

**A NATION REBORN? THE UNITED STATES,
NATIONALISM AND THE WAR AGAINST SPAIN**

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DECLARATION

I, Peter Seaman, confirm that this thesis has not been submitted for any other degree, or at any other university or institution.

Thanks to Sean for reading, and re-reading. And all the advice.

Also, thanks to the parents.

Yes, mum.

It's finally done.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis assesses the context and construction of American nationalism in the period of the Spanish-American War of 1898, and how this served efforts to overcome sectionalism. Nationalism remains a complex issue, especially when America's Civil War is considered. Following this, the former Confederacy remained isolated within national discourse. Despite re-admission to the Union, Southern interactions with the North continued to reflect hostility and scepticism. The post-bellum US showed Civil War fault lines. It was a nation shaped by regionalist identities. These were characterised by differing social, cultural and political frameworks and ideologies.

This work draws upon numerous extant sources to study nationalism in this context. It outlines its complexities, and the period's regionalist framework. War in 1898 enabled Americans to conceive those from other regions as fellow nationalists. This became a theme in political orations, mass media and popular culture. It enabled national re-imagining. This thesis assesses the character and outcomes of attempts at sectional reunification, which gained widespread support. This work finds that though ultimate success was mixed, reunification was a key theme of American nationalism in the context of the Spanish-American War. Yet, nationalism and reconciliation remained exclusionary. This marked not only an evolution in national policies, but also a dramatic change in American self-conception.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines the American nationalist context which shaped the War of 1898. It explores the complexities of American nationalism, the prevalence of regionalism and sectionalism preceding the war, and the ways in which the conflict was used to advance national re-unification. It finds a significant, concerted attempt to achieve national reconciliation by numerous groups, but that these efforts were ultimately undermined by the exclusionary nationalism they perpetuated.

It draws upon numerous sources, particularly political orations, newspaper accounts, written observations of contemporaries and later historiography, in order to fully explore the construction of American nationalism during the period. The opinions of those who lived through events remain essential. Thus, sources have been selected based upon their ability to illuminate this. Selections were also made according to availability, thus newspaper accounts and political works are pivotal. This is not an impediment, such sources often reflect popular public opinion.

Chapter One examines the unique nature of American nationalism. This is based upon and shaped by unique national identity. It is influenced by such beliefs as American exceptionalism and religious inheritance. The widespread popular conception of what it meant to be an American in the late 1890s was a manufactured fiction that remained profoundly exclusionary. American nationalism perpetuated a myth of a solely white, protestant, masculine nation.¹ This was politically expedient, perpetuated in the hope of overcoming post-Civil War regionalism. It appealed to the majority, white Protestant population. This took the fore in national imaginings.

This thesis examines the context of this development. American nationalism is an oft-approached element of the nation's history. Its complexities have been charted against the backdrop of varying contexts. Yet, the War of 1898 is often marginalized. Broad examination of America's nationalism must serve as the basis of a more focused look at the post-Civil War era. However, an overview of nationalism is not the sole emphasis of this work. Rather, its influence on national reunification is. This is a narrative underrepresented

¹ Edward J. Blum, *Reforging the White Republic*, Louisiana State University Press, New Orleans, 2007, pp. 11-17.

within ongoing historiography. This thesis aims to expand upon these existing historiographic themes, assessing national reunification in this context.

Chapter Two explores American regionalism and sectionalism. America's bloody Civil War ended with a northern Union victory over the southern Confederacy in 1865. The rebel South rejoined the Union. However, significant tensions remained between former belligerents. These directed post-war political and societal relations. Contemporary Americans realized the profound divisions shaping their nation. America's constituent regions were often characterized by wildly differing attributes. These in turn reflected varying conceptualizations of American citizenship. In many ways, the North and the South could be considered still as two singular nations, not a United States.

The South continued to possess a broadly differing cultural and political ethos when compared to the North. Many southerners resented Union enforced enfranchisement of African Americans.² Southerners saw Northern states as perpetuating an unequal peace. Economically, the South continued to lag behind the North. Its political system remained dominated by Democrats, Republicans held sway across the North. Partisan politics were rife.³ The post-Civil War period was characterized by the ascendancy of sectional divisions.

Contemporaneously, American industry rose to the global forefront.⁴ Though recession stifled growth and expansion in the early 1890s, the US emerged as a world power. This contrasted sharply with the fortunes of Spain, whose empire had lost most of its American possessions. Agrarian Spain had been unable to adequately industrialize. Harsh policies caused an uprising in its colony of Cuba in 1895. Spain's brutal response captured American attention and sympathy. This was directed by the period's mass media, which also reflected American sectionalism. Media analysis forms an important part of this work. By the 1890s, Americans were significant media consumers.⁵ The destruction of *USS Maine* in Havana harbor in 1898 further inflamed public opinion. Soon after, American forces intervened against Spain.

² *ibid.*, pp. 174-175.

³ Lewis L. Gould, *The Spanish-American War and President McKinley*, University of Kansas Press, Lawrence, 1981, pp. 24-25.

⁴ Michael H. Hunt, *1898: The Onset of America's Troubled Asian Century*, OAH Magazine of History, Spring 1998, p. 31.

⁵ Joe Knetsch and Nick Wynne, *Florida in the Spanish American War*, The History Press, Charleston, 2011, p. 36.

Chapter Three explores the outcomes of this war, particularly the ways in which diverse groups saw and facilitated national unification. American victory was relatively quick, despite some initial fears to the contrary. Henry Watterson, a Southern newspaper editor turned amateur historian, summed up the nation's reaction to this development at the time;

...press (reported)... the victory. The suspense of a week to Americans accustomed to the procurement and immediate publication of all news... found relief in a national outburst of praise of the victorious... In every city and hamlet the news fired the popular imagination... authorities of the world testified to the completeness of... American fighting ability and to the unprecedented annihilation of an adversary... without the slightest loss in return.⁶

Washington assumed control of Spain's former Pacific and Caribbean colonies.⁷ Though war had initially been a polarizing issue, especially in the South where much initial anti-war sentiment was focused, it soon came to enjoy broad, trans-regional support. Contemporaries from all sections of society lauded the popular re-imagining of the nation.⁸ Within extant press sources, developed criticism of this is lacking.⁹ The context of American nationalism facilitated this. A major theme which emerged against this backdrop was the idea that the war could unite Americans once again, as they had supposedly been before their Civil War. This national reunification is an issue which has been identified within the extant historiography.¹⁰

⁶ Henry Watterson, *The History of the Spanish American War*, Akron, New York, 1898, p. 118.

⁷ Carmen González López-Briones, 'The Indiana Press and the Coming of The Spanish-American War', *Atlantis*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Junio 1990), p. 165.

⁸ Paul T. McCartney, *Power and Progress*, Louisiana State University Press, New Orleans, 2006, p. 149.

⁹ Piero Gleijeses offers an excellent analysis of newspaper opinions and editorial lines. See, Piero Gleijeses '1898: The Opposition to the Spanish-American War', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 35, 2006.

¹⁰ This is examined in numerous works; notably Edward J. Blum, *Reforging The White Republic: Race, Religion and American Nationalism, 1865-1898*, Louisiana State University Press, New Orleans, 2007, pp. 175-250; Paul T. McCartney, *Power and Progress: American National Identity, The War of 1898 and the Rise of American Imperialism*, Louisiana State University Press, New Orleans, 2006; Randall S. Sumpter, *Censorship Liberally Administered*, 1999; Louis Perez Jr, *The War of 1812*, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1998; Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, Hill & Wang, New York, 2001.

However, it is yet to receive the level of examination it warrants. This work builds upon existing historical thought in terms of the War of 1898, adopting an often overlooked emphasis. Within the volumes concerning the war, nationalism remains marginalized. It is convenient to see the war as reshaping American self-conception. Political leaders were at the heart of this. Despite initial hostility from some segments of society to war, it soon enjoyed bi-partisan support. It was an enterprise which captured public imagination.

The Republican Senator from Nebraska, John Thurston, was among the many politicians who reflected this zeitgeist. As the war raged in Cuba and the Philippines, he described how it enabled a re-imagining of what it meant to be an American.¹¹ He remarked;

What an inspiring sight to see those who once fought against each other now rallying under one flag, exalting and rejoicing that... the union banner holds in equal honor every star of statehood, and singing together... 'Yankee Doodle' and 'Dixie'...¹²

Though he was far from the only such figure to espouse this idea, Thurston's words are instructive. The Republican Senator Henry Cabot Lodge also observed in a book published to capitalise on the war; 'Thus were the immediate object and purpose of the war achieved in fulfilment of the irresponsible conflict of centuries between races, systems, and beliefs inherently antagonistic.'¹³ Lodge wrote of a new spirit of national unity. Similarly, Watterson noted that the war provided 'for an extraordinary outpouring of national sentiment.'¹⁴

In 1898, the Union and the Confederacy once again marched to war. This time, not against one another. This was profoundly resonant for contemporary Americans.¹⁵ In a context of sweeping American nationalism, the nation was again popularly seen as united. To many contemporaries, it seemed that American sectionalism had finally been overcome.¹⁶

¹¹ John Pettegrew, 'The Soldier's Faith': Turn-of-the-Century Memory of the Civil War and the Emergence of Modern American Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Jan., 1996), p. 54.

¹² John M. Thurston, *Oration at the Arlington National Cemetery* (1898), as quoted in John Pettegrew, *Brutes in Suits: Male Sensibility in America: 1890-1920*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2007, p. 205.

¹³ Henry Cabot Lodge, *War With Spain*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1899, p. 232.

¹⁴ Watterson, p. 79.

¹⁵ Pettegrew, p. 54.

¹⁶ McCartney, p. 149.

But, this was not to be. Ideas of unification, though they captured public attention, proved to be fleeting and exclusionary. Little was afforded for minorities. This was reflected in the period's politics. The South's full re-admittance to the Union was contingent on Northern compromise over African American rights. African Americans featured little in the age's inclusive discourse. The North was willing to abandon post-Civil War promises to them in order to appeal to white Southerners.

The era-defining process of American regionalism, and its reflection in the period's mass media and political discourse must preclude more focused examination of nationalist efforts to overcome sectionalism. Once again, popular culture and politics serve as an appropriate prism from within which to examine the nationalism of the Spanish-American War. The profligacy of extant sources directs this.

This nationalism was uniquely shaped by the broader context in which it was birthed. This saw efforts to overcome American sectionalism by uniting the nation against a common enemy. Though this was only partially successful, and ultimately resulted in a paradoxically limiting interpretation of American civic character, its broad contours were reflected within then contemporary national development.

The Spanish-American War remains situated within the interlinked contexts of American regionalism and efforts towards national reconciliation. Fundamentally, it was a war directed by nationalism. The American population's reaction and support of the war was shaped by this. Thus, it is where the narrative must begin.

CHAPTER IAMERICAN NATIONALISM AND 1898

Nationalism is a phenomenon which has manifested across many nations. Simply being a nationalist nation does not make one unique. Yet, America's relationship with nationalism is particular in that Americans themselves have typically been reluctant to explore their own nationalist experience.¹ It is, as Peter Mickelson noted, an often marginalized element of American historiography.² Expansive analysis has come late within American historiography.

The Spanish-American War of 1898 was fought during a period of considerable American nationalism. This was buoyed along by the profligacy of mass media, and contemporary political developments. These promoted an exclusionary, uniquely American nationalism. The US began to look beyond its own borders, while public opinion was captured by the idea of national renewal and American exceptionalism. This was reflected within popular culture. The 1898 War suggested to American masses a biblical, messianic destiny for their nation. It is thus instructive to examine the complexities and unique characteristics of American nationalism.

The years before war against Spain were hardly the only such period of American nationalism. However, it is one which invites study regarding American self-reflexivity and understanding. Despite the role that nationalism exerted upon American history, fewer works than would be expected have focused on America's complex and often in-flux relationship with this.³ A key, defining element of American nationalism is the contention it raises among Americans themselves.⁴ It remains shaped by debates concerning the nature of citizenship. Furthermore, Americans have historically often viewed their nationalism more as 'patriotism'. This is seen as a less contentious and more desirable attribute.⁵

¹ Peter Mickelson, 'Nationalism in Minnesota During the Spanish-American War', *Minnesota History*, 41 (Spring, 1968), p. 1.

² *ibid.*

³ Bart Bonikowski, *Research on American Nationalism: Review of the Literature, Annotated Bibliography, and Directory of Publicly Available Data Sets*, Princeton University, Princeton, 2008, p. i.

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ *ibid.*

The 1890s heralded a transformative period in American political policy and social development. The nation looked abroad. The rapidly industrialized US intervened in a Cuban uprising against Spanish rule. Contemporaneously, its forces seized Spanish possessions across the Pacific. This imperialism was communicated to the public in euphemistic terms. Political leaders perpetuated a fiction concerning their ambitions. Within this America acted not in its own interests.⁶ Henry Cabot Lodge, the prominent Republican Senator, would write of the peoples of Spain's colonies, 'They declared that they desired annexation to the United States, above all independence of Spain and relief from Spanish rule, and wished to aid the Americans in all possible ways.'⁷

Despite initial fears as to US' chances for success, victory caused American writer Richard Harding Davis to remark that God 'looked after drunkards, babies and Americans.'⁸ The year 1898 was the point at which the US first expended itself as an imperial power.⁹ Spain's former holdings fell into the American sphere of influence. Despite the contention which characterized the lead-up to this war, in its aftermath public support was widely ecstatic. American media capitalized upon this.¹⁰

Generations of historians have continued to debate what America's reasons for going to war truly were.¹¹ This is a complex issue which cannot be answered with a single reason. Security and economic concerns are often offered, as is the argument that the US intervened for benevolent reasons: to save Cubans.¹² These remain among the most common understandings. Yet, these arguments elicit contention, due to later American territorial expansion and imperialist behavior.¹³ Historian Akira Iriye noted that with victory, 'The globalisation of America had begun.'¹⁴

⁶ Louis A. Perez Jr, *The War of 1898*, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1998, pp. ix-xii.

⁷ Henry Cabot Lodge, *War With Spain*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1899, p. 197.

⁸ George C. Herring, *From Colony To Superpower: US Foreign Relations Since 1776*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2008, p. 316.

⁹ Carmen González López-Briones, 'The Indiana Press and the Coming of The Spanish-American War', *Atlantis*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Junio 1990), p. 165.

¹⁰ Piero Gleijeses '1898: The Opposition to the Spanish-American War', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 35, 2006, p. 716-719.

¹¹ Perez Jr, pp. xii-xiii.

¹² *ibid.*, pp. 51-56.

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ Akira Iriye, *The Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations, vol. 3, The Globalisation of America, 1913-1945*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1992, p. 13.

The short, sharp war against Spain enabled the US to impose its will upon territories tens of thousands of kilometers apart.¹⁵ It proved American military and industry to the world. More importantly, the war provided a context from within which to attempt to overcome post-Civil War regionalism, promoting the idea of a truly United States. The US had emerged from its Civil War a fractured state, united in little more than name.¹⁶ A vast cultural, economic and political gulf existed between the Union and former Confederacy.¹⁷ Many saw their fellows across the dividing Mason-Dixie line as inherently different. It is convenient to think of the nation in terms of regions. This was the context in which nationalism existed.

Loyalty to shared political ideals and federal government in Washington did little to overcome sectional animosity. The mutual skepticism and often outright hostility which existed between the Union and former Confederacy became a defining attribute of America's national identity.¹⁸

Yet, in the lead up to the 1898 war, the idea of a united nation rose to national prominence within the context of growing nationalist discourse. This nationalist outburst was one which manifested in numerous ways, expressed in different tones along not only geographic and cultural lines. It reflected national religious, racial and socio-economic divisions. The advent of this would shape the subsequent development of US identity. The idea of a trans-regional US came to capture widespread public sympathy and support. This national imagining raced to the fore of public thought. Nationalism was the force used to articulate this.

America's nationalist development in the late nineteenth century reflected global events. The period was often seen by those living through it, particularly Europeans, as the 'age of nationalities.'¹⁹ American consolidation across the period was indicative of 'global

¹⁵ Louis L. Gould, *The Spanish-American War and President McKinley*, University of Kansas Press, Lawrence, 1981, pp. 89-90.

¹⁶ Paul T. McCartney, *Power and Progress: American National Identity, The War of 1898 and the Rise of American Imperialism*, Louisiana State University Press, New Orleans, 2006, p. 149.

¹⁷ Azar Gat, *Nations: The Long History and Deep Roots of Political Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2013, p. 270.

¹⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁹ David Armitage, et. al., 'Interchange: Nationalism and Internationalism in the Era of the Civil War', *The Journal of American History*, September 2011, p. 455.

processes of national formation.’²⁰ Though the US was not created in this context, it could be reborn.

American nationalism in the 1890s was not a historical aberration. The 1898 war, largely a consequence of this, enabled American national renewal. This was an epoch defining element of national history. Though this has been a popular element of broader American historiography, examination of the interlinked issues of American unification, nationalism and the war against Spain remains lacking. These were themes which shaped American cultural life. Yet, despite deficiencies, it would be simplistic to argue that American nationalism is absent from the historical record. This has been increasingly examined in recent decades. A brief overview of its characteristics and complexities must suffice.

Historian Eric Hobsbawm appropriately viewed nationalism as a ‘modern phenomenon’, ‘a political programme... in historic terms a... recent one. It holds that groups defined as ‘nations’ have the right to, and therefore ought to, form territorial states...’²¹ Paul McCartney, in a more focused, recent study on American nationalism, saw nationalism as manifesting ‘when a particular... group believes... it is in some way... different from all other (peoples).’²² He writes that nationalism grows when ‘identities become self-conscious in a way that demands political manifestation.’²³ The post-Civil War US was a state of numerous, often contradictory, identities. Among these, Northern and Southern remained most pronounced.

Similarly, Azar Gat argued that nationalism is always political.²⁴ The study of American nationalism is best situated within the broad and complex field of political history.²⁵ Its development mirrored that of American society.²⁶ The sub-discipline has often

²⁰ *ibid.*

²¹ Eric Hobsbawm, ‘Ethnicity and Nationalism in Europe Today’, *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Feb., 1992), p. 3.

²² McCartney, *Power and Progress*, p. 23.

²³ *ibid.*, p. 24.

²⁴ Gat, p. 3.

²⁵ Erkki Berndtson, ‘The Rise and Fall of American Political Science: Personalities, Quotations, Speculations’, *International Political Science Review / Revue internationale de science politique*, Vol. 8, No. 1, *The Evolution of Political Science: Selected Case Studies* (Jan., 1987), p. 85.

²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 87.

been directed by contemporaneous political aspirations.²⁷ It explores how the nation's contemporary and historical organization emerged.²⁸

Gat echoes Hobsbawm, who convincingly argued that history is the best framework from within which to explore nationalism. Hobsbawm wrote that 'nations without a past are contradictions... What makes a nation is the past, what justifies one nation against others is the past, and historians are the people who produce it.'²⁹ He continued that political history has always been an essential component of nationalism.³⁰ Hobsbawm identified the ethnic basis of most nationalist discourses. Yet, he concedes that definitions of a nation remains ambiguous.³¹ Popular historical understandings often shape nationalist imaginations.

American political history has been concerned with theorizing the nation's global place. Within this, there remains debate concerning the War of 1898. Further study of the nationalist context which surrounds this will expand on existing themes and works.

Study of American nationalism often reflects an approach spanning demographics, national identity, political policy, popular culture and racial issues. Much existing literature examines the war's legitimacy, reflecting a foreign policy emphasis. Though this will not be adopted here, political history, with its broad approach and analysis of context, remains the best sub-discipline within which to situate this work. This approach aims to assess a narrative relatively lacking within existing studies, though this work builds upon existing themes.

Nationalism remains a broad concept, often dictated by a nation's unique context. An examination of what precisely the term means must be undertaken. Despite the vast scope in which nationalism has been approached, common themes emerge within scholarship, including reference to a people's acclamation of the nation. The nation is seen as the force to which one owes allegiance. American nationalism pre-dated the 1890s. Its origin can broadly be seen as occurring in the period immediately after the American

²⁷ *ibid.*

²⁸ Brian J. Glenn, 'The Two Schools of American Political Development', *Political Studies Review*, 2004, vol. 2, p. 153.

²⁹ Hobsbawm, p. 3.

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ *ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

Revolution.³² It found resonance among Americans in the generations before the Civil War.³³

Nationalism often manifests across several 'levels of engagement'.³⁴ Bart Bonikowski has rightly argued that it is best to view it according to varying lenses of 'political, psychological and cultural' approaches.³⁵ It is a force which transcends the individual. The political approach reflects this, examining nationalism according to broader societal trends, these were often disproportionately shaped by a society's elites.³⁶ In the context of American nationalism in the 1890s, this approach focuses on governmental and political leaders. Conversely, the psychological level of analysis draws upon experiences of the individual.³⁷ This is an equally broad level of examination, given the often contradictory views expressed by Americans from varying regions. Finally, the cultural approach draws upon interactions between individuals. These direct the evolution of national values and opinions.³⁸ Most conceptions of nationalism emphasize interactions between an individual and their understanding of what the nation is.³⁹

A single definition of American nationalism remains elusive. Anatol Lieven has defined it as 'the devotion to an ideal, abstract, unrealized notion of one's country, often coupled with a belief in some wider national mission to humanity.'⁴⁰ The idea of a national mission is profoundly relevant to the US.⁴¹ This was used to encapsulate a justification for war against Spain. Liven also notes that many Americans view their nation's actions as beneficial to all people.⁴² Liven's definition is suitable as a basis for conceptualizing American nationalism. His work reflects both political and social psychology.⁴³ Liven argues that understandings of the nation impact upon, and are directed by, self-identity.⁴⁴

³² Edward Pessen, 'American Nationalism and American Historians', *OAH Magazine of History*, Vol. 2, No. 4, *The Development of Nationalism and the Northwest Ordinance* (Fall, 1987), pp. 4-7.

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ Bonikowski, p. 4.

³⁵ *ibid.*

³⁶ *ibid.*

³⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁰ Anatol Lieven, *America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2004, p. 8.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴² *ibid.*, p. 23.

⁴³ Bonikowski, p. 5.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*

Lieven contends that American nationalism stresses ideas of common law and liberty, which theoretically apply to all its people.⁴⁵ These are used to unify the population, and are the concepts from which American democracy derives. While these are laudable traits, American nationalism retains some negative attributes. Arguably, chief amongst these is the idea of American exceptionalism. While many nations see themselves as special, this idea has come to direct not only American nationalism, but also foreign policy and action.⁴⁶ Drawing upon its Christian inheritance, the US often sees itself as a messianic nation, with a 'special mission'.⁴⁷ Understandably, other nations often disliked this element of American identity.⁴⁸ American exceptionalism is key in understanding 1898. The expeditions against Spain were often seen by contemporaries as a modern crusade. In his orations, President McKinley drew upon such religious imagery.⁴⁹

America's national identity is one which has been re-evaluated across its history according to prevailing social, political and cultural contexts.⁵⁰ Nationalism has often transcended ideas of race or ethnicity, rather being based upon the theoretically less exclusionary ideas of democracy and law.⁵¹ Yet, American nationalism is often more pronounced than that of others. Particularly across the twentieth century, the US aimed to further its will abroad.⁵² This extension of American nationalism was apparent prior to 1898.⁵³

America's national identity is prefaced on the contentious idea that American beliefs should be universal.⁵⁴ Consequently, its foreign policy has often assumed that its

⁴⁵ Lieven, pp. 2-4.

⁴⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 30-33.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 5, 10.

⁴⁸ James W. Caesar, 'The Origins and Character of American Exceptionalism', *American Political Thought: A Journal of Ideas, Institutions, and Culture*, vol. 1 (Spring 2012), pp. 7-8.

⁴⁹ William McKinley, *Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley from March 1, 1897 to May 30, 1900*, Doubleday and McClure, New York, 1900, p. 367.

⁵⁰ Manuel Madriaga, 'Why American Nationalism Should Never Be Considered Postnationalist', *National Identities* Vol. 12, No. 1, March 2010, p. 81.

⁵¹ Minxin Pei, 'The Paradoxes of American Nationalism', *Foreign Policy*, May/June 2003, p. 31.

⁵² Paul T. McCartney, 'American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy from September 11 to the Iraq War', *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 119, No. 3, Fall 2004, p. 402.

⁵³ McCartney, *Power and Progress*, p. 149.

⁵⁴ Hans Kohn, *American Nationalism: An Interpretive Essay*, Macmillan, New York, 1957.

national interest and benefitting foreign peoples are congruent.⁵⁵ It is unsurprising that this element of its nationalism has proved contentious abroad.⁵⁶

American exceptionalism is a further defining attribute of its nationalism.⁵⁷ This is more than Americans viewing themselves as unique, as Daniel Bell has argued.⁵⁸ Rather, this exceptionalism suggests that the American people are in some way superior to other peoples. Its proponents often argued that the US profoundly benefits the world. This has religious undertones. American exceptionalism often reflected an American 'duty... a responsibility to lead others.'⁵⁹ It remains a nationalist construct.⁶⁰

US identity reflects this idea of an 'exceptional' purpose.⁶¹ American culture has been shaped by the belief that its people have been 'specifically chosen'.⁶² This pre-dates the war against Spain. Thomas Paine, an American revolutionary leader, declared that the new American nation had the power 'to begin the world over again.'⁶³ Paine suggests that from their inception, the American people aimed to advance their global interests.⁶⁴ American exceptionalism remains a populist discourse.⁶⁵ It was prevalent in the political context of the 1890s. The war was marketed to American society through this.

American exceptionalism has had a profound influence on the development of policy.⁶⁶ Americans have often seen themselves as liberating other nations. Historically, this has typically adopted religious imagery.

⁵⁵ Liven, p. 161.

⁵⁶ McCartney, 'American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy from September 11 to the Iraq War', pp. 402-403

⁵⁷ Liven, pp. 30-33.

⁵⁸ Daniel Bell, 'The 'Hegelian Secret': Civil Society and American Exceptionalism' in Byron E. Shafer, ed., *Is America Different? A New Look at American Exceptionalism*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1991, pp. 46-70.

⁵⁹ McCartney, 'American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy from September 11 to the Iraq War', p. 403.

⁶⁰ McCartney, *Power and Progress*, p. 26.

⁶¹ Brian Klunk, *Consensus and the American Mission*, University Press of America, Lanham, 1986; William Pfaff, *The Wrath of Nations: Civilization and the Furies of Nationalism*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1993.

⁶² Liven, p. 30.

⁶³ Thomas Paine, 'Common Sense' in Nelson F. Adkins, ed., *Common Sense and Other Writings*, Macmillan, New York, 1953; Walter A. McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State: America's Encounter with the World Since 1776*, Houghton Mifflin, New York, 1997.

⁶⁴ McCartney, 'American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy from September 11 to the Iraq War', p. 402.

⁶⁵ Liven, p. 19.

⁶⁶ McCartney, 'American Nationalism and U.S. Foreign Policy from September 11 to the Iraq War', p. 406.

Protestantism, America's largest and most influential religion in the 1890s, influenced opinion concerning war.⁶⁷ Religion offered American jingoists the tone in which to cast their ambitions. This also drew upon racial ideas: Protestantism and the white race were inseparable. This idea was broadly reflected in contemporary popular culture, it seemed to newspaper editors, particularly those in the South, that God had ordained the US for greatness.⁶⁸ America's nationalism has often adopted overtly religious tones. This has applied to not only individuals and public discourse, but also political figures and public government policy. The Congressional Record of the 55th Congress, which was contemporaneous to the war against Spain, provides numerous examples of legislators calling upon God's will or provenance.

Religious imagery was thus unsurprisingly adopted by the government in the 1890s because of its broad resonance. It was used to communicate and justify policies to the public. To a crowd at the Trans-Mississippi Exposition, the Northern Republican President McKinley of Ohio declared;

The faith of a Christian nation recognizes the hand of Almighty God in the ordeal through which we have passed. Diving favor seemed manifest everywhere. In fighting for humanity's sake, we have been signally blessed. We did not seek war. To avoid it, if this could be done in justice and honor to the rights of our neighbors and ourselves, was our constant prayer...⁶⁹

He described the American victory over Spain in terms appropriate to a pulpit. McKinley also identified the interlinked nature of religion and American nationalism. Previously speaking in New Jersey, he informed a crowd;

... Piety and patriotism go well together... Love of flag, love of country... are not inconsistent with our religious faith... we have more love for our country and more love our flag than ever before... and, wherever that flag is raised, it stands not for despotism and oppression, but for liberty, opportunity and humanity...⁷⁰

McKinley's orations illustrate the unifying power of religion for Americans. Given its resonance, it is unsurprising that it could exert such influence on the development of

⁶⁷ Edward J. Blum, *Reforging The White Republic: Race, Religion and American Nationalism, 1865-1898*, Louisiana State University Press, New Orleans, 2007, p. 230.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*

⁶⁹ McKinley, *Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley*, p. 367.

⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p. 105.

American nationalism. Louis Gould has written of McKinley's efforts to overcome sectional animosity through his speaking tours.⁷¹ This is evident within his speeches, their favorable response from audiences emphasizes this.

Tellingly, McKinley was far from unique in his use of such imagery. Often repeated themes of American destiny convey the supposed messianic nature of American policy. Democratic Representative Joseph Wheeler of Alabama, a Confederate hero who later commanded forces in Cuba, argued that American action against Spain was 'God's will'. He justified his support of intervention, telling an audience;

It is the will of God that the atrocities which for three years Spanish officials have perpetuated in Cuba shall cease; it is God's will that humanity should prevail throughout the world, and when he created this great Christian Republic He imposed upon it the duty of obeying the admonition. We cannot neglect this duty any longer. If we do so, we will lose all of that great prestige which we now enjoy throughout the world, and I very much fear that some disaster may come to punish a people recreant to so sacred a duty.⁷²

Religion, so long as it was white and Protestant, was a profoundly influential element of everyday life. The popular culture of war against Spain adopted this imagery. Much of this drew upon the idea of a biblically preordained destiny, reflecting American exceptionalism. The poet M. Pardee Adams drew parallels between the American mission and scripture, writing;

From Cuba to the Philippines,
A cry for rescue came,
As Macedonia of old,
'Come! Help in Jesus' name!'
To those who sat in darkness,
God sent His own Great Light;
So we, the Lord's own freemen,

⁷¹ Lewis L. Gould, *The Spanish-American War and President McKinley*, University of Kansas Press, Lawrence, 1981, pp. 103-105.

⁷² Joseph Wheeler, in 'Proctor Report, 7 March 1898', *Congressional Record*, 55th Congress, 2nd Session, Government Printing, Washington, 1898, p. 2917.

May take the message bright.⁷³

The poem concluded;

To these 'the least' who need us,

God calls, 'My truth proclaim',

Go! To the faint and fallen,

Send peace through Jesus name.⁷⁴

Nationalism remains a cultural phenomenon, religion is but one element of American culture, which suggests to Americans their place in the world.⁷⁵ Rogers Brubaker further defined nationalism as 'a heterogeneous set of 'nation'-oriented idioms' expressed through cultural and political life.'⁷⁶ In 1890s America, this was often contingent upon one's region. The cultural experiences a Northerner might significantly contrast with those in the South. Thus, American nationalism is not as all-encompassing as might be assumed. This was an age characterized, politically, socially and culturally, by American regionalism.

Michael Billig's understanding of nationalism reflects Brubaker's. Billig further explores cultural practices. He argues that nationalism consists of 'ideological habits.'⁷⁷ Similarly to Bonikowski, Billig understands these as existing at several levels of analysis, including that of the nation, socio-demographic groups, and individuals.⁷⁸ When speaking of American nationalism, it is important to understand the term's internal divisions.

Most American research concerning its nationalism has emphasized national identity. This is a contested term, but fundamentally relates to the elements which define a nation's people.⁷⁹ Bart Bonikowski defines nationalism as, 'the self-understanding of individuals and groups framed in terms of their membership in... the territorial, social, and legal boundaries of an actual or potential nation-state.'⁸⁰ His work argues that nationalism

⁷³ Sydney A. Witherbee (ed.), *Spanish-American War Songs: A Complete Collection of Newspaper Verse During Our Recent War With Spain*, Witherbee, Detroit, 1898, p. 43.

⁷⁴ *ibid.*

⁷⁵ Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, 1995.

⁷⁶ Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2004, pp. 55, 108, 130.

⁷⁷ Billig, p. 6.

⁷⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

⁷⁹ Bonikowski, p. ii.

⁸⁰ *ibid.*

is a combination of a number of factors, all of which combine to define a nation.⁸¹ This is a good approach.

Nationalism remains, in essence, a unifying force. Yet, America's nationalist development was fractured by its Civil War. Later, nationalist development typically aimed to unite citizenry against perceived threats.⁸²

However, in reality, American nationalism remains contradictory.⁸³ In theory, it offers the idea of the American nation to all of its inhabitants. Paradoxically, in practice, It was historically shaped by ideologies which prevented minorities from attaining full citizenship. As scholars have noted, the exclusionary nature American nationalism has been a defining attribute.⁸⁴ In the 1890s, the popularly understood image of an American within nationalist discourse was that of a white, Protestant man. This could appeal to both Northern and Southern majorities, but hardly applied to the entire nation.

American nationalism thus remains a complex field, within which multiple understandings exist. The 1898 War emerges as a pivotal element within this. Within US historiography, 1898 is typically seen as a triumphal narrative, the point the nation first acted as a global power.⁸⁵ Louis Perez noted that this expansive historiography is ambiguous because historical understandings change.⁸⁶ Popular American conceptions of 1898 came to reflect the ways in which Americans sought to view their nation. Within extant historiography, this has often been covered within an overarching historical analysis.

The twentieth century has often been characterized as 'The American Century.'⁸⁷ It is appropriate to say this began in 1898, when Americans were forced to adapt to their nation's new policies. As Robert L. Beisner wrote, the war, 'provoked a major crisis of belief... Americans... questioned... the nation's future role in international affairs.'⁸⁸ The period saw 'one of the most exacting... examinations of the... principles of American

⁸¹ *ibid.*

⁸² *ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

⁸³ *ibid.*, pp. 1-12.

⁸⁴ Gary Gerstle, 'Theodore Roosevelt and the Divided Character of American Nationalism', *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 86, No. 3, *The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History: A Special Issue* (Dec., 1999), p. 1280.

⁸⁵ Perez Jr, p. ix.

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p. x.

⁸⁷ Donald H. White, 'The "American Century" in World History', *Journal of World History*, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 105-108.

⁸⁸ Robert L. Beisner, *Twelve Against Empire: The Anti-Imperialists, 1898-1900*, McGraw Hill, New York, 1968, p. xiv.

government and society in history.⁸⁹ A rapid growth of nationalism, which had distinct and varying regional attributes, influenced the nature of American society and culture. Such study can be located within the increased emphasis political history has placed upon nationalism in recent decades.⁹⁰

Though works of political history cover 1898, that is not to say the field is crowded. Relatively few adopt nationalism as a main theme. Most recently, Paul T. McCartney's *Power and Progress* explores how the conflict's outcomes shaped American national identity.⁹¹ He correctly suggests the war was largely a consequence of American nationalism.⁹² He writes that arguments concerning this development are 'more complimentary than historians and political scientists have admitted.'⁹³ McCartney notes that understanding American character is essential in understanding national ambitions.⁹⁴ His work is both balanced and articulate.

Conversely, Matthew Frye Jacobson's *Barbarian Virtues* offers a scathing indictment of American nationalism and policies. He argues that racism and economic imperialism dictated American action in Spain's colonies. He suggests populations in these territories were exploitable workforces for Americans.⁹⁵ He is right in addressing this. Jacobson also explored American geopolitical and humanitarian motives. His examination of US policy offers good examples of how it was shaped by complex concerns.

Similarly, *The War of 1898*, by Louis A. Perez, argues that the expedition against Spain was undertaken with the aim of gaining colonies.⁹⁶ Perez notes that generations of US leaders had long coveted Cuba.⁹⁷ According to him, Americans popularized a humanitarian myth to obfuscate their true motives.⁹⁸ This has been a re-occurring theme within American historiography. Walter Zimmerman echoes this view. He argues that American political

⁸⁹ *ibid.*

⁹⁰ Gat, pp. 1-2.

⁹¹ McCartney, *Power and Progress*, p. 2.

⁹² *ibid.*, p. 149.

⁹³ *ibid.*, p. 4.

⁹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 7.

⁹⁵ Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, Hill & Wang, New York, 2001.

⁹⁶ Perez Jr, pp. 3-7.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 45.

elites utilized the nationalist context of the 1890s to achieve 'great power status'.⁹⁹ America's elevation to this position was one of the most tangible war outcomes.

More interestingly, James McPherson has contended that the war against Spain reflected ideas of 'Southern ethnic nationalism'.¹⁰⁰ This was a consequence of the political and cultural context: Southern nationalists promoted their unique cultural characteristics. This Southern nationalism typified Southern culture and politics. McPherson writes that Union victory in 1865 was a 'victory of civic over ethnic nationalism.'¹⁰¹ Southern ethnic nationalism had been an impediment to national unity. Within existing historiography, national re-unification is often seen through limited case studies.

Edward J. Blum's *Reforging the White Republic*, a more focused study on nationalism in the nineteenth century, outlines the age's social and political context. It asserts that post-Civil War national reconciliation was an aim of white Protestants.¹⁰² These (typically Northern) Protestants aimed to promote domestic unity. Both religion and nationalism provided the context for this.¹⁰³ Blum identifies contextual cultural undertones which promoted American expansion.¹⁰⁴ He argues the era saw the re-birth of the US nation as an exclusionary state based upon white Protestantism. Certainly, the period was one of unparalleled national change.

The 1890s were a period of tremendous American economic and industrial growth. The nation began its emergence as a world power.¹⁰⁵ 'Manifest Destiny', the ideology of western advance, was all but at an end. The US spanned a continent. The young American historian Frederick Jackson Turner saw the process of westward advance as a pivotal element of national success. His 'Frontier Thesis', first articulated in 1893, noted that constant expansion over previous generations had contributed significantly to the growth of American power. This process had also directed the evolution of its culture.

⁹⁹ Walter Zimmerman, *The First Great Triumph: How Five Americans Made Their Country a World Power*, Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, New York, 2002.

¹⁰⁰ James M. McPherson, 'Was Blood Thicker than Water? Ethnic and Civic Nationalism in the American Civil War', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 143, 1998, pp. 102-8.

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*

¹⁰² Blum, p. 16.

¹⁰³ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p. 212.

¹⁰⁵ Michael H. Hunt, 1898: *The Onset of America's Troubled Asian Century*, OAH Magazine of History, Spring 1998, p. 31.

Turner later wrote, 'American democracy was born of no theorist's dream; it was not carried in the *Sarah Constant* to Virginia, nor in the Mayflower to Plymouth. It came out of the American forest, and it gained new strength each time it touched a new frontier.'¹⁰⁶ Turner, who has had significant influence upon the development of American historical thought, was alarmed by the 1890 Census, which had declared the frontier to be closed.¹⁰⁷ Turner saw this as the end of an outlet for American energies. It is interesting that the war against Spain would occur so soon after this, offering a new outlet for American expansion.

Henry Cabot Lodge, Senator and prominent proponent of war against Spain, saw the nation in much the same way as Turner. He wrote immediately after victory in a hastily published book;

For thirty years the people of the United States had been absorbed in the development of their great heritage. They had been finishing the conquest of their continent, and binding all parts of it together with the tracks and highways of commerce. Once this great work was complete, it was certain that the virile, ambitious, enterprising race which had done it would look abroad beyond their boundaries and seek to guard and extend their interests in other parts of the world.¹⁰⁸

The Spanish-American War can thus be seen as an extension of America's unique culture, and a continuation of earlier US historical trends. Political history, often the lens through which the war was examined, remains the best approach, inviting study of social and cultural context.¹⁰⁹

War did not mark the birth of American nationalism. Rather, it was a transformative episode.¹¹⁰ Ironically, despite the move towards shared national identity,

¹⁰⁶ Frederick Jackson Turner, 'The Significance of the Frontier in American History', *The Frontier in American History*, 1920, p. 293.

¹⁰⁷ Robert Porter, at. al., 'Progress of the Nation', in *Report on Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part 1*, Bureau of the Census, pp. xvii-xxiv.

¹⁰⁸ Henry Cabot Lodge, *War With Spain*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1899, pp. 233-234.

¹⁰⁹ Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting For American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked The Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1998, p. 2.

¹¹⁰ McCartney, *Power and Progress*, p. 27.

citizenship at its heart remained exclusionary. Masculine, white Protestantism cannot accurately define an entire nation.

Gender roles exerted vast influence upon America's nineteenth century political development.¹¹¹ Unsurprisingly, this system was dominated by ideas of masculinity, which influenced the context of the war. Some argued that the US required access to foreign markets, that the war be pursued for economic interests.¹¹² Others promoted the conflict to prevent American men from losing masculine vigor.¹¹³ Writing in 1899, Elbridge Brooks remarked the war had 'brought a higher manhood.'¹¹⁴ This context helps explain why jingoist policies enjoyed broad political support.¹¹⁵ Yet, this was within a political system which excluded women.

African Americans were similarly excluded from full citizenship and political representation, despite the rights they won following the Civil War. Racial theorizing was often utilized by contemporaries to explain perceived national success.¹¹⁶ Paradoxically, despite the aims of Lincoln, white ethnic nationalism once again came to characterize American nationalism and popular ideas of citizenship in post-Civil War decades.¹¹⁷

In particular, and most surprisingly, it was Northern Protestants who helped promote a national identity within which whiteness, rather than loyalty to a federal Union or political principals, was the pre-requisite for full citizenship. The aim of this was sectional reconciliation with the South. African Americans across the South thus suffered with the advent of the Jim Crow laws. These were enacted with tacit Northern support in the aim of achieving national re-unification, albeit a process which redefined ideas as to who constituted an American citizen.¹¹⁸ The works of scholars such as Alexander Saxton¹¹⁹ and Matthew Frye Jacobson have explored the interlinked relationship between the ideas of whiteness and national identity. As these historians and others have shown, ideas of race

¹¹¹ Hoganson, pp. 10-11.

¹¹² McCartney, p. 9.

¹¹³ Hoganson, pp. 10-11.

¹¹⁴ Elbridge Brooks, *The Story of Our War With Spain*, Lothrop Publishing, Boston, 1899, p. 336.

¹¹⁵ Hoganson, p. 10.

¹¹⁶ Brian Rouleau, 'Maritime Destiny as Manifest Destiny, American Commercial Expansionism and the Idea of the Indian', *Journal of the Early Republic*, 30 (Fall 2010), p. 379-380.

¹¹⁷ Blum, p. 244-249.

¹¹⁸ Gerstle, p. 1282.

¹¹⁹ Alexander Saxton, *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth Century America*, Verso, New York, 1990, pp. 370-377.

change.¹²⁰ The racial element of American nationalism is reflects other nationalist ideologies.¹²¹

The conflict against Spain provided a common enemy against which to re-cast the idea of American citizenship and reassert the principles of a united nation. A generation on from 1865, the fault lines of the Civil War were still evident. This discourse was reflected within the age's popular culture and national imagination. While strides towards national unity ultimately met with mixed success, the hope that they drew upon represented an epoch defining element in the nation's history.

New understandings of American identity and national consciousness were reflected through contemporary culture.¹²² In particular, American newspapers promoted an imperial ideology.¹²³ These also broadly reflected the ongoing theme of American unification. This contributed to a new, popularly accessible conceptualization of American citizenship, though this was both simplistic and exclusionary. It reflected broader societal trends, borne along on the current of nationalism.

It is convenient given this summary to adopt a brief, definition of American nationalism. It is a force which draws upon the nation's religious inheritance, along with ideas of American exceptionalism. It suggests that the American people have a unique, almost biblically ordained, messianic destiny. In the late nineteenth century, it was also heavily dependent upon ideas of white, protestant masculinity. It was a force which aimed to unite the nation, though the actual outcome remains more complex.

The Spanish-American war generated unparalleled American national unity within the context of the second half of the nineteenth century.¹²⁴ The sectionalism which had long characterized North-South relations was spectacularly, but fleetingly, overcome.¹²⁵ It became popularly understood that the North or the South was marching to war. Rather, it was a United States.

¹²⁰ Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues, The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, New York, Hill and Wang, 2000., p. 7.

¹²¹ Hobbsbawm, p. 4.

¹²² Bonnie Goldenberg, 'Imperial Culture and National Conscience: The Role of the Press in the United States and Spain during the Crisis of 1898', *BHS*, LXXVII (2000), p. 170.

¹²³ *ibid.*

¹²⁴ Gerstle, p. 1282.

¹²⁵ *ibid.*

This consciousness was shaped by religious context, political and economic ambitions and the spread of nationalism. This manifested against the backdrop of foreign policy and power concerns.¹²⁶ The war remains highly relevant to subsequent American political and cultural development.¹²⁷ The nationalist outburst it encapsulated aimed to address religious, racial and socio-economic divisions. This nationalism was shaped by public discourse and popular culture.¹²⁸ It was used to frame post-Civil War reunification, and the ultimate success, or rather failure, of this warrants further study. This work is not a challenge to the orthodoxy of existing historiography. Rather, it is simply an often overlooked element of a wider narrative.

¹²⁶ McCartney, *Power and Progress*, p. 45.

¹²⁷ Goldenberg, p. 171.

¹²⁸ McCartney, *Power and Progress*, p. 27.

CHAPTER IIREGIONALISM AND THE WAR AGAINST SPAIN

Nationalism suggests that a nation should be led by those with whom the majority of the population recognize as 'co-nationals'; that is, those who adhere to the same nationalist discourse.¹ But what constitutes a co-nationalist? This creates problems in a nation as vast and diverse as the US, where definitions of a co-nationalist are often arbitrary or open to interpretation. Within such nations, individuals can often feel a greater loyalty or attachment to a constituent region, their region, than to the nation as a whole. Deviations in national character along geographic lines contribute to this.² Regionalism and 1898 must be addressed before examination of the Spanish-American War's contributions to American reunification. This chapter shall examine this, drawing upon contemporary sources.

American regionalism has been a re-occurring theme across history. Americans have often defined themselves along regional social and political lines.³ This was evident in the 1890s. In the lead-up to the Spanish-American War, regionalism had risen to the fore of national political thought. Yet, the conflict and its immediate aftermath offered opportunities through which to address regionalism, and advance the cause of a common US. However, this was only partially successful, and the North/South divide endures within contemporary politics. Nevertheless, the 1898 war offers an often overlooked case study into the complexities of American identity.

Some recent American histories have moved to adopt a regional framework.⁴ This involves identifying constituent regions of the nation, and their unique characteristics.⁵ This approach correctly presupposes that regionalism influences the development of both nationalism and national identity. As Thomas G. Patterson has noted, regional identity influences a nation's 'security, vulnerability, freedom of choice, cultural, political, and

¹ Brendan O'Leary, 'On the Nature of Nationalism: An Appraisal of Ernest Gellner's Writings on Nationalism', *Journal of Political Science* 27, p. 192.

² A good overview of American regionalism can be found in Joseph A. Fry, 'Domestic Regionalism and the Formation of American Foreign Policy', *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (June 2012).

³ *ibid.*, pp. 451-453.

⁴ Thomas G. Patterson, 'U.S. Intervention in Cuba, 1898: Interpreting the Spanish-American-Cuban-Filipino War', *OAH Magazine of History*, Spring 1998, p. 6.

⁵ Fry, pp. 451-452.

economic ties, and the historical patterns that have shaped decisions and events.⁶ This is particularly relevant to the nationalism of 1890s America.

The US can broadly be categorized into several constituent regions, though definitions and understandings vary. The two most prominent regions are those which broadly correspond to the Civil War era North and South. In the lead up to war against Spain, these two regions were the best understood within public consciousness. They were also the regions which exercised the greatest level of influence upon politics and society. Their mutually antagonistic interactions shaped the nation, as contemporary history Frederick Jackson Turner and others have noted.⁷

American regionalism defined the political context of 1898. Turner remarked, 'there are evidences that now... the separate geographical interests have their leaders and spokesmen... the United States are shaped by the interplay of sectional with national forces... Our national character is a composite of these sections.'⁸ Turner noted that when compared to the North and the South, the 'middle region' of the country was the 'least sectional... it... mediated between East and West as well as between North and South.'⁹

Despite the significant influence that regionalism had on American foreign policy at this key time, this has often been overlooked or marginalized within historiography.¹⁰ The historian Patricia Nelson Limerick wrote, 'To many scholars, regional history is where one goes for a nap.'¹¹ This is surprising, given how regional politics, culture and society contributed to American nationalism and the expedition against Spain.

The regionalist context of 1898 was a pivotal element of national life. A generation on from their cataclysmic Civil War, many Americans continued to define themselves along these sectional lines, most commonly North and South. These fault lines in the nation's

⁶ Patterson, p. 6.

⁷ See Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, Holt and Company, New York, 1921; Patricia Nelson Limerick, 'Region and Reason', in Edward L. Ayers, et. al. (eds), *All Over the Map: Rethinking American Regions*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1996 and Joseph A. Fry, 'Domestic Regionalism and the Formation of American Foreign Policy', *Diplomatic History*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (June 2012).

⁸ Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, Holt and Company, New York, 1921, p. 322

⁹ *ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁰ Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson, eds., *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1991.

¹¹ Patricia Nelson Limerick, 'Region and Reason', in Edward L. Ayers, et. al. (eds), *All Over the Map: Rethinking American Regions*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1996, p. 84.

makeup were expressed not only through media, but also political alignment. The pre-Civil War Northern Republican/Southern Democrat dichotomy still held sway. This characterized debates concerning the decision to go to war.¹²

As the war against Spain approached, conceptions of a *United States* came to characterize nationalism. The idea of a truly united nation became the temporary zeitgeist of the age. Yet, for many in the lead-up to this, allegiance to a state or region remained the defining attribute of citizenship. This was challenged once war was underway, sectionalism was lessened. This illustrates that the spread of nationalism was often expressed as a means of national reunification, numerous speeches, editorials and even government policies attest to this.

In February 1895, Cubans had risen against Spain. The US was initially hesitant to intervene, internally occupied with its own economic depression and looming elections.¹³ However, the large subsequent civilian death toll, the mysterious destruction of a US warship in Havana harbor and American security concerns gradually paved the way for intervention in 1898. The Spanish-American War forced the US to re-examine ambitions and ideologies.¹⁴ Victory over Spain saw the ascent of the US as a major global power.¹⁵ However, the conflict's impact upon domestic politics and culture was as transformative as that which it exercised on foreign policy.

The year 1890 had seen the closure of the American western frontier,¹⁶ which has retained a dominant place within American popular culture. The US now stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The end of this expansionist outlet had vast repercussions. Frederick Jackson Turner argued in the 1890s that the nation needed a new frontier.¹⁷ He asserted that without this, American energies would decline. Turner's thesis proved influential among contemporaries. William Appleman Williams later substantiated Turner's work. He

¹² See Paul T. McCartney, *Power and Progress*, pp. 114-142 and Blum, *Reforging the White Republic*, pp. 237-244, for an overview on contextual partisan politics. Lewis L. Gould's *The Spanish-American War and President McKinley* also concerns itself with the political dimensions of the war.

¹³ Piero Gleijeses, '1898: The Opposition to the Spanish-American War', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 35, 2006, p. 686.

¹⁴ Bonnie Goldenberg, 'Imperial Culture and National Conscience: The Role of the Press in the United States and Spain during the Crisis of 1898', *BHS*, LXXVII (2000), p. 170.

¹⁵ James Landers, 'Island Empire: Discourse on US Imperialism in Century, Cosmopolitan and McClure's, 1893-1900', *American Journalism*, 23 (1), pp. 95-97.

¹⁶ Robert Porter, at. al., 'Progress of the Nation', in *Report on Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890, Part 1*, Bureau of the Census, pp. xvii-xxiv.

¹⁷ Goldenberg, pp. 172-173.

noted that 'given the marketplace-expansionist conception of reality, the end of one frontier implied the need for a new frontier.'¹⁸ By the end of the 1890s, the American economy had begun to prosper. The nation was keen to expand once more. This propelled a desire for new foreign markets. Contemporaneous to this was a cultural, social and political shift within which a desire for a united American nation was broadly articulated, in contrast to the historical trend of regionalism.

Regionalism is of profound importance in understanding the American nationalist context of the 1890s. Geography, and an understanding of place has influenced how Americans develop policy.¹⁹ Academic interest in American regionalism has varied.²⁰ Yet, regionalism has served several, often contradictory, functions. It originally attempted to define a new nation. In the post-Civil War era, it aimed to forge a revisionist national identity.²¹ This diversity also explains the nebulous nature of the concept of regionalism itself.²²

Regions can be defined according to shared attributes, such as area, race, ethnicity, or religion, among others. Turner drew upon several of these elements in his writing. He noted that regions are 'self-obsessed' and 'self-absorbed'. They consider their own culture as 'best for all the nation... (they think)... in other words, of the nation in terms of itself.'²³

Regions have exercised influence upon the evolution of American foreign policy.²⁴ David M. Emmons contends that 'regions are the result of economic and political forces that lend themselves to historical analysis.'²⁵ Emmons has examined the post-Civil War era within American regionalism. In this, he has noted that both the Southern and Western American regions were skeptical of the ascendancy of the North-East, which roughly corresponded to the Civil War Union. He identifies North-Eastern 'cultural imperialism',

¹⁸ William Appleman Williams, *The Roots of the Modern American Empire*, Random House, New York, 1969, p. 277.

¹⁹ Robert J. McMahon, 'The Study of American Foreign Relations: National History or International History?' in Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson (eds.), *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, New York, 1991, pp. 11-23.

²⁰ Fry, pp. 455-456.

²¹ Kari Meyers Skredsvig, 'Places of the Heart: Female Regionalist Writers in Nineteenth Century US Literature', *Filología y Lingüística* XXVIII(1): 2002, p. 81.

²² *ibid.*, p. 81.

²³ Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History' and Other Essays, with commentary by John Mack Faragher*, New Haven, 1994, p. 190.

²⁴ David M. Emmons, 'Constructed Province: History and the Making of the Last American West', *Western Historical Quarterly* 25 (Winter 1994), p. 442.

²⁵ *ibid.*

and the ways in which the South and West aimed to avert a fundamental, Northern-imposed remaking of their culture.²⁶

Regionalism characterizes the post-1865 political situation. Within this, the US was fractured. In *Reconstructing the World: Southern Fictions and U.S. Imperialisms, 1898–1976*, Harilaos Stecopoulos also adopted the region as a unit of examination.²⁷ Here, he argued ‘that regionalism represents the worst aspects of nationalism’.²⁸ Regionalism pits constituent regions of a nation against one another, rather than one whole nation against others. In this way, it is an internally disruptive force which undermines not only national unity, but also prospects of national success.

As Stecopoulos, Jackson Turner, Fry and Limerick have noted, it would seem that this form of regionalism is an anathema to nationalism. Rather than promote ideas of the unified nation and its people, regionalism places emphasis upon its constituent parts. However, regionalism has shaped the development of American nationalism. In the context of 1898, this increasingly aimed to heal American sectionalism.

In the post-Civil War period, the North-East was the dominant American region.²⁹ It contained a disproportionate level of population, and concentrated political, economic and industrial power. Historians have moved to address how this came to be.³⁰ Notably, Anne Goldman’s *Continental Divides: Revisioning American Literature* examined the trans-regional dimension of American culture in the late nineteenth century. Within this, Goldman notes that ‘diverse US regions all too often are framed as equivalent of time zones in a chronology of empire, the eastern wilderness chastised by the Puritans, the western spaces made penitent a little later by their pioneer descendants.’³¹ This characterization of East and West, when also considered with the South, does a good job of capturing relevant elements of American regionalism post-1865. Among these American parts, the South which remained the most distinct.

²⁶ *ibid.*,

²⁷ Harilaos Stecopoulos, *Reconstructing the World: Southern Fictions and U.S. Imperialisms, 1898–1976*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2008.

²⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 6–7.

²⁹ Edward Watts, *An American Colony: Regionalism and the Roots of Midwestern Culture*, Ohio University Press, Athens, 2002, p. xiv.

³⁰ *ibid.*

³¹ Anne Goldman, *Continental Divides: Revisioning American Literature*, as quoted Edward Watts, *An American Colony: Regionalism and the Roots of Midwestern Culture*, Ohio University Press, Athens, 2002, p. xiv.

The former Confederacy was America's 'most self-conscious, most coherent, and most persistent one-party region.'³² Consequently, it attracted the 'greatest level' of regional analysis.³³ Theories of American regionalism have yet 'to unseat... (the North-East's)... continued status as center of the United States and originary metaphor for national identity.'³⁴ Southern sectionalism saw itself as distinct. This divide between the former Confederate South and the rest of the nation was particularly evident in the lead-up to the war against Spain, though this had been a rift present for generations. It transcended simple partisan politics, shaping both culture and identity.

The American Civil War shattered the nation. A contributing factor to the outbreak of this was that Northerners and Southerners came to see each other as inhabitants of another nation, divided by politics and culture. Popular understandings within the period came to reflect the belief that 'austere Puritans... populated the North... hot blooded Cavaliers had settled the South.'³⁵ As Northerners and Southerners grew further apart over the mid-nineteenth century, sectional animosity spread.

One Civil War soldier from Michigan wrote; 'A generation has been educated to hate the South, and most earnestly the hate has been returned.'³⁶ This divide between the two major regions was accelerated by Northern anti-slavery efforts. Northern support of African American rights facilitated a reconceptualization of the 'interlinked ideas of whiteness and national identity.'³⁷ This was unpalatable to the South.

As guns fell silent in 1865, the US faced ongoing sectionalism. Much of this was shaped by post-war discussion of national character. This contentious debate aimed to determine the nature of citizenship. Northern white Protestants initially advocated an ideology within which former slaves would be American citizens.³⁸ This promoted an unparalleled and inclusive civic nationalism, within which 'shared political commitments to

³² *ibid.*

³³ *ibid.*

³⁴ Watts, p. xiv.

³⁵ William Robert Taylor, *Cavalier and Yankee: The Old South and American National Character*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1961, p. 55.

³⁶ Randall C. Jimmerson, *The Private Civil War: Popular Thought During The Sectional Conflict*, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1988, p. 124.

³⁷ Edward J. Blum, *Reforging The White Republic: Race, Religion and American Nationalism, 1865-1898*, Louisiana State University Press, New Orleans, 2007, p. 5.

³⁸ *ibid.*, p. 6.

the Union formed the essential basis for citizenship.’³⁹ Yet, this idea was not to eventuate within the lifetimes of its proponents.

The Southern defeat was accompanied by widespread economic and political humiliation and depravation across Dixie.⁴⁰ The largely agrarian Southern economy suffered devastation as a consequence of the Union advance. The post-war outcome of this can be characterized as ‘a colonial relationship relative to the more industrialized and technologically sophisticated Northeast.’⁴¹ The former Confederacy saw its political position as inferior to the North.⁴² These issues shaped the development of post-Civil War Southern regionalism.

In this context, the Democratic Party re-asserted political control over the South. This accelerated efforts to undermine Northern attempts at racial equality. Southern politics can be characterized according to ‘overwhelming white resistance to outside political interference, and support for states’ rights, restrained federal power, and fiscal conservatism.’⁴³ This endured well into the 1890s.

Broadly, the South initially reacted to the impending war with Spain with skepticism. This is unsurprising, given the political context. Yet, the South had a history of advocating imperial expeditions.⁴⁴ Pre-Civil War Southern states had been supportive of territorial growth.⁴⁵ Westward expansion and the appropriation of Indian lands all enjoyed support across Dixie.⁴⁶ Southern ambitions at the time were directed by economic concerns and racial beliefs.⁴⁷ New markets could be secured for Southern agriculture.

However, Southern support for expansion and imperialism evaporated when similar post-war policies were pursued by Northern states. The re-admitted Confederacy opposed Union efforts. Despite earlier behavior, by the time of President McKinley, ‘the South was the most dependable segment of the anti-imperialist coalition.’⁴⁸

³⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁰ Fry, pp. 469-470.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 469.

⁴² *ibid.*

⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 470.

⁴⁴ Tennant S. McWilliams, “The Lure of Empire: Southern Interest in the Caribbean, 1877–1900,” *Mississippi Quarterly* 29 (Winter 1975–76), pp. 43–63.

⁴⁵ Tennant S. McWilliams, “The New Southerner Abroad: General Joe Wheeler Views the Pacific and Beyond,” *Pacific Historical Review* 47 (February 1978), pp. 123–27.

⁴⁶ Fry, p. 464.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 469-470.

Popular culture is representative of American regionalism in this context. The divisions between North and South were particularly evident within the period's mass media. James Castonguay has undertaken excellent analysis of regional newspapers.⁴⁹ His analysis shows that Northern and Mid-Western press supported the war, while Southern newspapers were at best ambivalent. March 1898 issues of both the Northern *Worcester Telegram* and Mid-Western *Milwaukee Sentinel* demonstrate this.⁵⁰ These clamored for war.⁵¹ They saw this as the impending victory of a newly united nation. Yet, this proved to be an ultimately unrealized hope. Castonguay also outlines opposition to pro-war newspapers such as these. The Southern *Savannah Morning News* informed readers via headline that war was 'Not Generally Wanted.'⁵²

The 1890s press reflects the prevalence of regionalist attitudes, which directed not only nationalism, but also political developments. Media analysis is a useful tool when comparing regionalist attitudes. Extant newspapers have survived the century since. These were a common element of national life. By the 1890s, the US had over fifteen thousand newspapers.⁵³ Over a quarter of all Americans aged ten or over regularly read a newspaper.⁵⁴

Newspaper mogul William Randolph Hearst and his 'yellow journalism' are associated with the period's press.⁵⁵ His *New York Journal* and Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World* were amongst the most read newspapers. Yet, their political power focused on the North-East region.⁵⁶ However, regional newspapers, such as those in Indiana, often ran their stories.⁵⁷ These prominent urban papers were among the most supportive of action in Cuba. They often published sensational accounts of Spanish atrocities.

⁴⁹ James Castonguay, 'The Spanish-American War in U.S. Media Culture', Paper Presented at the 1998 American Studies Association, Seattle, Published Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media, Fairfax, 2009.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*

⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁵² *ibid.*

⁵³ Joe Knetsch and Nick Wynne, *Florida in the Spanish American War*, The History Press, Charleston, 2011, p. 36.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p. 35.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p. 36.

⁵⁷ Carmen González López-Briones, 'The Indiana Press and the Coming of The Spanish-American War', *Atlantis*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Junio 1990), p. 171.

The West Coast, more removed from the North/South dichotomy, was also broadly supportive of war against Spain. Western states were the most recent additions to the nation by 1898. The 1848 Mexican-American War had secured California for the US.

American migration to the West Coast had intensified in the early nineteenth century. A series of revolts against Mexico across the 1830s saw the creation of a California Republic in 1846. Californians entertained continuing this.⁵⁸ Yet, the Union resented foreign influence in the region and coveted it.⁵⁹ In 1848, Union troops had defeated Mexican forces outside Los Angeles.⁶⁰ US troops then occupied the area. It was admitted to the Union in 1850. The 1854 Gold Rush saw an explosion in population, many new residents hailed from the North. Decades on, the West Coast had far more in common with the North than the South.

The *Los Angeles Times* reflected the views expressed by other California papers, including the *Evening Express*.⁶¹ The *Times* advocated for a war to be ‘made so terrible’ that Spain would immediately seek peace. In an editorial on April 20, it argued:

...we trust our government will overestimate the strength of the enemy... and... make slaughter and destruction so terrific at the outset that the war will be one of the shortest in history... there is wisdom in making the killing so terrible as to strike terror to the Spanish heart. We can sweep Cuba as a housewife dusts off a bit of bric-a-brac on a mantel, and it should be our particular business to dust the troops of Spain out of that island with a rush and a roar...⁶²

As noted, the Mid-Western states were generally pro-war, like the North. This was helped by a wave of newspaper editorials.⁶³ Minnesota enlisted several new regiments to fight, as nationalist sentiment spread across. Many of those across the mid-West failed to see war as waged by less than the whole country.⁶⁴ Henry A. Castle, a St. Paul newspaperman and prominent Republican, told an audience that ‘the gray had returned to

⁵⁸ Robert W. Merry, *A Country of Vast Designs: James K. Polk, The Mexican War and the Conquest of the American Continent*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 2009, p. 296

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁰ *ibid.*, p. 305.

⁶¹ Castonguay.

⁶² ‘Make War Terrible’, *Los Angeles Times*, April 20, 1898, p. 6.

⁶³ Peter Mickelson, ‘Nationalism in Minnesota During the Spanish-American War’, *Minnesota History*, 41 (Spring, 1968), pp. 3-5.

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 1-3.

the blue... the unswerving loyalty of every class and section of the country had welded Americans together into an eternally united people.’⁶⁵

A Minnesotan, Leonard A. Rosing, unlike Castle, a Democrat and an immigrant, offered a similar oration for a Fourth of July audience. He noted;

...this war has had a great national benefit in teaching the people that we are now one great and united people, that sectionalism is forever dead... in answer to the call To Arms' the response came equally from Alabama and Minnesota, from Virginia and California... today the old flag waves in every hamlet in all the broad Union...⁶⁶

Civil War imagery, often reflecting the blue Union and grey Confederacy was prominent in speeches.⁶⁷ Peter Mickelson has done a good job of studying this within the confines of Minnesota. Senator Cushman Davis remarked a year after the conflict that ‘the grey disappeared into the blue like the last lingering cloud of a departed storm...’⁶⁸ Davis was an ardent expansionist.⁶⁹ He understood that the best way to facilitate this was to overcome sectionalism.

Newspapers continued this public acclamation. The *Minneapolis Tribune* wrote that the victory over Spain had united disparate sections of the nation, creating ‘the new feeling of brotherhood than had been accomplished in thirty years of peace.’⁷⁰

Much of this feeling adopted religious imagery and motifs, tying into the idea of American exceptionalism.⁷¹ Castle later remarked, ‘There seems to be an inexorable decree of Divine Providence, that each advance step in freedom, in national development, in

⁶⁵ Henry A. Castle, ‘Synopsis of Address at Chattanooga, Tennessee’, May 30, 1898 Castle, Henry A., ‘Synopsis of Address at Chattanooga, Tennessee’, May 30, 1898, Henry A. Castle Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, Retrieved August 23, 2014 < <http://www2.mnhs.org/library/findaids/01133.xml>>.

⁶⁶ Rosing, Leonard A., ‘Fourth of July Oration’, 1898, Leonard A. Rosing Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, Retrieved August 25, 2014 < <http://www.mnopedia.org/person/rosing-leonard-august-1861-1909>>.

⁶⁷ Mickelson, p. 10.

⁶⁸ Cushman K. Davis, ‘Notes of a Speech at Lyceum Theater, Minneapolis’, September 7, 1898, Cushman K. Davis Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, Retrieved August 23, 2014 <<http://www2.mnhs.org/library/findaids/00822.xml>>.

⁶⁹ Lewis L. Gould, *The Spanish American War and President McKinley*, p. 99.

⁷⁰ *Minneapolis Tribune*, June 18, 1898, Retrieved August 25, 2014, < <http://www.newspapers.com/newspage/7789561/>>

⁷¹ Mickelson, pp. 11-12.

Christian civilization, shall be won by the sword and paid for in the blood of heroes.’⁷² He continued,

...our spirit of patriotism... has become imbued and dominated by an aggressive, progressive, defiant, triumphant Americanism. Wherever we look we see it... in the cabinets of our rulers and in the camps of the new soldiers that are going forward on a holy crusade to stand by that flag we fought to preserve and which we love so well.⁷³

It is convenient to explore how differing regions responded to war. However, that is not to say that each region can be simply generalized as either pro-war, or anti-war. Divisions existed even within these. At the same time as Minnesota newspapers and speakers praised the war against Spain and its unifying effects, the Southern *Charleston News and Courier* proclaimed across its byline that ‘Columbia Is The Only Hot Town, That Is, The Only Place In The State Hot For War.’⁷⁴ The newspaper then continued, ‘Perhaps when it comes to volunteering even Columbia will cool off...’⁷⁵ This shows that even in a period of profound regionalism, competing voices, though less pronounced, were still heard.

Many contemporary commentators glossed over the complexities of public opinion. The Southern newspaperman Henry Watterson, who enjoyed national prominence, is instructive. He wrote,

In each of the forty-five States of the Union there was a generous rivalry for the opportunity to rally around the flag and to serve the country. In Georgia, Alabama, and Texas, no less than in Vermont, Michigan, and Illinois, in Massachusetts and in South Carolina, in Kentucky, Missouri, Indiana, and Wisconsin, in the crowded centers of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and New York, as in the more isolated regions of New Hampshire, Arkansas, and Oregon, the drum-beats and the heart-beats kept time to the music of the nation's anthem and made a cause common to all men. If

⁷² Henry A. Castle, ‘Address at National Cemetery at Chattanooga, Tennessee’, May 30, 1898, Henry A. Castle Papers, Minnesota Historical Society, Retrieved August 23, 2014 <<http://www2.mnhs.org/library/findaids/01133.xml>>.

⁷³ Henry A. Castle, ‘Synopsis of Address at Chattanooga, Tennessee’.

⁷⁴ Castonguay.

⁷⁵ *The Charleston News and Courier*, April 21, 1898, p. 1.

there had been question anywhere about the wisdom or the justice of the war with Spain, it ended with the call to arms.⁷⁶

Watterson saw this call to arms as proof of the end of American sectionalism. He continued; ‘...wounds of prolonged and embittered sectional controversy were healed... there had been many evidences that the restoration of the Union was complete, both in spirit and in fact...’⁷⁷ Yet, the newspaperman was generalizing. While Southern states did send troops to fight, these were dwarfed by the contributions of their northern neighbors.

Perceived Southern ambivalence contrasts with the large recruitment rates of the mid-West, these were reported by local newspapers.⁷⁸ State military units were raised at speed. The feeling in many northern cities was excitement. There was even fear that all recruitment places would be filled ‘before enough of their young men could participate in the fighting and prove their patriotism and manliness.’⁷⁹ On July 20, 1898 the *Indianapolis News* reported that the states of both Indiana and Wisconsin had exceeded their troop enlistment quotas by a combined two thousand men.⁸⁰ Unsurprisingly, this contrasts sharply with the South. Within Georgia, only 255 of the 704 troops expected had volunteered by this time.⁸¹

This highlights how the war was a polarizing issue between regions.⁸² Though newspaper opinions were often shaped along political lines, as the war approached, there was a broad reappraisal of editorial bylines, and the press became significantly more supportive of action against Spain. Indiana newspapers, such as the *Indianapolis Journal* are indicative of this.⁸³

In the North and Mid-West, numerous military units were quickly formed under the auspices of the Federal Army. While the troops were keen to win glory, their families at home remained circumspect. Mass militarization contributed towards nationalist feelings of unity. This was expressed through the writings of many of the troops.

⁷⁶ Henry Watterson, *The History of the Spanish American War*, Akron, New York, 1898, p. 79.

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

⁷⁸ Castonguay.

⁷⁹ *ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Indianapolis News*, July 20, 1898, retrieved August 25, 2014 <<http://www.newspapers.com/newspage/40153508/>>

⁸¹ Castonguay.

⁸² López-Briones, p. 172.

⁸³ *ibid.*, pp. 171-172.

Many new regiments were raised. The Wild West figure Annie Oakley even wrote to President McKinley offering to raise a company of fifty 'lady sharpshooters' who would provide their own equipment. This was declined.⁸⁴

The Indiana National Guard's Second Regiment was renamed. It became the 158th Regiment Indiana Volunteer Infantry.⁸⁵ It mustered on May 10, 1898.⁸⁶ One of its soldiers wrote;

... Every time she (his wife Mayne) comes out she begs and pleads for me to show the white feather and get out. If I was to do that I would lose the respect of every person I know. The streak of yellow would show to you and to my people and I could not look a man straight in the face. It is a choice of which to serve—my country or my wife I am pledged to both and as I see it now. My duty at this time is to my country, and so it will be. If I am wrong I will have to be judged later...⁸⁷

As war loomed, a change of attitudes in the South took place. The nationalist context of the period did much to facilitate this. The thawing in relations between regions was further promoted in the afterglow of American victory. On December 20, 1898, the *Savannah Morning News* reflected this.⁸⁸ Though widespread public mistrust of the North still remained, the editor painted President McKinley as a supporter of Dixie.⁸⁹ The newspaper's headline remarked that McKinley had received a medal from a Confederate veteran.⁹⁰ In speeches, McKinley made consistent efforts to remind audiences of the South's contribution. At Macon, Georgia, he addressed crowds. The *Savannah Morning News* afterwards reported;

The President and his party... were received by the largest crowd which has gathered in Macon since the... visit of Jefferson Davis... Drawn up in line... was the... County Camp of the Confederate Survivors' Association... headed

⁸⁴ Oakley, Annie, *Letter to President William McKinley from Annie Oakley*, National Archives, Retrieved September 26, 2014, <<http://www.archives.gov/research/recover/example-02.html>>.

⁸⁵ Pamela J. Bennett (ed.), *The Indiana Historian*, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, September 1998.

⁸⁶ *ibid.*

⁸⁷ *ibid.*

⁸⁸ Castonguay.

⁸⁹ *ibid.*

⁹⁰ *ibid.*

by Commander C.M. Wiley... who addressed (the President) as follows: ... 'I hope and pray, Mr. President that God in his infinite mercy, may so direct future legislation of this country that the living Confederate will be remembered. This country and the Stars and Stripes belong as much to the Confederate veterans as they do to the Grand Army of the Republic. The South proved her loyalty to the grand old country when war was declared with Spain, and, now henceforth and forever she will be found ready to take up arms to defend our country and our flag.'⁹¹

This is instructive in that it reflects Southern support of American victory, but also a request that unique Southern political and social structures endure as thanks for its support of Union policies. The North was willing to reciprocate this, Americans on both sides of the Mason-Dixie line 'commonly invoked the story and drama of (the Civil War's) sectional conflict and reunification in support of contemporary patriotic causes.'⁹² This sectionalism would have profoundly troubling consequences for African Americans, but this went unremarked.

On June 28, 1898, the *Indianapolis News* reported 'A Beautiful Incident among Camp Thomas Soldiers'. This article described a Federal Army camp, within which noting was more evident 'than that sectionalism is dead. There is no longer a North or a South in the old sense; it is but a memory. Still, because of the awful sacrifice, it is a sacred memory to both.'⁹³ Sectionalism was also used by contemporaries to illustrate why the war must be fought. Trumbull White, a war correspondent, published *Our War With Spain For Cuba's Freedom* in 1898, in which he drew upon this theme. He wrote,

The Spanish government was deluded by the belief that in the event of war our country would not be able to present a united front, and that sectional animosities would weaken our strength. The action of Congress from the time of the first rumors of war to the end of the session snowed how little ground there was for this belief. The representatives of the people from all sections of our broad land gave

⁹¹ *Savannah Morning Herald*, December 20, 1898.

⁹² John Pettegrew, 'The Soldiers' Faith': Turn-of-the-century Memory of the Civil War and The Emergence of Modern American Nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History* 31 (1996).

⁹³ *Indianapolis News*, June 28, 1898.

President McKinley loyal support in every undertaking, and the South vied with the North, the East with the West, in expressions of devotion to our nation and our flag.⁹⁴

The author later wrote that the war ‘...was a bringing together of Uncle Sam's soldier boys from all conceivable sections of the country.’⁹⁵

As with many wars, once conflict was underway and the nation was tested, support increased. Though action against Spain was undertaken in the post-Civil War era context of regionalism, there were forces within the American nation which transcended regional divides. Diverse groups often present across multiple geographic areas tended to express the same opinions as other members of the group, regardless of geographic affiliation. Thus, religious evangelicals in Florida shared the same views as their brethren in Minnesota, who saw the war as a holy crusade to bring religion to Cubans and Filipinos. Agrarian landowners in Georgia saw the war as an opportunity to gain access to new markets, much as Northern landowners.

A more inclusive national unity between Northern and Southern whites was promoted in the late 1890s. This was done by popularly emphasizing that American identity could apply to range of people.⁹⁶ Despite this, the US of the 1890s was not as united as its name would suggest. In addition to the regionalism which characterized political and cultural discourse, a strong racist understanding defined societal structures.⁹⁷ These regarded white Americans, particularly those of British descent, as ‘the most evolved race’.⁹⁸

In the 1890s, African Americans were increasingly disenfranchised. Across the South, government enforced segregation began again in 1887. The preacher Thomas Dixon, with a national following, wrote; ‘The Negro is a vanishing quality in our national life. The Negro who believes that the Anglo-Saxon race fought (The Civil War) in order to help him should re-read history.’⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Trumbull White, ‘Relief For Survivors of the Maine’, in *Our War With Spain for Cuba's Freedom*, Monarch Book Company, Chicago, 1898.

⁹⁵ Trumbull White, ‘The Camp at Chickamauga’, in *Our War With Spain for Cuba's Freedom*, Monarch Book Company, Chicago, 1898.

⁹⁶ Paul T. McCartney, *Power and Progress: American National Identity, The War of 1898 and the Rise of American Imperialism*, Louisiana State University Press, New Orleans, 2006, p. 43.

⁹⁷ *ibid.*, 57.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

⁹⁹ Thomas Dixon Jr, ‘A Friendly Warming To The Negro’ *Freelance* 1, No. 5, pp. 112-120.

Religion was a defining element of national identity, ‘a primary matrix through which many Americans interpreted, evaluated, and articulated their experiences and idea.’¹⁰⁰ Yet, many studies of the period between the Civil War and war against Spain, ‘assume that religion was not a salient feature of postwar America.’¹⁰¹ Between the wars, whiteness re-ascended to occupy a key position within national understanding.

The North was keen to compromise with the South. Edward Blum has written that this ‘remaking of national whiteness was so successful that it appeared as if it had never been ruptured.’¹⁰² However, this remained a fiction which ‘masked the fact of a fractured and reconfigured whiteness that followed the Civil War.’¹⁰³ Blum has appropriately argued that the North’s willingness to abandon its efforts towards social and racial justice in the South was a key pre-requisite for what he terms ‘the remaking of the white republic.’¹⁰⁴ Americans, in the name of easier sectional reconciliation, abandoned hope for post-Civil War equality and inclusive nationalism to appeal to racist Southerners.

Ethnic groups transcended regional divides. While African Americans dwelled on both sides of the Mason-Dixie line, Irish Americans clustered in the North. Protestant America’s war against Catholic Spain was challenging. Despite this, they were overwhelmingly supportive of their new nation.¹⁰⁵ Catholic Irish-Americans were accused of secretly supporting Catholic Spain.¹⁰⁶ In order to overcome public opinion, Catholics aimed to prove to a trans-regional American public that, as one wrote in an editorial, ‘President McKinley will have no more loyal and patriotic supporters in any position he may take in vindicating the honor and dignity of our country, than among members of the Church.’¹⁰⁷

The post-Civil War period was once which can be characterized by the prevalence of regionalism. Many Americans saw themselves through the prism of the North/South dichotomy, rather than primarily as Americans. In this context, the idea of Americanism was one which did not immediately capture public support or imagination. Rather, in the

¹⁰⁰ Blum, p. 11.

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁰² *ibid.*

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, p. 15.

¹⁰⁵ David Traxel, *1898: The Tumultuous Year of Victory, Invention, Internal Strife, and Industrial Expansion That Saw the Birth of the American Century*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1998., pp. 107–26.

¹⁰⁶ Ryan D. Dye, ‘Irish-American Ambivalence Toward the Spanish-American War’, *New Hibernia Review*, Volume 11, Number 3, Fómhar/Autumn 2007, p. 100.

¹⁰⁷ Fred Sharon, ‘Catholics and Spain’, *Iowa Catholic Messenger*, 12 March 1898, p. 4.

period preceding the war against Spain, 'class, sectional, and ethnic loyalties frequently seemed to overshadow national allegiance.'¹⁰⁸

Yet, this coincided with a period of increased American nationalism, which culminated in a short, victorious imperial expedition against Spain. The most pronounced element of American regionalism was the post-Civil War North/South split, and addressing this would be a key objective of the war against Spain.

The war facilitated a change of attitudes on a national scale. The press, politics and popular culture of the period all reflect this. At the onset of the conflict against Spain, there was significant opposition to the war from some regions and sections. Yet, the American nationalist creed which promoted national unity was largely able to at least temporarily overcome this. Regionalism was the greatest impediment to national reconciliation. Though it would re-emerge across the twentieth century, and endure to the present, to Americans in 1899 it seemed that this had at last been overcome.

The grouping of the US into constituent regions can often be seen as arbitrary. Yet, as has been explored, the post-Civil War North and South were the regions with the most developed identities and structures. The mid-West and West Coast regions also formed their own coherent identities, though were less important within national discourse. The zeitgeist of the 1890s was one which supported efforts towards bringing these sections together. American nationalism, with its religious themes of destiny and greatness, was the force best positioned to do this. In this context, the Spanish-American War saw an unparalleled effort toward post-Civil War national reunion and reconciliation. This must now be explored.

¹⁰⁸ Mickelson, p. 2.

CHAPTER IIITHE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR AND THE NATIONAL UNIFICATION OF THE UNITED STATES

Within existing historiography, the Spanish-American War's unifying power in the scope of American identity is often remarked upon. Numerous studies note that the conflict re-vitalized popular imaginings of a unified nation.¹ This allowed American national consciousness to move beyond the divisive Civil War.

Yet, this issue is rarely afforded the level of analysis or examination it warrants. Too often is the political and social context of the 1890s overlooked. Though a defining spirit of the age was a move toward national unity, this was not as all-encompassing as many narratives have suggested. American nationalism in the 1890s remained nuanced and complex. Consequently, a greater examination of how this was reflected within contemporary culture is called for. It is not simply enough to say that war against Spain promoted American national unity. Rather, how and why this was expressed must be explored. As must the challenges to these views, for nationalism is never as all-encompassing as its adherents would suggest.

Adherents of the new national identity which rose to prominence in the 1890s argued that no longer would Americans consider themselves primarily as Southerners or Northerners. The political and societal rifts which had characterized late nineteenth century America were to be overcome. The emergence of a common enemy enabled the nation could be re-imagined. While this new idea of citizenship was prefaced on exclusionary concepts, the conflict proved to be a turning point within national history.

The Spanish-American War is typically portrayed within American historiography as a profoundly transformative event.² This chapter aims to address the deficiencies often

¹ This is examined in numerous works; particularly Edward J. Blum, *Reforging The White Republic: Race, Religion and American Nationalism, 1865-1898*, Louisiana State University Press, New Orleans, 2007, pp. 175-250; Paul T. McCartney, *Power and Progress: American National Identity, The War of 1898 and the Rise of American Imperialism*, Louisiana State University Press, New Orleans, 2006; Randall S. Sumpter, *Censorship Liberally Administered*, 1999; Louis Perez Jr, *The War of 1812*, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1998; Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, Hill & Wang, New York, 2001.

² See *ibid*.

articulated within the historical record with reference to 1898. The ways in which the Spanish-American War enabled a popular expression of national unity should be discussed. Similarly, challenges to this development are explored. Ignoring these would be disingenuous. Nationalism is often as exclusionary as it is unifying, though it came to the fore of American thought in the 1890s.

Most contemporary study concerning American nationalism and the War of 1898 is expressed through journal articles, though recently a number of more focused books have emerged. Among these Edward Blum's *Reforging the White Republic* and Paul McCartney's *Power and Progress* are the most relevant to nationalism. However, journal articles remain indicative of the field's deficiencies: they present the idea the war contributed to national reunification, often without explaining, proving or contextualizing this.

Illustrative of this is 'Censorship Liberally Administered' by Randall S. Sumpter, an article focusing on the media impact of the war. This credits the conflict against Spain with 'healing sectional rifts left over from the Civil War'³, but like others offers no examination of what this means. Sumpter makes reference to the works of Joyce Milton and Davis Traxel to justify these assertions.⁴ Similarly, Gary Gerstle has noted that war 'generated remarkable national unity... seemingly intractable divisions... were at least momentarily overcome.'⁵ The article then studies the contradictions of American nationalism through the case study of Teddy Roosevelt. In asking why the US fought Spain, John Offner offers American humanitarian concerns and Spain's intransigence to compromise.⁶ There is no examination of the underpinning motive of national reunification. These works also reflect the trend within the field towards glossing over the complexities of efforts towards national reunification.

The war's contributions to unification were initially identified by nationalist American writers in the war's aftermath, or often, before the guns had even fallen silent.

³ Randall S. Sumpter, 'Censorship Liberally Administered', *Communication and Law Policy*, Vol. 4, No. 4, 1999, p. 463.

⁴ See Joyce Milton, *The Yellow Kids: Foreign Correspondents in the Heyday of Yellow Journalism*, Harper Perennial, New York, 1990, p. 270 and David Traxel, *1898: The Tumultuous Year of Victory, Invention, Internal Strife, and Industrial Expansion That Saw the Birth of the American Century*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1998., p. 255.

⁵ Gary Gerstle, 'Theodore Roosevelt and the Divided Character of American Nationalism', *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 86, No. 3, *The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History: A Special Issue* (Dec., 1999), p. 1282.

⁶ John Offner, 'Why Did the United States Fight Spain in 1898?', *OAH Magazine of History*, Spring 1998, p. 23.

Though these often contained ‘History’ in their titles, they were little more than journalistic panegyrics to American greatness.⁷ These works set the tone for the subsequent century of historiography.

The war was legitimised within the popular historical record even before US victory had been attained. A plethora of histories emerged in 1898, triumphalist narratives applauding the American people. Many leapt to the theme of national reunification. Henry Watterson’s 1898 *History of the Spanish American War* elevated the conflict within the national consciousness to the heights of the War for Independence. He wrote;

It was more important to us than Gettysburg, in that while it erased every jarring memory of Gettysburg itself, it sanctified and heightened the one glorious of the valor of all Americans who met on that field of heroic struggle; and that the reunited devotion to one country and one flag was sealed in sacrifice of blood and life by North and South together fighting side by side. It revealed to us, as by inspiration, the strength and character of our population, and the resourceful intelligence springing from liberty restricted only by the rights of man. That this revelation was understood by all foreign observers was confessed. They were sent to observe both sides; not merely the tools of war, but the nature and power of the men who wielded them. It is for the purpose of studying forces as possible adversaries that such observations are made.⁸

Similarly, William H. Titherington’s *A History of the Spanish-American War*, appearing in 1900, continued this trend. Its emphasis on the triumph of the US, a ‘young and mighty republic of the west’,⁹ reflects a belief in American exceptionalism and destiny. Within this ascendant state, there was to be no difference between North or South. In his introduction, Titherington addresses the emerging historiography of the war. He identifies then recently published narratives concerning the experiences of American soldiers and sailors, but writes ‘these books are not history.’¹⁰ These narratives are seen as inaccurate,

⁷ Such panegyric publications as Murat Halsted, *The Full Official History of the War With Spain*, James Otis, *The Boys of ‘98’* and William H. Titherington, *A History of the Spanish-American War* are instructive.

⁸ Henry Watterson, *The History of the Spanish American War*, Akron, New York, 1898, pp. 247-248.

⁹ William H. Titherington, *A History of the Spanish-American War*, D. Appleman and Company, New York, 1900, p. 394.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. iii.

and Titherington notes that his work will address this, through drawing upon ‘a sufficient body of trustworthy evidence to make it possible to write anything like a real history.’¹¹ Titherington describes his work as a true history, making some effort to draw upon Spanish sources. Yet, his journalistic volume reflects then prevailing American cultural and social attitudes.

The Full Official History of the War with Spain, hastily written and published in 1899 by Murat Halsted, was inscribed to ‘the history makers of the United States.’¹² It shares thematic similarities with Titherington’s work. Halsted had been a war correspondent, where he complained of poor conditions in Havana, despite occupying the city’s most ostentatious suite.¹³ He writes that Americans ignored Spanish observations concerning parallels between the uprising in Cuba, and America’s Civil War.¹⁴ Halsted dismisses the Civil War as a mere constitutional quarrel. Rather, he continually emphasizes the idea of a singular American people and destiny. This reflects broader societal trends aimed at overcoming regionalism.

These themes were further explored in James Otis’ contemporary work, *The Boys of ‘98* which emerged before the war had even finished. In this, Otis characterizes American soldiers as heirs of a martial legacy stretching to before independence, though he specifically excludes any reference to the Civil War.¹⁵ Otis manufactures a historical narrative within which American success is prefaced on the idea of a national consciousness and shared identity. These authors, among others, leapt to the acclamation of American unity. In doing so they generalized the complexities of the issues, but reflected the broad public sentiment toward sectional reconciliation.

Also indicative of the move towards national reunification are more personal sources, such as the 1929 publication, *Letters of a Volunteer in the Spanish-American War*, by George G. King.¹⁶ King, from Massachusetts, marched to South Carolina. In a letter of

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² Murat Halsted, *The Full Official History of the War With Spain*, Butler and Alger, New Haven, 1898, p. 11.

¹³ Joe Knetsch and Nick Wynne, *Florida in the Spanish American War*, The History Press, Charleston, 2011, p. 42.

¹⁴ Halsted, p. 702.

¹⁵ James Otis, *The Boys of ‘98*, Estes Press, Boston, 1899.

¹⁶ Library of Congress, ‘Spanish-American War – Personal Narratives’, *American Memory*, Retrieved June 1, 2014, <<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gdc/lhbpr.12858>>

May 26, 1898, he remarked upon first meeting ‘the Southern attitude.’¹⁷ This initial hostility to the Northern troops eventually gave way to a greater level of acceptance, and delight in shared American-ness. However, some divides were not to be bridged, and Southern Americans remained skeptical of African-American troops.

Popular acclamation of the war continued across subsequent decades. Woodrow Wilson continued this theme in the early twentieth century. Beyond his triumphal recount of the American enterprise, he characterized the conflict as ‘not for the material aggrandizement of the United States, but for the assertion of the right of the government to succor those who seemed hopelessly oppressed.’¹⁸ This simplistic view indicates the initial interpretation of the war. Only relatively recently has been challenged by revisionist histories, such as Louis Perez Jr and Matthew Frye Jacobson’s works. Most study within the broader field can be grouped in one of two camps; either complimentary or critical of US action. Perhaps due to the sensibilities of an American audience, the issue of nationalism has been marginalized within historiography. Where the war’s impact upon American reconciliation is discussed, it is often done in passing.

These works are indicative of the celebration of national unity which within historiography regarding 1898. These directed subsequent understandings of the war and its cultural context. Early published works were a reflection of the triumphalist theme which characterized early writings. Yet, many volumes have taken this assertion at face value, without greater examination of the complexities and challenges associated with the war’s impact on national identity.

Fundamentally, the assertion made by both early commentators, and later historians such as Blum, McCartney and others, that the war promoted ideas of sectional healing, remains correct. This argument was first articulated in early historiography, which given its propensity towards ‘American exceptionalism’ remains flawed and simplistic. It reflected the cultural and political discourse of the war itself, and shaped subsequent understandings. Though the argument that the war promoted national unity remains sound, a more complex understanding of this must be articulated. This is shown through broad

¹⁷ George G. King, *Letters of a Volunteer in the Spanish-American War*, Hawkins and Loomis, Chicago, 1929, p. 14.

¹⁸ Woodrow Wilson, *A History of the American People*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1902, p. 274.

analysis of archival material. Greater emphasis must be placed on the voices from the past to show what this meant to contemporaries of the period. This is not a challenge to the orthodoxy of existing historiography, it is simply an often overlooked element of a wider narrative.

Beyond providing the context within which the US could assert itself on the world stage, the conflict had profound influences upon American society and culture. In the 1890s, America was gripped by financial depression, racial tension and the lingering animosities of its Civil War. Americans often saw themselves through the prism of a North/South dichotomy. The 1898 war provided an outlet within which to re-evaluate this. The printed and popular culture of the 1890s illustrate how the war enabled Americans to move beyond limiting ideas of North and South, embracing the zeitgeist of national unity. This was also reflected within the era's political discourse.

The war against Spain enabled a popular re-imagining of the American state. Within this, white protestant Americans could once again see their fellows across the Mason-Dixon Line as co-nationalists. The chance to heal sectional rifts was embraced. The rapid growth of nationalism in the 1890s influenced American cultural development.¹⁹

Americans became more willing to consider themselves as Americans, rather than Southerners or Northerners. The idea of a nation once again came to the fore. A strong counter to these views emerged, often articulated by Southern newspapers. However, as the war was won, many of these came to support the project of national unity. Though this was a dream never fully realized, the War of 1898 is an important event within the evolution of the American nation. Ironically, this nationalist upsurge simply changed which groups were excluded from the discourse of citizenship. Most prominently, African Americans saw their hard won rights evaporate under the glare of the new nationalist paradigm. Its complexities demand an in-depth study of extant sources which explore how Americans saw the move towards national reunification.

The study of American nationalism belongs to political history, as Azar Gat has argued.²⁰ This echoes the earlier work of Eric Hobsbawn, who convincingly showed that

¹⁹ Paul T. McCartney's *Power and Progress* does an excellent job of exploring the nationalist context of the war, providing a highly readable, though broad, overview.

²⁰ Azar Gat, *Nations: The Long History and Deep Roots of Political Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2013, p. 3.

history is the best framework from within which to approach nationalism.²¹ Political history best reflects the context within which a nation is imagined.

Benedict Anderson defined a nation as an 'imagined political community'.²² Nationalism is often shaped by militaristic themes.²³ Anderson notes these capture 'ghostly national imaginings'.²⁴ They shape memory and popular nationalist understandings.

Within broader American historiography, only in recent decades has nationalism come to receive the level of analysis it requires. A survey of the construction of American nationalism within this context lends itself to a multi-disciplinary approach. This involves analysis of religion, demographics, popular culture national identity, politics, foreign policy and racial issues. Study of American nationalism is often covered as an element of an overarching history. However, even these works barely address the concept of American reunification. Most existing literature is focused on assessing the legitimacy of the war, adopting a foreign policy focus. The idea of nationalism as a means towards national unification has never been the pivotal element of Spanish-American War historiography. Where it is mentioned, it is often done in passing, continuing a trend which emerged with the advent of the field of study. This represents an important gap which should be addressed.

In 1968, Peter Mickelson noted the deficiencies of American nationalist study.²⁵ He argued that Americans expressed reluctance toward discussion of their nationalism.²⁶ Since these criticisms, several volumes focused on nationalism and 1898 have emerged. Paul McCartney's *Power and Progress*, a dedicated study of nationalism and the Spanish-American War, is among the best of these. He asserts that America's cultural context dictated policy during colonial expansion.²⁷ McCartney notes the war and its consequences shaped the development of national identity. However, it offers few pages examining the

²¹ Eric Hobsbawm, 'Ethnicity and Nationalism in Europe Today', *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Feb., 1992), p. 3.

²² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, New York, 2006., pp. 5-6.

²³ *ibid.*, p. 7

²⁴ *ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁵ Peter Mickelson, 'Nationalism in Minnesota During the Spanish-American War', *Minnesota History*, 41 (Spring, 1968), p. 1.

²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 2.

²⁷ Paul T. McCartney, *Power and Progress: American National Identity, The War of 1898 and the Rise of American Imperialism*, Louisiana State University Press, New Orleans, 2006, p. 2.

interlinked ideas of American regionalism and nationalism as key to re-unification. Much of its emphasis is placed on examining the war's historical context. However, McCartney offers a broad, highly readable overview. Like other most recent volumes, he adopts a balanced approach regarding American reasons for war, though nationalism is key among these.²⁸

McCartney draws upon existing historical arguments. He examines the earlier works of Matthew Frye Jacobson, Louis Perez, Lewis Gould and the historical contemporaries of the war.²⁹ His work is an excellent overview of the context surrounding American nationalism in the late nineteenth century, though he contends himself with a broad overview of the dimensions of this. The issue of national reunification is examined briefly. As a recent publication, this omission is characteristic of existing work. Broadly, McCartney offers a reasoned examination of American policies, making excellent use of archival sources, particularly documents drawn from the Library of Congress. Few works are as concerned with American nationalism as McCartney.

Edward Blum's *Reforging the White Republic* notes that national reconciliation began in post-1865 decades.³⁰ Protestants had planned to use expansion abroad to promote domestic unity. Blum characterizes these efforts towards 'evangelization of the world' as aimed at transcending national divisions.³¹ Religion and nationalism provided the context for this.³² 'Whiteness' was seen as the defining attribute of American citizenship. This was reflected in the period's popular culture.³³ Blum sees the Spanish-American War as 're-forging of the white republic', a period of nationalism which altered American self-perceptions.³⁴ He identifies the undertones which promoted this expansion while.³⁵ Several key proponents of war were missionary organizations. Blum argues evangelicals provided the nation with the 'lingua franca' for national reconciliation.³⁶

Reforging the White Republic outlines the emergence of what Blum terms a 'new' Republic. This was characterized by 'northern white Protestants thoroughly embracing and

²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 46

²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 4.

³⁰ Edward J. Blum, *Reforging The White Republic: Race, Religion and American Nationalism, 1865-1898*, Louisiana State University Press, New Orleans, 2007, p. 16.

³¹ *ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

³² *ibid.*, p. 16.

³³ *ibid.*, p. 17.

³⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 212-214.

³⁵ *ibid.*, p. 212.

³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 16.

propagating an ethnic nationalism that privileged whiteness at the direct expense of the radical civic nationalism of the mid-1860s.³⁷ Blum identifies the development of American nationalism, typically shaped by Protestantism and whiteness. The American Republic was interrupted by its Civil War, and in its aftermath whiteness became a prevalent element of national self-identification. Blum notes that as the US entered the twentieth century, ideas of whiteness, the ascendancy of the US and its Christian ethos became increasingly interlinked.³⁸

Blum examines the idea of national reunification in greater detail than other authors. Yet, his emphasis remains on the religious context of the 1890s, focusing on broader cultural and racial developments which preceded the war. He is principally concerned with post-Civil War developments, rather than the war against Spain. Other figures within the field include Lloyd Kramer, who stressed the role of the 'long nineteenth century' as a period in the growth of American nationalism's political and cultural themes.³⁹ He identified the role played by 'American exceptionalism', this had its origins in early American national narratives.⁴⁰ The core of this belief is that the US is 'morally and politically exceptional', as Geoffrey Hodgson also argued.⁴¹ Americans have often seen their nation as possessing an 'exceptional' mission.⁴² In his study, Kramer offers a well written survey of nationalist discourse, but again fails to contextualize the 1890s spirit of national unity.

Across this decade, the US re-evaluated its place in the world.⁴³ The Civil War challenged the frameworks through which Americans defined themselves. As Paul McCartney has noted, from the 1870s onwards, new American philosophies developed.⁴⁴ These were indicative of efforts to foster a new sense of common purpose. Within this, national re-unification was a pivotal part of a wider process.

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 7.

³⁸ *ibid.*, 'Introduction'.

³⁹ Lloyd Kramer, *Nationalism in Europe and America; Politics, Cultures and Identities Since 1775*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2011, p. 27.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 36-37

⁴¹ Geoffrey Hodgson, *The Myth of American Exceptionalism*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2009, p. 10.

⁴² Kramer, p. 123.

⁴³ Louis Menand, *The Metaphysical Club*, Farrar, New York, 2001, as discussed in McCartney, pp. 152-153.

⁴⁴ McCartney, p. 153.

Relatively few works deal with this avenue of inquiry in significant detail. The historiography of the War of 1898 remains too diverse to examine in its totality here, but a brief overview outlines existing gaps in examination. While historiography has turned recently to examine the role of nationalism, the importance of nationalism in addressing the post-Civil War rifts in American society has only begun to be addressed. Additionally, the ongoing digitization and increased access available to archives results in an exciting field that has developed, often contentiously, over the course of more than a century. Much remains to be written.

White ethnic nationalism was a key element of national identity in pre-Civil War America. As Blum has identified, it gained prominence following the Civil War.⁴⁵ Northern attempts to secure greater freedoms for African Americans were abandoned in favor of greater links with white Southerners. This was deemed politically expedient. This reversal less than a generation after the sacrifice of the Civil War enabled nationalist upsurge in the 1890s. Within this, conceptions of American identity were re-forged. National identity based on whiteness became the defining attribute of citizenship. While this had previously been a theme in American self-conceptualizations, it is striking that it rose to such prominence at that time.

Early historiography did not reflect the idea that this effort towards greater national unity in the 1890s exacerbated racial divides. However, the works of later scholars writing beyond the confines of the Spanish American War's cultural context, including Alexander Saxton⁴⁶ and Matthew Frye Jacobson, explored the symbiosis between the notion of whiteness and national identity. As these works have shown racial distinction is a historical constructs which evolves over time.⁴⁷ A nation's conception of itself is a nebulous idea, constantly in flux.⁴⁸ Yet, the 1890s became a period of national union.

The declaration of war against Spain had been contentious.⁴⁹ However, debates surrounding this showed that both Northerners and Southerners were able to overcome

⁴⁵ Blum, *Reforging The White Republic*, p. 6-11.

⁴⁶ Alexander Saxton, *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth Century America*, Verso, New York, 1990, pp. 370-377.

⁴⁷ Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917*, Hill & Wang, New York, 2001, p. 7.

⁴⁸ Hobsbawm, p. 4.

⁴⁹ McCartney, p. 149

sectional animosity, uniting against a common foe.⁵⁰ As war loomed, American political leaders acknowledged unification.⁵¹ However, this was not as all-encompassing as might be initially imagined. While national re-unification excited public opinion, it remained overshadowed within government by more mundane realities of administration.

Within more than four thousand pages of the 55th Congressional Record spanning the months of the war, only a few hundred deal with the conflict itself. Fewer still deal with public opinion, regionalism and national reunification.⁵² Nevertheless, national reconciliation was a theme proudly reflected by politicians from North and South. Congressman William Carlile Arnold, a Republican of Pennsylvania, advocated war for national honor.⁵³ He remarked of former antagonists;

A new South has sprung up, and joined hands with... the North. We are all moving.... to attain the highest possibilities of this nation, one God, one flag, one country, one destiny!⁵⁴

Similarly, Democrat Senator Donelson Caffery of Louisiana echoed these sentiments.⁵⁵ A popular hero of the Civil War, he recalled the debates which had preceded that conflict;

I have stood once before on the brink of war. Though quite young, I counselled moderation and delay. I counselled due consideration of the disastrous consequences... My counsels were swept to the winds, and I was swept along with the balance of my people into the most colossal war that was ever waged between civilized nations... the hostile sections that engaged in that dreadful conflict were each a unit. It was North against South.⁵⁶

Caffery continued that the war against Spain would overcome old animosities. Triumphally, he proclaimed; 'If we, unhappily, must go to war with Spain, it will be waged

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, p. 150

⁵¹ *ibid.*, p. 149-152.

⁵² Piero Gleijeses, '1898: The Opposition to the Spanish-American War', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 35, 2006, p. 683.

⁵³ Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting For American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked The Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1998, p. 72.

⁵⁴ Congressional Record, 55th Congress, 2nd Session, Government Printing, Washington, 1898, p. 3193.

⁵⁵ McCartney, p. 150.

⁵⁶ Donnelson Caffery, 'Intervention in Cuban Affairs', in Congressional Record, 55th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 3953.

on our part by a solid Union. There will be no North nor South, nor East nor West. It will be the war of a great Republic with one of the oldest States of Christendom.’⁵⁷

His peer, Peter J Otley, a Democratic representative from Virginia, in a long and at times rambling speech, noted to continuing applause that; ‘... the clouds of prejudice necessarily engendered by our civil strife have now happily given way to the bright sunshine of magnanimity and good feeling.’⁵⁸ Otley continued:

Posterity will be gladdened when... the sons of Civil War heroes joined together to sustain the honor... of their great nation... we look at the flag of our common country... we recognize that the honor of the country is threatened, the sons of the boys who wore blue and those of the boys who wore gray will salute it...⁵⁹

These remarks are indicative of the broad, bi-partisan support for reconciliation. This new nationalism was inherently religious, based on racist conceptualizations of ethnicity and place in society. Edward Blum has noted that this process, ‘left people of color... disenfranchised... segregated.’⁶⁰

The most vocal proponents of the unified American people excluded ethnic and religious minorities. The idea of a magnificent and pre-ordained destiny for the nation, or at least white Protestant Americans, captured public imagination. This reflected the narrative of American exceptionalism⁶¹. While debate was more keenly felt at the state level, and opposition to the war was expressed nationally by several groups, the new American nationalism challenged popular understandings of what the nation meant.

That said, a strong countercurrent in elected government emerged against the war as it loomed. Most of those opposing the conflict failed to convincingly explain why they adopted this line.⁶² However, the argument that war would be costly was common. The Republican Henry Johnson of Indiana informed Congress that war would ‘shake the business interests of this country to the foundation (and) arrest all of our recuperation and

⁵⁷ *ibid.*

⁵⁸ Congressional Record, 55th Congress, 2nd Session, Government Printing, Washington, 1898, pp. 3763-3764.

⁵⁹ *ibid.*

⁶⁰ Blum, p. 6.

⁶¹ Anatol Liven, *America Right or Wrong: An Anatomy of American Nationalism*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2004, pp. 30-33.

⁶² Gleijeses, p. 683.

development.’⁶³ The aforementioned Caffery had earlier acknowledged that Spain was ‘a cripple’. Yet, he continued that in the event of war, Spain could ‘sweep our ships from the seas’.⁶⁴

Anti-imperialists also contributed to this discourse. They opposed overt jingoism and territorial ambition. A pamphlet published by the Anti-Imperialist league noted, ‘We protest against the extension of American sovereignty by Spanish methods. We demand the immediate cessation of the war against liberty, begun by Spain and continued by us.’⁶⁵

However, months later in the afterglow of victory, this opposition was muted. This was reflected within early journalistic accounts such as Halsted and Watterson. However, the opposition to the war shows the complexities of the American political context in the 1890s. Within this context Americans were keen to show how victory allowed them to transcend civil frameworks.⁶⁶ Yet, the public proclamations claiming that the nation had at last overcome its sectional animosity proved premature, as contemporary politics continue to show.

The year of 1898 saw concrete and historically unparalleled efforts towards sectional reconciliation. These transcended simple rhetoric, illustrating the spirit of the age. Former Confederate officers led troops from northern states, under the auspices of the new Federal Army.⁶⁷ These Union troops, in blue uniforms reminiscent of those they had worn on the battlefields of Gettysburg and Antietam, marched south. In Florida, they embarked for Cuba. Along the way, many were surprised by the hearty welcome given to them by those who a generation before had been antagonists. The first American war-dead to be buried were Southerners. In this context, many assumed that the old animosities could finally be overcome.

American victory furthered national reconciliation. The war provided a rallying point around which both North and South could coalesce. It also enabled white Southerners

⁶³ *ibid.*

⁶⁴ Congressional Record, 55th Congress, 2nd Session., Government Printing, Washington, 1898, p. 3844.

⁶⁵ ‘Platform of the American Anti-Imperialist League’, in *Speeches, Correspondence, and Political Papers of Carl Schurz*, vol. 6, ed. Frederick Bancroft, New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1913, p. 77.

⁶⁶ McCartney, p. 149.

⁶⁷ Knetsch and Wynne, pp. 81-91

to show national loyalty, while contemporaneously promoting Southern heritage.⁶⁸ Southern units saw themselves as the inheritors of the martial tradition of their Civil War forbears. Yet, rather than fight for Dixie, their battle standard was that of the US. As units intermingled, the distinction between old antagonists abated. That is not to say national reconciliation was fully achieved. Remnants of sectional tensions remained. War graves prominently displayed the birth state of the fallen soldier.⁶⁹ Yet, there can be no denying the American zeitgeist of national reunification. The Revolution's centenary contributed to healing extant rifts, but factional animosity within politics remained real into the 1890s and beyond. Against this backdrop, large swathes of the populace were keen to explore national unity.⁷⁰

Despite their contentious history, the 1898 war made it possible for Americans to recognize a sense of commonality with those from formerly disparate regions.⁷¹ The widespread conception of a truly united nation excited nationalist imaginations. This was a single nation inhabited by one people. The pervasive spirit of the age recognized common ideals, culture and traditions. This is shown through the popular and political discourse. This thesis places a new emphasis on this, exploring how ideas of reunification manifested and were viewed, rather than simply just stating they existed. In embracing the idea of a single national cultural ethos, Americans made significant steps toward national unity.⁷²

The reality of political debates was more nuanced than simply characterising it as pro-war and in favour of national integration, though this was the major theme of the period. This national rapprochement was reflected within the rapidly expanding American army. At the onset of the war, it had numbered less than thirty thousand troops. Vast recruitment, including the enlistment of several Black Regiments, diversified its demographic base. The US military spread the idea of national unity in its recruits, though most units continued to be arranged according to the region from which enlistees hailed.⁷³

⁶⁸ Caroline E. Janney, *Burying the Dead, But Not The Past: Ladies' Memeorial Associations and the Lost Cause*, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 2007.

⁶⁹ Iowa Veterans of Foreign Wars, *When Johnny Came Marching Home*, Retrieved August 20, 2014, <www.vfw388.com/vfw_history.pdf>.

⁷⁰ Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War*, London, Bloomington, 1977, p. 170.

⁷¹ McCartney, p. 153.

⁷² *ibid.*, p. 149.

⁷³ David F. Trask, *The War With Spain*, Macmillan, New York, 1981, p. 181.

A multitude of extant letters attest to troop experiences. Among these, the writings of Colonel Leonard Wood and Lieutenant Theodore Roosevelt are instructive. They were the commanding officers of the First Volunteer Cavalry. This hastily organized unit is famously known to history and subsequent popular imagination as the 'Rough Riders'.⁷⁴ Their unit moved through New Orleans as it marched to their ships. Wood described the response of the city in a letter to his wife;

New Orleans was very enthusiastic... streets full of people and best of all an American flag in the hands of all. The cost of war is amply repaid by seeing the old flag as one sees it today in the South. We are indeed once more a unified country.⁷⁵

Roosevelt was also taken with the jubilation with which they were greeted. He noted;

Everywhere the people came out to greet us and cheer us... We were travelling through a region where practically all the older men had served in the Confederate Army, and where the younger men had all their lives long drunk in the endless tales told by their elders... The blood of the old men stirred to the distant breath of battle; the blood of the young men leaped hot with eager desire to accompany us... the young girls drove down in beavies... to wave flags in farewell to the troopers and to beg cartridges and buttons as mementos. Everywhere we saw the Stars and Stripes, and everywhere we were told, half-laughing, by grizzled ex-Confederates that they had never dreamed in the bygone days of bitterness to greet the old flag as they now were greeting it, and to send their sons, as now they were sending them, to fight and die under it.⁷⁶

It was hardly just the officers within the Army who embraced this. A popular army marching song, appropriately called 'Blue and Grey Are One' declared;

Hurrah for the north!

Hurrah for the south!

Hurrah for the east and the west!

The nation is one, undivided and free,

And all of its sons are the best.

⁷⁴ William A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire The United States Army in the Spanish-American War*, University of Missouri Press, Columbia, 1971, p. xv.

⁷⁵ Leonard Wood, *Letter to Wife*, quoted. Trask, p. 181.

⁷⁶ Theodore Roosevelt, 'The Rough Riders in Tampa' in *The Rough Riders*, Scribners, New York, 1899.

Together the men of the whole blessed land
 Are firmly united in one mighty band,
 And they that were once the Blue and the Gray
 Are gathered beneath dear Old Glory today,
 With men of both sides in command!⁷⁷

Yet, this patriotic surge did not reflect the opinions of all Southerners. Prior to war, several prominent Southern newspapers illustrated the gulf between rural, Democratic South and the industrial, urbanized, Republican North.⁷⁸ In their editorials, these papers showed long held mistrust of Northern intentions. Initially, these publications did not embrace the sensationalist headlines of those in the North.⁷⁹ These newspapers included the *Florida Star*, which questioned the accuracy of Northern newspapers.⁸⁰

Civil War memories caused Florida newspapers, closest to Cuba, to exercise ambivalence at the prospect of what was seen as a Northern expedition.⁸¹ Conversely, newspapers catering to a religious audience were broadly supportive of war, seeing it as a crusade to liberate Cubans from Spanish oppression. The *Northern Christian Advocate* proclaimed, ‘our cause will be just... (we) will be ready to do its full duty. Every... preacher will be a recruiting officer.’⁸² Yet, the North/South dichotomy was also initially expressed through these publications.

Some argued that the North’s greater industrial capability, for it contained most of the munitions factories, shipyards and armaments industries, would provide it with economic advantages.⁸³ In contrast, the agrarian South would see no benefits from the war, its boys would be sent to die. Southern newspapers also suggested that the war would impose a greater cost on them, due to proximity of Spanish forces.⁸⁴ These editorials feared Spanish military operations against Southern cities.⁸⁵

⁷⁷ Trask, p. 182.

⁷⁸ Arnold M. Shankman, ‘Southern Methodist Newspapers and the Coming of the Spanish-American War’, *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Feb., 1973), pp. 93-94.

⁷⁹ Knetsch and Wynne, p. 49

⁸⁰ *ibid.*, p. 50

⁸¹ *ibid.*, p. 52

⁸² Syracuse (N. Y.) *Northern Christian Advocate*, April 13, 1898, quoted in Julius W. Pratt, *Expansionists of 1898: The Acquisition of Hawaii and the Spanish Islands*, Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, 1964, p. 282.

⁸³ McCartney, pp. 150-151.

⁸⁴ *ibid.*, p. 151.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*

Southern religious newspapers were initially conflicted as war approached.⁸⁶ Though not indifferent to Cuba's situation and the suffering of its people, they argued that the US should avoid intervening. South Carolina's *Southern Christian Advocate* suggested to readers that they send aid to Cubans,⁸⁷ though it also warned against American troops being deployed. However, the tone expressed in religious publications became increasingly pro-war as the conflict loomed.⁸⁸

Despite this characterization, Northern newspapers can hardly be seen as totally pro-war. Many opposed intervention, including *The Wall Street Journal* and *Dun's Review*.⁸⁹ This shows the complexities of attitudes even within a region. *The New York Herald*, *New York Commercial Advertiser* and *Chicago Times-Herald* initially adopted similar editorial policies, though with other newspapers they later joined in restrained support of the war as it approached.⁹⁰ Several papers lacked a clear position, or 'had an inconsistent editorial line.'⁹¹ Conversely, many newspapers had a clear political affiliation, this further shaped attitudes towards the war.⁹² Despite the complexities of public opinion, the expedition against Spain did enjoy greater public support in northern states.⁹³

The opposition toward the war felt in the South for economic and security reasons was only one element of the debate. The conflict provoked significant criticism and opposition from groups as diverse as those who supported the imperial expedition. Preachers, industrialists, writers, academics and intellectuals united to form a counterpoint to the jingoism of the age. Their objections were often moral, though many remarked on the simplistic narratives which captured such broad public appeal.

Mark Twain captured the atmosphere of the age in his cynical work, 'The War Prayer'. His publisher judged this to be so inflammatory to US sensibilities that its publication was delayed until 1923, after his death. Twain wrote of the national context of the 1898 war;

⁸⁶ Shankman, pp. 93-95.

⁸⁷ *Southern Christian Advocate*, Greenville, South Carolina, February 10, March 24, 1898.

⁸⁸ Shankman, p. 93.

⁸⁹ Gleijeses, p. 685.

⁹⁰ *ibid*

⁹¹ *ibid*.

⁹² *ibid*.

⁹³ Gleijeses.

It was a time of great and exalting excitement. The country was up in arms, the war was on, in every breast burned the holy fire of patriotism... a fluttering wilderness of flags flashed in the sun; daily the young volunteers marched down the wide avenue gay and fine in their new uniforms, the proud fathers and mothers and sisters and sweethearts cheering them with voices choked with happy emotion as they swung by; nightly the packed mass meetings listened, panting, to patriot oratory which stirred the deepest deeps of their hearts... the pastors preached devotion to flag and country, and invoked the God of Battles...⁹⁴

The feeling which Twain describes was broadly reflected by the media. Its depiction of patriotic military developments found broad public support. This cultural production served 'as an outlet' for many.⁹⁵ It transcended depictions offered in sensationalist newspapers.⁹⁶ Within this commercialization of war imagery, a key triumphalist theme emerged. The American media portrayed military engagements and the victories of their nation. These illustrated 'the emerging national unification paradigm.'⁹⁷

Popular visual imagery reflected the patriotic nationalist atmosphere.⁹⁸ The advent of photography shaped popular culture. Indicative of this is the work of Fritz W. Guerin, a photographer and Union veteran, who shot a scene celebrating American unification against a common enemy.⁹⁹ In his image, US and Cuban flags provided a background behind a grey clad Confederate soldier shaking hands with a regal blue Union officer.¹⁰⁰ The Union officer breaks the chains of a 'young, white, female Cuba'.¹⁰¹ Images such as this became increasingly popular in the lead up to war.¹⁰² These manufactured narratives of war

⁹⁴ Mark Twain, 'The War Prayer', *Harper's Weekly*, November 1916.

⁹⁵ Bonnie M. Miller, *From Liberation to Conquest: The Visual and Popular Cultures of the Spanish-American War of 1898*, Boston, University of Massachusetts Press, 2011, p. 118.

⁹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 56.

⁹⁷ W. Joseph Campbell, 'Review: From Liberation to Conquest: The Visual and Popular Cultures of the Spanish-American War of 1898', *American Journalism*, Spring 2002, p.129, Retrieved September 1, 2014 <www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=35539>.

⁹⁸ Miller, pp. 116-120.

⁹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 118.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Martha Banta, *Barbaric Intercourse: Caricature and Culture of Conduct, 1841-1936*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2002, p. 567.

¹⁰² Miller, pp. 118-120.

‘nationalized audiences at two levels.’¹⁰³ They simultaneously strengthened ties to the nation and showed similarities between disparate Americans.¹⁰⁴

Unsurprisingly, sectional wounds could not be so easily overcome by simple images and media representation. Recruitment in most areas of the South was lower than the North.¹⁰⁵ This cannot simply be attributed to demographic factors, with the South’s smaller population. The 1898 declaration of war was at the height of planting season. This was a cornerstone of the South’s agricultural economy. Additionally, the crowds which had cheered the Rough Riders on their journey through New Orleans were more indifferent to less famous units, lacking newspaper coverage.¹⁰⁶

Ultimately, the South came to support the war. Southerners celebrated their role in victory. They saw themselves once again as equals of their formerly victorious Northern neighbors. Southern religious communities were at the forefront of this.¹⁰⁷ Many argued that the victory helped overcome sectional divides. Southerners reciprocated Northern efforts towards this, such as the appointment of ex-Confederate officers to high positions. Fitzhugh Lee and the ageing General Joe Wheeler are indicative of this.

Wheeler’s appointment as commander of ground forces was entirely political. While he had been a Confederate cavalry officer, his best years were truly behind him. The old General had grown so fat that he had difficulty mounting his horse, his aides devised a complex system of pulleys and ropes to get him astride the unfortunate animal. Yet, he was a symbol around which the South could rally. He showed that Washington recognized Southern concerns regarding political marginalization.¹⁰⁸

Contemporary historians and writers were keen to emphasize the war’s contribution to sectional reconciliation. This directed subsequent historiography, and is still reflected within contemporary narratives. As William Anderson Pew wrote a generation after the war;

...the effect of Joe Wheeler and Fitzhugh Lee laying aside their coats of grey to wear the Union blue cannot be overestimated. The spirit of patriotism was a solvent of

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, p. 119.

¹⁰⁴ Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Special Sorrows: The Diasporic Imagination of Irish, Polish and Jewish Immigrants in the United States*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1995, pp. 141-176.

¹⁰⁵ McCartney, p. 151.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ Shankman, pp. 93-94.

¹⁰⁸ McCartney, p. 151.

hatreds and animosities. The Spanish War, as its first fruit, contributed to the solidarity of the Union and made it again a union, not of constraint, but of affection.¹⁰⁹

Pew's work is indicative of the direction initial historiography took following the American victory. This reflected public understanding that their exceptional nation was now a world power. Subsequent understandings of the war were shaped by this. The journalist Henry Watterson, editor of the southern *Louisville Courier-Journal*, wrote in 1899;

In 1861 the country had been divided. Now it was united. Then the sections stood in opposing battle. Now, they stood shoulder to shoulder and heart to heart... the world was to witness at last what this union truly means. It was to see arise from the ashes of old and dead and buried controversies, a power undreamed of by itself before; a vast world-power, with which henceforward the nations of the earth must reckon... The swaddling clothes of national babyhood were gone. The giant stood forth in all the pride of his manhood... arrayed on the side of humanity and liberty.¹¹⁰

The prominent Republican Senator and advocate for war, Henry Cabot Lodge echoed Watterson's thoughts. He wrote in 1898;

For thirty years the people of the United States had been binding up the wounds and trying to efface the scars of their great and terrible Civil War. They knew that they had done much, they felt that the old passions had softened and were dying. The war came, and in the twinkling of an eye, in a flash of burning, living light, they saw the long task was done, and that the land was really one again without rent or seam, and men rejoiced mightily in their hearts with this knowledge which the new war had brought.¹¹¹

The plethora of books which emerged as the war was won, including Titherington's *A History of the Spanish-American War* and Halsted's *The Full Official History of the War with Spain*, acclaimed national unity. Yet, their understanding of unification remained simplistic, and ignored its exclusionary themes.

¹⁰⁹ William Andrews Pew, *The War With Spain and its Aftermath*, Newcombe and Gauss, Salem, 1927, p. 5.

¹¹⁰ Watterson, p. 80.

¹¹¹ Henry Cabot Lodge, *War with Spain*, p. 233-234.

National reunification was an oft-repeated theme in President William McKinley's speeches. His December 17, 1898, speech to the Savannah Board of Trade reflects this.¹¹² To cheering crowds, he repeated that the war was the basis upon which the nation could be rebuilt. He echoed his contemporaries in Congress.

McKinley was profoundly aware of the war's unifying power. He capitalized upon this, keen to encourage American unity. Lewis Gould identified this characteristic in his biography of the President.¹¹³

The victory over Spain was to be the victory of a united nation. As he traversed the South, McKinley addressed crowds.¹¹⁴ He characterized the victory as indicative of shared American religious and political traditions. In Saint Louis, he asserted;

Not since the beginning of the agitation of the question of slavery has there been such a common bond in name and purpose, such genuine affection, such a unity of the sections, such obliteration of party and geographical divisions. National pride has been again enthroned; national patriotism has been restored; the national Union cemented closer and stronger; the love for the old flag enshrined in all hearts. North and South have mingled their best blood in a common cause, and to-day rejoice in a common victory. Happily for the nation to-day, they follow the same glorious banner, together fighting and dying under its sacred folds for American honour...!¹¹⁵

McKinley's speaking tours repeatedly argued that the war and victory had reformed the disparate American people into a single, unified nation.¹¹⁶ His speeches were often couched in ideas of destiny and religious imagery. He exclaimed in Iowa, 'Never before has there been a more unified people. Never since the beginning of the government itself were

¹¹² William McKinley, *Address at the Savannah Board of Trade (Dec. 17, 1898)*, William McKinley Papers, Library of Congress, Series No. 4: 1896-Feb. 16, 1899, Reel No. 82, 1961, Retrieved August 21, 2014 <<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/service/mss/eadxmlmss/eadpdfmss/2009/ms009181.pdf>>.

¹¹³ Lewis L. Gould, *The Spanish American War and President McKinley*, University of Kansas Press, Lawrence, 1981, pp. 104-105.

¹¹⁴ McCartney, p. 151.

¹¹⁵ William McKinley, *Speech at the Coliseum*, St. Louis, Missouri, 14 October, 1898.

¹¹⁶ Gould, pp. 104-105.

the people of this country so united in aim and purpose as this present hour.’¹¹⁷ His administration gave the conflict a broad popular resonance.¹¹⁸

McKinley’s orations and actions are representative of the broader trend of national reconciliation through the nationalist context of the war against Spain. In the period following the war itself, McKinley continued with these themes in his public addresses. He exclaimed to a crowd in Illinois;

We are no longer a divided people; and he who would stir up animosities between the North and the South is denied a hearing in both sections. The boys of the South with the boys of the North fought triumphantly on land and sea in every engagement of the war... I conclude, in the moment I am to tarry with you, by saying that this nation has been greatly blessed, and that this hour we are a united, a prosperous, and a patriotic people.¹¹⁹

Little more than a week later in Iowa, he continued;

We are a united people united in interest, sentiment, purpose, and love of country as we have never been before. Sectionalism has disappeared. Old prejudices are but a faded memory. The orator of hate, like the orator of despair, has no hearing in any section of our country. On ship and on shore the men of the South and the men of the North have been fighting for the same flag and shedding their blood together for the honor of the country and the integrity of its institutions. Lawton and Wheeler in the Philippines are fighting side by side to-day. This is the Union we have now, and the North and the South are vying with each other in loyalty, and are inarching side by side in the pathway of our destiny and the mission of liberty and humanity.¹²⁰

A year before his assassination, he triumphantly told a gathering in New York that ‘Sectionalism has disappeared and fraternity and union have been rooted in the hearts of the American people.’¹²¹ McKinley was deeply affected by his Civil War service, and saw the war against Spain as a way to overcome sectional animosity.¹²²

¹¹⁷ William McKinley, *Speech at Denison*, Iowa, 11 October, 1898.

¹¹⁸ McCartney, p. 152.

¹¹⁹ William McKinley, *Speech at Canton*, Illinois, October 6, 1899.

¹²⁰ William McKinley, *Speech at Cedar Falls*, Iowa, October 16, 1899.

¹²¹ William McKinley, *Speech at the Banquet Ohio Society of New York*, March 3, 1900.

¹²² Gould, pp. 104-105.

McKinley was not the only figure advocating this. Within the broad popular culture of print and visual publication, he found his disciples. It is difficult to identify criticism of the war's unifying power within extant sources.

Henry Watterson, unlike many of his Southern contemporaries, promoted the war from the advent of tensions, in order to advance Southern economic and political interests. He had been a Confederate Officer, and in 1899 he published a wildly celebratory account of the conflict against Spain. His editorials consistently praised the war for re-uniting American society against a common enemy.¹²³ He was complimentary of politicians who advocated American action, regardless of party or constituency. He remarked of the political context;

In these warlike speeches everywhere manifested it has already united us as nothing else could, as emancipating both sections of the union from the mistaken impression that we ever were, or would be, anything less than one people.¹²⁴

The period saw increased emphasis on the idea of national unity. Against this backdrop, sectionalism and reunification between the North and the South became a key American objective. Former Unioners and Confederates aimed to identify with each other as national equals. While not as successful as its proponents had hoped, these efforts represented an important development. There can be no denying the spirit of national reunification engendered by America's war against Spain, and the aforementioned historiography is right to address this.

Also relevant is the ultimate success of this movement. Despite expanding patriotism and nationalism, the reality is that the war was unable to re-unite the nation as its proponents had dreamed. In particular, religious and racial divides proved most contentious. The divisions which endured prove that despite the spirit of the age, national reconciliation was a dream that was only partly realized.

America's dominant national religious culture has been Protestantism. This was especially pronounced in the 1890s. In this context, religious minorities aspired to utilize the war's atmosphere of national unity to further their own credentials of American-ness, as

¹²³ Daniel S. Margolies, *Henry Watterson and the New South: The Politics of Empire, Free Trade and Globalisation*, University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, 2003.

¹²⁴ Henry Watterson, 'Warlike Speeches Unite All Sections', *New York Journal*, May 28, 1898, p. 3.

Paul McCartney has identified.¹²⁵ In order to do this, marginalized religious groups emphasized their patriotism and support of US policies within the national fervor.

The often persecuted Jewish population eagerly joined flag-waving crowds.¹²⁶ Their language characterized Spanish society as medieval, an anachronistic order which the US could sweep away. Jewish authors emphasized their American loyalty, arguing that they were a part of 'this chosen people of free men.'¹²⁷ Biographical details of Jews serving in the war were published.¹²⁸ A volume of these noted, 'The number of Jews who distinguished themselves by their bravery and who attained high rank and other forms of recognition, was also correspondingly large, especially if we consider their inexperience in war.'¹²⁹ The account later continued, 'the number of Jewish soldiers was proportionally large, and many of them became distinguished for bravery and were promoted to responsible positions.'¹³⁰ Jewish journalists continued this theme in the national press. Pamphlets were issued, and the unique characteristics of Jewish culture were played down to appeal to the American majority. Other religions followed suit, attempting to characterise themselves as American.

Catholic Americans remained sceptical of religious developments.¹³¹ McKinley attempted to address these concerns, noting that 'our patriotism is neither sectional nor sectarian.'¹³² His orations were inclusive of Catholics. In the same speech delivered at the New York Catholic Summer School, he praised the 'demonstration of (the audience's) good will and patriotism.'¹³³ Most tellingly, the President remarked; 'We may differ in our political and religious beliefs, but we are united for country. Loyalty to the government is our national creed. We follow, all of us, one flag.'¹³⁴

¹²⁵ McCartney, p. 153.

¹²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 154.

¹²⁷ Jeanne Abrams, 'Remembering the Maine: The Jewish Attitude Towards the Spanish-American War as Reflected in The American Israelite', *American Jewish History* 76 (June 1987), p. 439

¹²⁸ Peter Wiernik, *History of Jews in America*, The Jewish Press Publishing Company, New York, 1912.

¹²⁹ *ibid.*, p. 219.

¹³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 238.

¹³¹ McCartney, p. 155.

¹³² William McKinley, *Speech to the Catholic Summer School*, Cliff Haven, New York, 15 August, 1898.

¹³³ *ibid.*

¹³⁴ *ibid.*

McKinley's remarks were calculated. Some protestant preachers argued that Spain was a Roman Catholic nation, consequently America's Catholics might offer it support.¹³⁵ Archbishops published a statement defending Catholic loyalty. Released on May 14, 1898, this asserted;

Whatever may have been the individual opinions of Americans prior to the declaration of war, there can now be no two opinions as to the duty of every loyal citizen. We, the members of the Catholic Church, are true Americans, and as such are loyal to our country and our flag and obedient to the highest decrees and supreme authority of the nation.¹³⁶

One bishop remarked, 'the fact that Spain is a Catholic nation matters nothing.'¹³⁷ He continued, 'The question is not one of religion. If there is a question at all it is one of national and international right, and nothing else. America, whether in religion, Catholics or Protestants, view the whole question from an American standpoint and from no other.'¹³⁸ This piece was published in several national newspapers.

Similarly to Jews, Catholics promoted their service in the war.¹³⁹ While Catholics failed to achieve equality with Protestants, they did manage to promote 'their claim to rightful membership in American society.'¹⁴⁰ Jewish and Catholic minorities achieved a greater role in American religious life.¹⁴¹

The 1898 war was the apex of efforts towards American re-unification.¹⁴² White, Protestant Northerners and Southerners understood that despite their history of sectionalism, there was much in common between them.¹⁴³ Yet, it is ironic that ideas of national reunification were prefaced on exclusionary ideas of race and religion. It was

¹³⁵ Frank T. Reuter, *Catholic Influence on American Colonial Policies, 1898-1904*, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1967, pp.10-11.

¹³⁶ *ibid.*

¹³⁷ 'Archbishop Ireland Scouts the Idea of War', *Iowa Catholic Messenger*, 12 March 1898, p. 1, Retrieved August 25 2014, <<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/82132626>>.

¹³⁸ *ibid.*

¹³⁹ Ryan D. Dye, 'Irish-American Ambivalence Toward the Spanish-American War', *New Hibernia Review*, Volume 11, Number 3, Fómhar/Autumn 2007, p. 101.

¹⁴⁰ McCartney, p. 155.

¹⁴¹ *ibid.*, p. 153.

¹⁴² Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2002.

¹⁴³ Susan K Harris, *God's Arbiters, Americans and the Philippines, 1898-1902*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2002.

convenient and politically expedient for this group to sacrifice the concerns of racial minorities when they complicated unification.

A racist attitude formed the undercurrent of nationalist efforts towards re-unification. It was reflected in the defining public discourse of the age. Editorials, newspapers, political speeches, pamphlets and the ideology of the south all came to endorse this. Walter Hines Pages, editor of the popular *Atlantic Monthly* reflected this. He attributed the great achievements of the American people to their race, and the historical inheritance this engendered. Pages saw the victory against Spain as a continuation of the ongoing victory of the American people, comparing it to earlier achievements. He wrote following America's naval victory over Spain in Manila Bay;

The race from which we are sprung is a race that for a thousand years has done the adventurous and outdoor tasks of the world. The English have been explorers, colonizers, conquerors of continents, founders of states. We ourselves, every generation since we came to America, have had great practical enterprises to engage us - the fighting with Indians, the clearing of forests, the War for Independence, the construction of a government, the extension of our territory, the pushing backward of the frontier... the long internal conflict about slavery, a great Civil War, the building of railroads, and the compact unification of a continental domain.¹⁴⁴

The nationalism engendered by the Spanish-American War was exclusionary. Since the end of the Civil War, African-Americans had overwhelmingly supported the northern dominated Republican Party.¹⁴⁵ By 1898, that same Party had come to regard relations with racist, white Southerners as preferable than its historical relationship with African Americans. The 1890s saw the realization of Northern acquiescence to Southern demands.¹⁴⁶ African-Americans understandably suspected that the racism which characterized the South after the Civil War would become entrenched across the nation.¹⁴⁷ And so it did.

¹⁴⁴ Walter Hines Pages, 'The War With Spain and After', in Richard Hoffstadter (ed.), *Great Issues in American History, From Reconstruction to the Present Day: 1864-1981*, Vintage, New York, 1982, p. 191.

¹⁴⁵ David J. Shirley, *A War of Frontier and Empire: The Phillipine-American War, 1899-1902*, Hill and Wang, New York, 2007, p. 108.

¹⁴⁶ McCartney, pp. 155-156.

¹⁴⁷ Shirley, p. 108.

William Graham Summer, a Northern American academic at Yale, critically remarked in a speech;

For thirty years the Negro has been in fashion. He has had political value and has been petted. Now we have made friends with the Southerners. They and we are hugging each other. We are all united. The Negro's day is over. He is out of fashion... A Southern senator two or three days ago thanked an expansionist senator from Connecticut for enunciating doctrines which proved that, for the last thirty years, the Southerners have been right all the time, and his inference was incontrovertible.¹⁴⁸

African Americans across the South had been gained increased rights following the Civil War. However, Southern politics remained dominated by whites. Many of these politicians resented Northern intrusions into their affairs. From the 1870s onwards, Northern politicians were willing to sacrifice the rights of African Americans to facilitate reconciliation. For African Americans, the 1890s saw a 'national descent into violence, disfranchisement, and hatred', and the emergence of a new, ethnic nationalism 'suffused with racism and alienation.'¹⁴⁹ Reunion between North and South came at the cost of the ideals that had been pursued through the Civil War: liberty, equality and inclusive nationalism. This is illustrated by a pamphlet of the late 1890s, which noted that the war enabled American unity, though it continued;

You must know that as long as the brain of the Anglo-Saxon continues to be superior to the brain of those with whom he comes in contact, so long will the white man of the South remain the master of the situation. But whatever way the problem of the South be solved... it must be solved by keeping the races separate, because amalgamation means debasement.¹⁵⁰

As McCartney has assessed, President McKinley disagreed with racist policies.¹⁵¹ However, in the name of political expedience, he did little to challenge them. On a speaking

¹⁴⁸ William Graham Summer, *The Conquest of the United States by Spain*, Speech delivered Yale, January 16, 1899, Retrieved August 25, 2014 <<http://mises.org/daily/2398/The-Conquest-of-the-United-States-by-Spain>>.

¹⁴⁹ Blum, p. 249,

¹⁵⁰ Champe S. Andrews, *Speech at Woolsley Hall*, New Haven, Connecticut, 28 September 1903, pamphlet reprinted New Haven Leader, September 29, 1903, p. 12.

¹⁵¹ McCartney, p.155-156.

tour of the South, he addressed at the African American Georgia Agricultural and Mechanical College.¹⁵² In his speech, he spoke of 'the splendid heroism of the black regiments which fought side by side with the white troops.'¹⁵³ McKinley congratulated the largely black crowd 'upon the valor of your race.'¹⁵⁴

He was far more complimentary of African Americans than were his Southern contemporaries. McKinley noted, 'Mr. Lincoln was right when, speaking of the black men, he said that the time might come when they would help to preserve and extend freedom. And in a third of a century you have been among those who have given liberty in Cuba to an oppressed people.'¹⁵⁵

However, when pressed on civil rights, he responded; 'You will solve your own problem. Be patient. Be progressive, be determined, be honest, be God-fearing and you will win, for no effort fails that has a stout, honest, earnest heart behind it.'¹⁵⁶ Many African Americans saw fighting for the Union as a way to solve this problem.

African American enlistment to fight Spain was significant. They were segregated into 'Black Regiments', with white officers. Frank W. Pullen, a white sergeant, noted to his diary that black units had guards detailed to ensure that they 'kept their place.'¹⁵⁷ Unsurprisingly, white soldiers enjoyed preferential treatment, receiving rations before black troops, and a higher rate of pay.

Following victory, African American soldiers wrote to newspapers to argue their bravery. The few newspaper reports concerning their martial prowess were often surprisingly complimentary.¹⁵⁸ However, headlines were typically captured by exploits of the Rough Riders or famous individuals.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵² William McKinley, *Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley from March 1, 1897 to May 30, 1900*, Doubleday and McClure, New York, 1900, p. 176.

¹⁵³ William McKinley, *Speech at Georgia Agricultural and Mechanical College*, Savannah, Georgia, 18 December, 1898.

¹⁵⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ Sergeant Frank W. Pullen, in Edward A. Johnson, *History of Negro Soldiers in the Spanish American War*, Raleigh, NC, Capitol Printing, 1899, reprint New York, Johnson, 1970, p. 22-31.

¹⁵⁸ Edward A. Johnson, *History of Negro Soldiers in the Spanish American War*, Raleigh, NC, Capitol Printing, 1899, reprint New York, Johnson, 1970, p. 55.

¹⁵⁹ Hiram H. Thweatt, *What the Newspapers Say of the Negro Soldier in the Spanish American War*, Thomasville, GA, 1898.

African American soldiers had been given menial tasks in the army. The photographs of Lieutenant Paul S. Brownlee, of the 159th Indiana Volunteer Infantry, contain numerous instances of black soldiers waiting on white officers in the mess. Another such photo is inscribed in elegant penmanship with, 'A Typical Virginia Darkey.'¹⁶⁰

African American war experiences were shaped by racism. One black soldier recorded;

... in Georgia, outside of the Park, it mattered not if we were soldiers of the United States, and going to fight for the honor of our country and the freedom of an oppressed and starving people, we were 'niggers', as they called us, and treated us with contempt. There was no enthusiasm nor Stars and Stripes in Georgia. That is the kind of 'united country' we saw in the South.¹⁶¹

The celebrated and oft mentioned 'reunification' enabled by the Spanish-American war was in reality, limited. Northerners and Southerners did engage in unification, but this was a process dominated by white Protestants. A racist construction of the American national character rejected a large portion of the population. Similarly, the dominant place of Protestantism in American culture was reinforced.¹⁶² Yet, war enabled Americans to conceive of their nation in a more unified fashion than they had in decades. It was unfortunate that American cultural construction excluded a significant proportion of its population from enjoying full citizenship.¹⁶³

National reunification was a key theme in the political and cultural discourse of the 1890s. It shaped the initial works of history concerning the Spanish-American War. These early authors were right in identifying the spirit of the age, though this was something they themselves were wrapped in. The volume of works which emerged in the immediate aftermath of the American victory were triumphalist in tone. They saw the outcome of the war as proof of America's destiny and its exceptionalism. This view directed subsequent

¹⁶⁰ Box 2, Folder 2, Manuscript and Visual Collections Department, William Henry Smith Memorial Library, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis, Retrieved August 23, 2014, <<http://www.indianahistory.org/our-collections/collection-guides/spanish-american-war-and-philippine-american-war.pdf/?searchterm=brownlee>>

¹⁶¹ 'Sergeant Major Pullen of the 25th Infantry Described the Conduct of Negro Soldiers Around El Caney', in Edward A. Johnson, *History of Negro Soldiers in the Spanish-American War, and Other Items of Interest*, 1899 <<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/11102/11102.txt>>

¹⁶² Jacobson, *Barbarian Virtues*.

¹⁶³ *ibid.*

American understandings of the conflict. While revisionist histories emerged decades later, many of these continued to take the assumptions first articulated for granted. As the writings of contemporaries attest, broad, public support of sectional reunification typified the public understanding of America's war against Spain.

A defining theme in American cultural and political life in the 1890s was the acclamation of efforts towards national reunification. While antagonism between North and South would continue to be a defining attribute of their relations, the war against Spain offered a unique, widely embraced, process through which the nation and its citizens could be imagined. Political leaders, writers, religious figures, soldiers and ordinary citizenry understood and reflected the move towards sectional reconciliation. The breadth of those who embraced this move; Democrats, Republicans, religious leaders, writers, journalists, soldiers and citizenry alike, shows the extent to which sectional unification was a national desire.

While American nationalism was complex, the war against Spain can be seen as a turning point. This enabled the main sections of American society to come together in a way they had not done so since before the Civil War. This excluded minorities from national discourse and was not as all-encompassing a movement as some authors have stressed. Fundamentally, the nationalism of 1898 was broadly understood to allow the nation to unify even if the reality failed to reach the expectations of McKinley and others.

The historiography of this is understandably broad, and has become increasingly complex with the publications of recent decades. Yet the idea of national unification, which is stated but under examined within several volumes, was an element of American cultural life at the time. It remains a truth more complex than is often understood, and even the heady glow of nationalism could not overcome all sectional animosities. Many of these endure to the present.

CONCLUSION

The United States emerged from its Civil War with deep divisions between its constituent regions. The most pronounced of these was the mutual animosity and distrust which characterized relations between North and South, the former Union and Confederacy. This gulf transcended religion, politics, economics and popular culture. It was exacerbated by partisan politics, with Republicans dominating the North and Democrats holding sway across the South. Yet, a generation after Lee's surrender at Appomattox, there was a concerted effort from a diverse range of groups aimed at overcoming American sectionalism. This was facilitated through the prism of America's 1898 war against Spain.

This issue of nationalism and the war has been examined within existing historiography. This thesis has consolidated and extended existing discussion. It has aimed to assess the extent to which unification was achieved. It has also surveyed both American regionalism and nationalism within this context.

The 1890s were a period dominated by nationalist fervor. Contemporaneously, events illustrated the complexities of American nationalism, and how the term is contingent upon not only the geographical basis of its adherents, but also their ethnic, political and religious backgrounds. The impact of the Spanish-American War on overcoming American sectionalism is an issue that has been examined within historiography, though existing works have been prone to gloss over the issue's complexities.

Much of the writing concerning the war of 1898 focuses on the transformative impact this had for America's place in the world. Yet, in recent decades a greater emphasis has been placed on the issue of American nationalism in the context of the war against Spain. Much of this work has aimed to survey the construction of American nationalism, though the field remains dominated by military histories, biographies and to a lesser extent, political analyses. This is unsurprising, as the war heralded America's emergence as a world power.

But, behind the scenes, the war served as a transformative period for the nation in a more circumspect way. As several historians have alluded to, the war owed much to the nationalist context of American politics and society. American nationalism remains a broad concept, but fundamentally it is shaped by ideas of American exceptionalism, a messianic

destiny for the American people and the nation's religious and cultural inheritance. It is outward looking, often overtly religious and ultimately simplistic in its popular understanding of what an American is. These elements were prominent in 1898.

The US of the post-Civil War era was one which was characterized by American regionalism: constituent parts of the nation each possessing their own distinct, or at least identifiable, political, social and cultural identities. Though the two most established regions were the North and the South, the mid-West and West coast also emerge as coherent units. Their ambitions and views were often tied to the North, thus it is convenient to write of the North/South dichotomy.

The war against Spain further served as a process which was utilized by many Americans in order to overcome the sectional animosity which characterized post-Civil War America. The Northern victory of 1865 had seen the nation re-unified, if only in name. Wayward states were brought back into the fold, but lingering animosities on both sides of the Mason-Dixie line continued to shape inter-state relations. In particular, Southerners were skeptical of Northern intentions and resented their interference. The issue of increased civil rights for African Americans in the South remained contentious.

Attempts to overcome this regionalism in 1898 and beyond were only partly successful. While a virtually unparalleled public acclamation of unity greeted American victory, most contemporaries failed to appreciate just how exclusionary the period's defining attitudes of American citizenship were. Though the victory enabled North and South to draw closer, the American ideal which they perpetuated was a white, masculine, protestant identity. Naturally, this failed to reflect demographic realities, especially in the south. The northern acquiescence to this fiction marked a betrayal of what it had fought for in the 1860s. The national zeitgeist of the 1890s failed to acknowledge this.

Such observations should not be read to suggest that there was no domestic criticism of the war against Spain. Opposition was broad, and well-articulated. Anti-imperialists, religious leaders and sceptical publications were at the forefront of this, though they never managed to capture public consciousness in the same way as jingoists, nationalists and expansionists. Additionally, Southern states were often more cautious in supporting war. Initially, the conflict was seen as a Northern expedition of no benefit to the South. This most notably shown in the differences in per capita recruitment between

regions. Likewise, the Southern press often repeated the idea that it was the North who would benefit from, and thus wanted, the war. American sectionalism endured in understanding the social, cultural and political context of the 1890s.

Newspapers, mass media, popular culture and politics were, in the end, broadly supportive of the war. But this was a point many had to reach. The Congressional Record, as well as numerous editorials and political figures outlined previously, show that it would be disingenuous to simply note that the Spanish-American War was met with initial and ongoing public support. The 1898 war illustrated the complexities of American culture, and the dangers of treating it as a singular monolith.

American regionalism, with its emphasis on constituent areas of the nation, rather than the nation itself, has long been a defining attribute of the US. While this is most often associated with the Civil War, in the decades and generations which followed a strong regionalist mentality came to define American civic and political life. The contemporaries of 1898 were well aware of this. It is unsurprising that in this context efforts would be made to at last overcome sectional animosity.

While such efforts at overcoming sectional animosity were initially led by Northern Protestants and political figures, the idea and intention was reciprocated by many in the South. Extant popular and political sources attest to this. Political leaders on both sides of the aisle came to support efforts towards sectional unification. Many prematurely applauded its success. This was echoed by civil leaders, popular culture and the press. However, the characterization of the American people which this advanced was ironically an exclusionary one. It took no account of the ethnic or cultural diversity. The image of an American that was promoted during the war drew upon ideas of white, protestant masculinity. This was especially apparent in the South, where African Americans were excluded from citizenship discourse. Northern Republicans and religious leaders were willing to abandon the promises of Lincoln in order to compromise with Southern white nationalists. This was sectional reunification of a sort, accompanied by a national reappraisal.

Sectional reunification was implicitly linked to nationalism. This was a force which suggested an almost biblically ordained destiny for the American people. This 'manifest destiny' is a major theme within American history. American exceptionalism further

suggested that the US would solve the issues of other peoples through intervention. This had to be accompanied by a re-affirmation of the unity of the American people themselves. The nationalist outburst which rose to national prominence in the 1890s was one which advocated the unity of the American people, and despite occasional efforts to the contrary, it found broad public appeal.

This thesis has shown that the often unsubstantiated description that the war against Spain was a unifying force in post-Civil War America is an interpretation deserving of merit. National civic, religious and political discourse from a multitude of states and varying American regions attest to this. The end of American sectionalism was a rallying cry, which was felt from the highest Federal office to those standing on a New Orleans street cheering the Rough Riders as they rode in.

But, the issue remains complex. This idea of sectional reunification was one which perpetuated a fiction of what constituted American citizenship. In the popular national imagination, Americans remained white, protestant men. That this was not entirely true seemed inconsequential to many contemporaries. American nationalism not only propelled the nation into war against Spain, it also shaped public and political discourse concerning who made up the nation.

This work has aimed to survey the complexities of American nationalism, along with the regionalist context which shaped American politics and culture in the context of the war. It has expanded upon the existing argument that the war was a unifying force for the nation, though American regionalism is something which cannot be quickly overcome. Sectionalism has continued to define the US until the present.

The War of 1898 was a conflict which illustrated the complexities of American nationalism, and the ways in which the American nation is able to see itself. Americans often understand their nation as an exceptional one with an almost messianic destiny, believing that their role is to liberate other peoples and bestow upon them American systems and norms. This was an idea which rose to the fore in the debates surrounding American action against Spain. Yet, in 1898 this was also accompanied by a profound willingness to exclude Americans from the discourse of citizenship, seemingly contrary to the nation's espoused values.

The Spanish-American War remains a conflict which promoted a then unparalleled effort from conflicting sections of American society towards post-Civil War reconciliation. This was an idea which occupied a prominent place within religious, political, civil and cultural discourse of the age. To many contemporaries, it seemed that at last the United States would finally live up to its name. Yet, these sectional animosities were so entrenched as to not easily be undone. The compromise of the North with the South offered the rights of minorities as sacrifice, and the echoes of this continue to be felt until the present. Certainly, much remains still to be written concerning the Spanish-American War of 1898.

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