strong enough militarily to withstand the combined pressure of Russia, France and Germany.

1 Beckett in House of Commons 19-7-1897 (hansard.millbanksystem.com/commons/1897/jul/19/foreign-office-vote).

In April 1897 Japan fuelled American anxieties by directing the *Naniwa* for the second time to Honolulu, where she was to remain until the end of September, this time to protest the restrictions on Japanese immigration. Imaginary as a Japanese invasion may have been, the presence of the *Naniwa*, as a headline in *The New York Times* of 28 June 1897 read, caused a 'Japanese scare in Hawaii', with all kinds of rumours circulating among the 'English-speaking people' about Japanese hostile intent and landing parties. Ignoring counsel from the American embassy in Tokyo that Japan only had the interests of the Japanese immigrants at heart (Coffman 2009: 256), the McKinley administration also prepared for the worst. Secretary of State John Sherman instructed the American ambassador in Hawaii to 'land suitable force, and announce provisional assumption of protectorate by the United States over Hawaii pending consummation of annexation', should Japan try to enforce the admittance of its emigrants (Dulles 1938: 191).

Hawaii had upset Japan for two reasons, both inspired by anxiety over the consequences of a growing Japanese colony on the islands, and both fortified by a persistent belief, also manifest in Europe and the United States, that everything the Japanese did or said at home or abroad was orchestrated by Tokyo. Terms like peaceful invasion and colonisation were used. It was feared that by increasing the volume of Japanese immigrants, Japan might well aim at gaining control of Hawaii in an indirect way; that Hawaii would become, as one contemporary expressed it, 'a Mongolian colony'.[2] Such reasoning lay at the root of the idea, genuinely felt or used as an argument to convince others, that if Congress did not approve annexation, Hawaii could well fall to the Japanese. Or, as McKinley was to state: the Japanese did not come to Hawaii 'voluntarily, as ordinary immigrants'. Japan was 'pressing them in there, in order to get possession' of the islands (Coffman 2009: 308). To prevent the Japanese immigrants from influencing domestic politics, the Hawaiian Provisional Government, just after its coup d'état, refused a request – Stevens called it a demand (*New York Times* 30-11-1893) – by Tokyo to give the Japanese residents in Hawaii the right to vote. It had also – in February 1897 – tightened immigration rules, resulting in the refusal to allow over a thousand new Japanese labourers to disembark and enter the country. They had been temporarily detained before being sent back; a course of action leading to much commotion in Japan. Tokyo protested. It demanded an indemnity for the maltreatment of the immigrants detained and adherence to the Treaty of Amity and Commerce the two countries

2 Morganreport.org/mediawiki/index.php?title=Summary_of_Alexander (accessed 25-2-2011).

had concluded in 1871, which assigned the same rights to the Japanese as to other foreigners in Hawaii. Japan also made it clear, and Japanese politicians were not alone in this, that a Japanese threat 'existed only in the minds of the zealous advocates of annexation', and was used by them for a speedy realisation of their aim (*New York Times* 18-6-1897).

The Hawaiian government and the American politicians eager to annex Hawaii made much of the threat Japan posed; a line of reasoning which of course found its way to the press. For Dole, Thurston and like-minded white Hawaiians, the prospect of Japanese aggression had become an indispensable argument, aware as they were that their annexation movement lacked popular support; the suffrage Cleveland had mentioned in his message to Congress. Most indigenous Hawaiians did not want to be incorporated into the United States, thus blocking the possibility to back up an annexation request by a plebiscite; a procedure that would have made support in the United States greater. In the autumn of 1897 protests were staged on the islands and two Hawaiian petitions denouncing annexation, one with 21,000 and one with 17,000 signatures, were drawn up (Coffman 2009: 279). Planters also had their doubts. Fearing the consequences of the limitations in place in the United States on cheap contract labour for the recruitment of Asiatic workers, they wanted the establishment of a protectorate at the most.

On 16 June 1897 representatives of the United States and Hawaii agreed on an annexation treaty. After receiving the consent of the American Senate, the islands would become part of the United States as the 'Territory of Hawaii'. However, this did not yet grant them the full rights of an American state and important appointments were still being decided on in Washington. Annexation was decided upon, the preamble read,

> in view of the natural dependence of the Hawaiian Islands upon the United States, of their geographical proximity thereto, of the preponderant share acquired by the United States and its citizens in the industries and trade of said islands and of the expressed desire of the Government of Hawaii that those islands should be incorporated into the United States.[3]

In the treaty the issue of Asian immigration had to be tackled before Hawaii could become part of the United States. It was stipulated that the treaties Hawaii had concluded, such as with Japan in 1871, would 'forthwith cease' and would be 'replaced by such treaties as may exist, or as may be hereafter

3 www/alahoquest.com/treaty_annexation_1897.htm (accessed 12-11-2011).

concluded between the United States and such foreign nations'.[4] Japan still had to be treated with care, China did not. Consequently, one of the articles read that there should be 'no further immigration of Chinese into the Hawaiian Islands' and that no Chinese should be 'allowed to enter the United States from the Hawaiian Islands'.[5]

Japan rejected annexation, but as the Japanese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Okuma Shigenobu, wrote to his ambassador in Washington, opposition 'should be within limits of diplomacy' (Coffman 2009: 255). Even before the negotiators appointed by Washington and Honolulu had signed the Annexation Treaty, the Japanese ambassador had lodged a protest. The civil rights of the Japanese formed a major issue. In the note it was observed that there were '25,000 Japanese in the islands with large property rights' who, according to the treaty of 1871, were allowed to become Hawaiian citizens. After annexation they would be subject to American legislation, which would imply that they 'would lose the right to become citizens and to vote'. It was also noted that 'large interests owned by Japanese citizens in the islands would be greatly jeopardised', all reasons that 'the Japanese Government must firmly protest'.[6] It was, LaFeber (1998: 363) writes, 'probably the strongest protest Japan ever issued to another power up to that time'.

In Japanese newspapers, Okuma Shigenobu drew a parallel between France successfully opposing a British protectorate over Egypt and Japan resisting annexation of Hawaii, stressing that 'Japan must oppose to the utmost' (*New York Times* 26-7-1897). Great Britain, France and Germany were informed about Tokyo's objections. Berlin also had intended to protest, but retracted when London refused to issue a joint note (LaFeber 1998: 363). Japan withdrew its opposition to annexation in December 1897. It accepted an indemnity of $75,000 to compensate for the sufferings the detained and repatriated labourers had had to endure (Coffman 2009: 257, 213). It did not matter. Japanophobia had become too strong. In March 1898 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee singled out the strategic position of Hawaii as 'the main argument in favor of the annexation' (LaFeber 1998: 410). Japan was the country to be kept out. It was the enemy the United States had to confront in the future (though for a brief moment the Russians taking Port Arthur in December 1897 complicated matters and made

4 Treaty of Annexation of Hawaii, Art. III.

5 Ibid., Art. V.

6 Report in *The New York Times* (25-6-1897) of the Japanese protest as read to the American Senate. The protest referred to decisions of the American Circuit Courts (Appeal Courts) that no Asian could become a citizen of the United States.

for a rapprochement between Tokyo and Washington). As the Committee observed in its report: 'The issue is whether, in that inevitable struggle, Asia or America shall have the vantage ground of the control of the naval "Key of the Pacific", the commercial "Cross-roads of the Pacific"' (ibid.: 410).

The Philippines, unexpected spoils of war

When the annexation of Hawaii was still undecided, the United States found itself at war with Spain and having to fight in Cuba and the Philippines. As in the case of Hawaii, strategic considerations would provide the proponents of an annexation of the Philippines with their arguments. The rich natural resources of the islands were mentioned, but this was only a minor factor, if it played any significant role at all. Political and commercial considerations, and trade with China, were paramount. The 'Philippines were the key to the Orient and Manila the natural rival of Hong Kong', Frank A. Vanderlip, US Assistant Secretary to the Treasury, wrote in an article in August 1898 (Dulles 1938: 233). 'And just beyond the Philippines are China's illimitable markets. We shall not retreat from either', Albert Jeremiah Beveridge, a Republican Senator in favour of taking control of the Philippines and of America's 'mastery of the world', promised.[7] Protagonists of an American Philippines saw these islands, more so than Hawaii, as compensation for the commercial opportunities they feared might be denied to them in China. LaFeber (1998: xxii) is even of the opinion that, given the threat to the Open Door policy in China, McKinley had 'no alternative but to go to war to extend the United States' control over both Cuba and at least the port of Manila'. Manila, he writes, was seen as 'a way station to the Orient' (LaFeber 1998: 411). What the American reaction was can also be surmised from the words of the historian Dulles (1938: 222): 'Our rivals were establishing footholds in Asia which threatened to shut us from the rich markets of China'. The Philippines provided the Americans with psychological and strategic compensation. It was, Dulles (1938: 222) posed, their Hong Kong, their Guandong, their Jiaozhou. After the United States had annexed the islands, yet another factor came into play: the threat or power that radiated from this act and from the presence of an American military force not so distant from China. As one Republican leader, Chauncey Depew, would phrase it, the American victory in the Philippines 'echoed through the

7 Beveridge in Senate, 9-1-1899 (Miller 1982: 250, marchand.ucdavis.edu/lessons/philippines/philippines. html, accessed 25-9-2011).

palace at Peking and brought to the Oriental mind a new and potent force among western nations … striving to enter the limitless markets of the east. These people respect nothing but power' (Miller 1982: 147).

The Philippines, a colony of Spain, came into American view after a rebellion against Spanish rule had started in Cuba in February 1895, raising the prospect of intervention to protect American interests on the island. Preparing for such a confrontation, American Naval Intelligence also drafted plans for war against Spain and the Spanish fleet in the Philippines at least as early as the end of 1896 (LaFeber 1998: 360). At that moment the Philippines – like Cuba – was in a state of turmoil. In August 1896 Emilio Aguinaldo had risen in rebellion against Spanish rule. The revolt, which had wide popular support, was grist to the mill of those outside the Philippines looking for territorial expansion, as such disorder could be used as an excuse to land troops to protects compatriots' lives and property. Indeed, in Japan the army briefly contemplated interfering (Goto 2003: 8). Furthermore, rumours immediately began to circulate that Japan intended to purchase the islands from Spain (for which it did not have the money). Coupled with the voices of Japanese nationalists airing their views about the leading role Japan had to play in Asia, such stories also gave rise to the suspicion that Japan had masterminded the rebellion in the Philippines (Saniel 1962: 223; *De Indische Gids* 1896: 1719-22).

Assigned with the task of taking on the Spanish in the Philippines was Commodore George Dewey, one of the members of an inner circle of American 'imperialists' who met frequently in Washington (Immerman 2010: 134). In December 1897 he got his orders. Dewey was to take over command of the Asiatic Station in January 1898. In February he received more specific instructions on how to proceed should there be war. They were drafted by Roosevelt who, not much later, would eagerly join the fighting in Cuba. Dewey had to prevent the Spanish fleet in the Philippines from being redirected to the Caribbean. Engaging the Spanish in war in the Philippines was something of a journey into the unknown. At the end of 1898 the War Department published an over-three-hundred-page handbook for the invasion of the islands, compiled from consular notes, naval intelligence, some travel books, and even the Encyclopaedia Britannica and the *National Geographic Magazine*. It was full of detailed military maps and geographical information, but on one of its first pages could also be read that the Philippines had 'a great number of good harbours', although little was known about them because of the 'exclusive policy of the Spanish Government in closing them to foreign commerce' (Military Notes 1898: 12). And, from what was to follow, it appears that neither the American government nor its navy

and army had any inkling of Aguinaldo's popularity or the mood among the population and the resilience of guerrilla warfare. After his return to the United States in December 1898, Major General Wesley Merritt, a senior army officer who had been on the spot and who had been in charge of the army operations in the Philippines, said that 'the people of the Philippines … do look forward to a colonial government' (*New York Times* 27-12-1898). He suggested that should trouble erupt, the United States could rely on an army of Filipinos commanded by American officers, just as the British did in India; a somewhat idle hope, also in view of the disdain with which American soldiers and officers treated the Filipino forces and the independence movement. Perhaps because of such misconceptions no plans were developed on how to proceed in the Philippines after Spain had been defeated. As Foreman (1906: 484) wrote, 'there was neither a Philippine policy nor any fixed programme regarding the future disposal of the Islands'. Only a few had warned from the beginning that a bitter and long battle with the local population striving after independence might lay ahead (Miller 1982: 27).

Matters between the United States and Spain came to a head after the blowing up of an American warship, the USS *Maine*, in Havana on 15 February 1898. On 21 April the American Congress issued a Joint Resolution in support of Cuba's independence, vowing that the United States had no intention of annexing the island. War was declared on 25 April. In response, London issued a declaration of neutrality, forcing Dewey's squadron to leave Hong Kong and move to Chinese waters (to Mirs Bay, which, with the extension of Kowloon, would become British within months). From Mirs Bay, Dewey steamed to the Philippines with a squadron of warships, which, Foreman (1906: 438) wrote, had been 'well supplied with coal from British vessels'. On 1 May he destroyed the Spanish fleets in the battle of Manila Bay. In the Caribbean the Spanish fleet suffered a similar fate on 3 July. On land, where in Cuba and the Philippines its troops had to fight insurgents as well as the American army, prospects were equally gloomy for Spain. In Hay's words, for the Americans it was a 'Splendid Little War' (Immerman 2010: 149).

As elsewhere in Asia, German commerce in the Philippines was expanding (Colquhoun 1902: 108). The American-Spanish War offered Wilhelm II a chance to consider expanding German territory in Asia even further by acquiring the Philippines or part of it (Mann 1992: 516). Public opinion seemed ripe for such an adventure. In 1897 the new American ambassador in Berlin observed a clearly anti-American mood in the German press and among German intellectuals. About the latter, he noted that 'some of their expressions seemed to point to eventual war' (LaFeber 1998: 325).

Figure 29 Admiral Dewey in a Pears' Soap advertisement

Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_White_Man's_Burden

The Philippines had already been on the agenda of the explorer Richthofen. In 1869 he had pointed at the strategic position of the archipelago for trade in the Far East. With Zhoushan Island near Shanghai and Manila on the island of Luzon, Germany would command the two best ports in East Asia, the future focuses of China trade.[8] The Philippines was not an empty spot that the powers had been contesting each other elsewhere in the world for, but there might be a way in which a slice of it could be acquired relatively easily to satisfy German colonial ambitions in Asia and give even more substance to the country's world politics. Wilhelm II, as Berlin informed its ambassador in Washington, hoped that coming to the support of Spain could give Germany a part of the Philippines. To him it was 'a principal object of German policy to leave unused no opportunity which may arise from the Spanish-American war to obtain maritime *fulcra* [points of support] in East Asia' (Dulles 1938: 225).

Just a few days after Dewey had defeated the Spanish fleet a German squadron of five warships appeared on the scene. It had, as Knoll and Hiery (2010: 26) phrased it, rushed to the Philippines. Ordered to sail there at the

8 Richthofen to Bismarck 2-1-1869 (in Gründer 1999: 59-61).

end of April it was ostensibly in search of a suitable place for a German naval station in the Philippines (Nuhn 2002: 100). The suspicion that Germany might try to establish itself on Luzon, the largest island in the north of the archipelago on which Manila is located, gave the presence of the German warships an additional dimension not only with regard to United States. It also made the Philippines conflict of direct concern to Great Britain, not least because, as a British Member of Parliament observed, the island becoming German was 'viewed with considerable anxiety in the Australian Colonies', urging his government to prevent 'any portion of a group situated on the great commercial highway between Australia and the Far East' falling 'into hostile hands'.[9]

The commander of the squadron was Vice-Admiral Diederichs, the same officer who had occupied Jiaozhou, and being a man prepared to fight battles for his country he seemed to have had every intention of making the Kaiser's aim come true. The deployment of German ships would almost immediately lead to complications. What the Americans regarded as running their naval blockade of Manila and assistance to the Spanish war effort, the Germans presented as a legitimate effort to protect Germans and other foreigners (the British navy would send four warships to the Philippines). The German interpretation was rather elastic. In July the German cruiser *Irene* assisted in defending a Spanish garrison in Subic Bay against an attack by Filipino insurgents, who had joined forces with the Americans. She withdrew after Dewey had dispatched two of his own cruisers to Subic Bay. The incident 'caused war talk' *The New York Times* (11-5-1918) would write after Diederichs' death, some twenty years later.

Officers of the German East Asia Cruiser Division would behave in the same aggressive, haughty way, that was also so characteristic of a number of German secular and religious representatives in China. On shore they conspicuously showed their sympathy with the Spanish cause; their commander assuring his Spanish hosts at a picnic that Germany would never allow the Americans to take the Philippines (Foreman 1906: 434). Diederichs, the American historian Dulles (1938: 214) writes, displayed a 'boorish, interfering, arrogant attitude' acting 'as if he were doing his best to invite a quarrel and cause one of those "incidents" which so easily lead to open hostilities'. Dewey, also not a paragon of modesty, would have told Diederichs that 'if Germany wants war, alright, we are ready' (Nuhn 2002: 100). The German naval operation put the German business community in

9 Hogan in House of Commons 1-8-1898 (hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1898/aug/01/future-of-the-philippines).

the Philippines in a difficult position. After Spain had had to admit defeat, German merchants in Manila hastened to apologise in the newspaper *La Independencia* for the pro-Spanish behaviour of the German naval officers, which had evoked the hatred of the population (Foreman 1906: 473-4).

At the end of July Spain accepted defeat. On 12 August 1898 a Protocol of Peace was signed in Washington (with the French ambassador representing Spain). It stated that the United States would 'occupy and hold the city, bay, and harbor of Manila' (which at that moment was still in Spanish hands) and suggested that a final decision about what territory the United States would take possession of depended on the results of a peace treaty still to be negotiated.[10] The following day American troops took Manila; its centre being an old-fashioned fortified city, complete with a wall, bastions and bulwarks, and moats which could be inundated.

All of a sudden, the United States could become master of the Philippines, for many Americans a faraway, little known island group. Granting the Philippines independence was out of the question; though there were some in America, like the influential anti-imperialist Republican Senator, George F. Hoar, who were in favour of this option, taking the well-known position that it was against the spirit of the American Constitution to impose American rule upon people against their will (Foreman 1906: 495). The opinion that prevailed was different. Though not all shared this view, the general feeling in government circles in the United States, as well as in Japan and Great Britain, was that the Philippines was unfit for self-government. Its population had not yet reached that state of civilisation that Westerners in those days determined was required for this. They were as 'incapable of self-government as children', Lodge would state in the American Senate (Immerman 2010: 152). Independence could only result in chaos; an invitation for foreign intervention, maybe by Japan or Germany.

Handing over the Philippines to France or Germany was out of the question. They were, in the words of McKinley, America's 'commercial rivals in the Orient' (Dulles 1938: 241), while in the case of Germany the sympathies showed for Spain had also not endeared the Americans. In the United States the German naval presence in the Philippines – or what Bülow described as 'lying reports about our attitude in the Spanish-American War"[11] – had caused an outcry. New complications in Samoa would soon strain

10 Protocol of Peace Embodying the Terms of a Basis for the Establishment of Peace between the Two Countries, Art. 3.

11 Memorandum Bülow 14-3-1899 (E.T.S. Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, Ch. IV, Samoa, August, 1898, to November, 1899; www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/dugdale/samoa.htm).

American-German relations even more, forcing Bülow to conclude that an 'aggressive Press put American public opinion in a hostile mood' against Germany.[12]

American newspapers mentioned Japan as a possibility but, similarly, this was no alternative, as Japan was emerging in public opinion as a threat to Hawaii and thus to the United States itself. The fact that as early as 1896 Japan was one of the countries to which the Filipino rebels of Emilio Aguinaldo had appealed for moral and military support probably also did not help. McKinley might well have contemplated offering the islands to Great Britain, but the British government was not eager to comply. London informed Washington that, in its opinion, the best option was for the United States to hold on to the Philippines and that in no way should Germany gain a foothold there. To sway public opinion in the United States in favour of annexation, Rudyard Kipling joined in the fray. It was America and the 'new-caught, sullen peoples, half-devil and half-child' of the Philippines he had in mind when he wrote his famous poem *The White Man's Burden* in February 1899, published just before the American Senate had to decide on the future of the Philippines.

Another option initially considered in the United States was to occupy the Philippines temporarily; keeping only one or two naval bases – Manila and Cavite on the island of Luzon – and returning the rest of the Philippines to Spain, after having sold some of its islands to compensate for the financial costs of war. The Port Arthur and Jiaozhou leases made some waver. The novel argument was advanced that a naval base needed to have a hinterland for defence purposes. Consequently, Luzon, and also the rest of the Philippines, came into view (LaFeber 1998: 414-5). That still left the choice between annexation and protection of either Luzon, should Washington decide to confine American's presence to that island, or the archipelago as a whole.

On 1 October 1898 formal peace negotiations commenced in Paris. Spain argued that the Protocol of Peace of August said nothing about the end of Spanish rule in the Philippines. It only mentioned a temporary occupation of Manila by the United States, which, when it took place on 13 August, had been in violation of the cessation of hostilities agreed upon in the Protocol. Manila should be returned to Spain. Madrid also demanded an indemnity. These demands were unrealistic. The United States wanted land. Initially, McKinley was of the opinion that Luzon and Guam in the Spanish Mariana or Ladrones Islands would suffice (Miller 1982: 20). In the end the United States would claim the entire Philippines.

12 Ibid.

In part, this change in objective was due to a powerful military lobby, represented by Major General Merritt who had travelled to Paris to advise the American delegation. His position was clear. As he explained to *The New York Times* (27-12-1898), the United States should hold on to the Philippines: 'If we dispose them to any other nation it will certainly precipitate a war, and they are not yet capable of governing themselves'. Keeping only Luzon was no option. The island could not be defended should another power occupy other parts of the Philippines (Miller 1982: 20). Partly, the whole of the Philippines became American because, as Miller (1982: 23) concluded, 'expansion was immensely popular' and mid-term elections for the House of Representatives were to take place in November.

McKinley initially made a distinction between a peaceful and a forcible annexation. In a speech to Congress in December 1897 he still observed that the latter 'under our code of morality … would be criminal aggression' (Foreman 1906: 484). The following year, when he had a real case at hand, McKinley ordered the annexation of the Philippines. Afterwards, McKinley evoked the interception of God to explain his decision. 'I walked the floor of the White House night after night; and I am not ashamed to tell you, gentlemen, that I went down on my knees and prayed Almighty God for light and guidance more than one night', he later told a delegation of clergymen. When it dawned on him, and these are words often quoted, that the United States had 'to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them', he 'went to bed and went to sleep and slept soundly' (Hardy and Dumke 1949: 417). Sincere or not, the confession made an impression. McKinley, the American historian Dulles (1938: 228) wrote, 'took over the Philippines only after long communion with God, as he himself has recorded, had convinced him that it was his duty'. Having made up his mind, McKinley wired to Paris on 28 October that returning the Philippines minus Luzon to Spain could not 'be justified on political, commercial, or humanitarian grounds', also mentioning the possibility that other islands could become 'the subject of future contention' between the powers (Miller 1982: 24).

Madrid yielded and agreed to hand the Philippines over to the United States. In return, Spain received US$20 million. Guam also became American, giving the United States a coaling and naval station en route to the Philippines. Spain was promised that its imports in the Philippines would be submitted to the same duties as American goods for a period of ten years. It was an empty gesture. The United States would grant the same right to all other nations.

Conspicuously absent at the negotiating table had been representatives of Aguinaldo and his independence movement. Initially, it appeared that he

had the full backing of the United States. While still in exile, the American consuls in Hong Kong and Singapore, and also Dewey, had given him the impression that his insurrection could count on American support should it come to war with Spain; overtures which could not meet with the approval of Washington (Miller 1982: 35-7). Aguinaldo had also entered the Philippines on board a dispatch boat of the American navy on 19 May 1898 and had proclaimed Independence on 12 June 1898. He had probably counted on a brief American occupation, after which the Philippines would be recognised as an independent state with the administration handed over to him and his government, if it had to be under American military protection. In line with this he had urged his countrymen to welcome the Americans as 'liberators' who fought the war 'for the sake of humanity' (Foreman 1906: 433). In August, addressing the powers, Aguinaldo, and he must have been aware of how native rule was considered there, tried in vain to convince them that the Philippines had 'arrived at a state in which it can and ought to govern itself'.[13] It was a miscalculation. Aguinaldo and his forces were tolerated as long as they were useful to the war effort. His independence movement was courted, used when it suited American aims, but never considered a serious candidate for taking over Spanish rule. His troops received American arms but at the same time his fighters were kept on the leash, soon leading to frictions between them and the American invasion force. They were ignored, at times bullied, and, for instance, not allowed to participate in the siege and the taking of Manila.

Aguinaldo had urged that his Philippine Republic be allowed to attend the negotiations, but in Paris Major General Merritt referred to him as a Chinese half-breed adventurer (as did others too) and did his best to put him and his movement in a bad light (Miller 1982: 20). In a sense Aguinaldo took revenge. A peace treaty was signed on 10 December 1898, but not being allowed to participate in the negotiations Aguinaldo did not feel bound to it, and allowed his troops to continue to attack Spanish forces in the Philippines (ibid.: 46).

When the peace treaty between the United States and Spain, also known as the Treaty of Paris, was signed, American troops were only in possession of Manila and Cavite and its naval base, located some thirty kilometres south of the capital on the southern shore of Manila Bay. The rest of the northern Philippines 'was virtually and forcibly held by natives in revolt' (Foreman 1906: 478). Tension between American forces and those of Aguinaldo turned into open warfare when the two fought a battle for

13 Memorandum Aguinaldo 6-8-1898 (cited in Foreman 1906: 457).

control over Manila on 4 and 5 February 1899, with the Americans firing the first shots and the Filipino fighters being no match for the much better armed American troops. On 2 June Aguinaldo formally declared war. To most Americans hostilities came as an unpleasant surprise. Many had no idea that Aguinaldo and his co-revolutionaries, acting in the name of the Philippine Republic, had been preparing for guerrilla war. What followed would be one of 'the bloodiest and most costly colonial wars of the 19th century'; costing some 5,000 American lives (Hennessy 1984: 77). To suppress resistance, the American army had to send many more troops than originally envisaged. The strain on the American troops became apparent during the Boxer Rebellion. The Philippines was the obvious place from which to send the first American reinforcements to China; but the American commanders in the Philippines were far from happy to do so, as they needed their soldiers to suppress the insurgency (Silbey 2012: 93, 125).

It would take some two years of brutal fighting, complete with the customary shelling of coastal villages by warships and the setting ablaze of villages in the interior. Racial prejudices contributed. 'Nigger' became a favourite term of reference on the American side. Another one was 'Indian', a word at least as emotionally charged, since it was associated with cruel savages. Many of the American soldiers and officers had fought in the Indian Wars, and in suppressing resistance in the Philippines would resort to the same dirty methods they had used against the American Indians (the Wounded Knee massacre had taken place less than nine years before, in December 1890). Justification was found in the supposed innate cruelty of the uncivilised Filipinos. As Roosevelt and others would argue, the 'cruelty, treachery and total disregard of the rules of civilized warfare' by the insurgents gave good reason to the Americans to act the way they did (Miller 1982: 255). One example was water boarding, in those days called water cure. Roosevelt suggested in private that it was 'an old Filipino method of mild torture', which did little damage and was quite harmless compared to the 'incredible torture' inflicted on American soldiers (Miller 1982: 235).

In March 1901 Aguinaldo was captured. After he had sworn an oath of allegiance to the United States the following month, and had asked his followers to do the same, he was released. The rebellion formally ended on 4 July 1902 when Roosevelt, President since September 1901, issued a Peace Proclamation and Amnesty Grant, but in reality it continued until at least 1910 (Bootsma 1986: 11). The United States also inherited from Spain the equally brutal and much longer war with the Moro, the Muslims living in the southern Philippines, the Sulu Archipelago and Mindanao; the recollection to this day contributing to the anti-American mood among its Islamic population.

Though a vocal anti-expansion movement remained active, the Philippines gave the American government and part of the American public a taste for territorial expansion with the United States in control of its own shipping routes in the Pacific, not dependent on other nations. One of the problems was the two-thirds majority needed in the Senate. The Senate voted in favour of annexation on 6 February 1899. McKinley and his fellow Republicans had had to work hard to accomplish this; indeed, some spoke of buying votes (Miller 1982: 27-8). In view of widespread aversion in the United States against colonising others, this was coupled with promises of future self-government. Eight days after the Senate had agreed to annexation a resolution, proposed by the Democrat Samuel Douglas McEnery, was accepted. In it, it was observed that the United States intended to prepare the Philippines for 'local self-government' and would not 'permanently annex said islands as an integral part of the territory of the United States'. The resolution also solved another problem. It observed that there was no intention 'to incorporate the inhabitants of the Philippine Islands into citizenship of the United States' (*New York Times* 7-2-1899).[14]

To Wilhelm II the annexation of the Philippines was an American 'step against the Yangtze'.[15] In the Netherlands Indies, American rule was greeted with relief. There – and in Australia – Taiwan, in Japanese hands since the Sino-Japanese War, and the Philippines figured as stepping stones in doom scenarios about a Japanese invasion.

Initially, the Philippines was placed under military government. The civil administration that took its place in July 1901, headed by William Howard Taft, soon found itself in a position similar to that of Gordon in Fiji. Taft was accused of unduly siding with the local population. He would disregard the interests of the many Americans who were trying their luck in the newly conquered territory and had been lured to the Philippines by the stories about gold fields waiting to be harvested and other riches to be won (Foreman 1906: 564, 568). The Philippines was granted a kind of protectorate status in 1935, the Commonwealth of the Philippine Islands, and became fully independent in July 1946.

Germany joined in the spoils of the Spanish colonial empire. In February 1899 Spain, down and out and needing money, sold the Caroline, Mariana

14 Cuba became an independent Republic in 1902, but in the true spirit of a protectorate, had to allow American supervision over its foreign and financial policy.

15 Memorandum Wilhelm II 23-8-1901 (E.T.S. Dugdale, German Diplomatic Documents, Ch. X, The Anglo-Japanese Agreement, 1901-02, www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/dugdale/japan.htm).

(minus Guam, which the United States had already acquired in December 1898) and Palau Islands to Germany. For economic and strategic reasons there were doubts about the wisdom of the acquisition. Some considered the Carolines to be a number of useless islands, not worth exploiting, while Tirpitz and his navy were not overjoyed by the military value of the islands and had in fact spoken out against acquiring them (Hiery 1995: 1). Prospects for the Palau islands seemed equally bleak. In 1883 the Polish ethnographer Johann Stanislaus Kubary (1885: 139) had observed during a visit to the archipelago that German merchant ships no longer called at the islands because there was no money to be earned, and that a German trading station had long been abandoned. In fact, German trade with the South Pacific, including Samoa, would remain trivial, amounting in 1909 to only 0.15 per cent of total German foreign trade (Conrad 2008: 58). Nevertheless, when he informed the Reichstag about the deal, Bülow presented it as a great success for German diplomacy. The new acquisitions completed the German possessions in the South Sea. Until then, German territory in the Pacific had had the shape a half circle, a long and disjointed line. With the addition of the island groups the circle was closed and the German possessions had become a coherent whole. For that reason, they should not have fallen in the hands of others. His picture was also rosy, resembling what Bismarck had said about New Guinea: The Caroline, Mariana and Palau Islands were located in a region where trade and traffic could only increase. The islands were all well-suited for plantation cultivation and wood industry; coconuts flourished and provided good prospects for the production of copra. The climate was relatively healthy. More importantly, what had failed Germany in the past was a harbour on the route from New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago to Jiaozhou, the rest of China and Japan. According to Bülow, the Caroline Islands filled this gap. The group had excellent ports and anchorages (which he said the Marshall Islands lacked). The Mariana Islands could serve as an intermediate German station for shipping between Southeast Asia and Central America. The fact that, as critics said, Germany had paid Spain a huge sum of money, more than the number of inhabitants and German settlers seemed to warrant, was beside the point. In 'large politics' (*grosse Politik*) more counted than just money (Gründer 1999: 124-5). What Bülow also did not mention was the disposition of the local population. On the Island of Pohnpei (Ponape) in the Carolines, for instance, Germany had to cope with 'islanders possessed by hatred of all white strangers', and had to deploy the navy to keep them in check (Nuhn 2002: 210). Unrest would culminate in the Sokehs Rebellion of 1910.

The American Empire

Soon after the start of the Spanish-American War, Hawaii disregarded the laws of neutrality and became a coaling and bunkering station for American ships transporting troops to the Philippines. The war and the 'hysteria' that arose tipped the scale in the United States in favour of annexation (Dulles 1938: 196). In September 1897 the Hawaiian Senate, controlled by Dole and Thurston, had already ratified the Annexation Treaty of June of that year. In the United States getting formal agreement to the annexation was more difficult. As the new annexation treaty mentioned, what was still needed was the consent of the American Senate. Unsure of the required two-thirds majority in the Senate, the less elegant and legally disputed procedure had to be followed: a joint resolution accepted in the Senate and the House of Representatives by a simple majority; a possibility already contemplated by the American government before the earlier Annexation Treaty had been submitted to the Senate in February 1893. A joint resolution, mentioning the main points of the Treaty, was approved on 7 July 1898. On 12 August 1898 the United States formally incorporated Hawaii. Dole became the first Governor of the new American 'Territory'. Marines from the USS *Philadelphia*, the flagship of the American Pacific Station, and USS *Mohican* attended the ceremony. At that moment the Hawaiian government had already allowed new Japanese labourers in. In January 1899 the Island of Wake, one of the Marshall Islands, located between Hawaii and Guam would also become American. It would take until 1958 before Hawaii would become a state of its own.

The American occupation of Hawaii, and the threat emanating from Japan, added to the importance of the Panama Canal. Already for a long time, at least since the 1830s, a canal cutting through the Central American isthmus, connecting the Pacific and Atlantic Ocean, had been in the minds of those pleading for a greater global commercial and political role of the United States. It would give a boost to the Asian trade of the states on the American East Coast and would allow for a quick deployment of the American fleet stationed along that coast in the Pacific. Among those who were strongly in favour of the Panama Canal, was Mahan, who published an article specifically on the topic; in fact, a political pamphlet capitalising on the racial prejudices and the fear of Japan in the United States and the British colonies.[16] Apart from this, his main argument was that such a connection would reduce the time in which an American fleet could reach

16 Disgust of Asian immigrants provided Mahan yet another argument in favour of speeding up the digging of the Panama Canal. The new sea route would facilitate the flow of labour from

Hawaii from the Atlantic Ocean, from four months to less than four weeks (Mahan 1911: 26).

In June 1902 the American Senate agreed to the digging of the Canal. The first obstacle that had to be surmounted was easy to remove. In 1903 the United States, with Roosevelt still as President, actively supported a rebellion in Panama against Colombian rule. It did so after the Colombian Senate had refused to assent to the leasing of land where the Panama Canal was intended to be dug. Panama became independent in November 1903. A few months later, in May 1904, work on the canal commenced. In 1906-07 the emergence of Japan as a potential enemy gave the digging of the canal an additional urgency. A shortcut between the Pacific and Atlantic Ocean became a vital element in American strategic thinking. Work was speeded up, though it would take until 1914 before the first ships sailed the canal.

With the incorporation of the Philippines and Hawaii, a real American Empire had taken shape; and it was proudly referred to as such by contemporaries. Dulles (1938: 10) wrote in 1938 that with the acquisition of Hawaii and the Philippines, the United States had taken its 'place as an accepted World Power' and had gained 'a new voice in the determination of the policies of the Far East, a new importance in the balance of power in the Pacific'.

The empire sufficed. Though there were suggestions to establish a foothold in China, the United States stayed aloof from this. Instead, Washington embraced the Open Door policy and free trade in China. Having acquired Hawaii and the Philippines, both presented as being beneficial to American China trade, the United States left no doubt that it wanted unrestricted access to Chinese markets. In the autumn of 1899 John Hay, by then Secretary of State, sent his so-called Open Door Notes to the other powers (including Italy). Apprehensive about the Anglo-Russian Railway Agreement of April 1899, and under the wrong impression that London had come to an agreement with Berlin over Germany's special rights regarding railways and mining concessions in Shandong, to the detriment of American producers of mining machines and other equipment, Hay formally asked the other powers to uphold China's territorial integrity and 'perfect equality of treatment for their commerce and navigation' in the regions in China under their control.[17] In Hay's own words, his initiative was 'eminently successful', concluding so even before Germany and Italy had responded (*New York*

Europe to the American west coast. Not having to use the American transcontinental railway would make the journey from Europe considerably cheaper (Mahan 1911: 19-20).

17 Hay to Bülow 6-9-1899 (cited in Millard 1906: 185). In coming to this conclusion Hay may have been misled by the Anglo-German Financial Agreement of 1898.

Times 3-1-1900). All reacted positively; providing of course that their rival powers would do the same. Hay's step was hailed in Great Britain as a 'signal success of American policy' and a significant change in American foreign policy, with Washington for the first time taking an active interest in global politics.[18] In the United States itself, Hay's adviser on Far Eastern affairs, William Woodville Rockhill (who had been instrumental in drafting the Open Door Notes), concluded that Washington had taken over the 'sceptre of Open Door Champion'.[19] He was also sure that one of the reasons why Hay had succeeded was because of the American presence in the Philippines, not that far away from China (Miller 1982: 135). Hay's name became coupled with America's China policy. About ten years later, Americans still referred to 'Hay's policy of the open door' (*New York Times* 7-1-1910). America's role in advocating the Open Door in China would only become more pronounced in the years to come, when that other early advocate, Great Britain, assumed a less vocal role on the issue due to political considerations and, some would observe, to its cowardice in confronting Russia and Japan.

18 Walton and Buchanan in House of Commons 30-3-1900 (hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1900/mar/30/british-commercial and political-interests-in-china).

19 www.americanforeignrelations.com/O-W/Open-Door-Policy-Laying-down-the-policy.