



Imperialism in Latin America

Background :

- **Latin America = area rich in resources**
- **Latin America = countries with newly gained independence**
- **Latin America = area that needs money to modernize and industrialize**

What happens when a country needs money?

- **Borrows from other countries**
- **Becomes “enslaved” by debt to these countries**

Railroads and the Imperialism of Free Trade

- **The natural resources of the Latin American republics made them targets for a form of economic dependence called free-trade imperialism.**
- **British and the United States' entrepreneurs financed and constructed railroads in order to exploit the agricultural and mineral wealth of Latin America.**

- **Latin American elites encouraged foreign companies with generous concessions because this appeared to be the fastest way both to modernize their countries and to enrich the Latin American property owning class.**

Europe, the U.S. and Latin America

- **European influence in Latin America was very different than in Africa and Asia.**
- **Europe penetrated South America with investment and trade and immigration.**
 - **Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and other countries took in the Irish, Germans, Italians, eastern Europeans, and Spaniards.**
- **Direct imperialism would only come from the United States.**
 - **U.S. declared war on Spain in 1898 and captured the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Cuba.**

US Foreign Policy

- **Monroe Doctrine (1823)**—declared Western Hemisphere off limits to Europe
- **US (& Europe) had invested \$\$ in Latin American businesses**
- **Spanish-American War 1898** → kicked Spain out of Cuba, Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico
- **1904**—Europeans sent warships to Venezuela demanding repayment of debts → **Roosevelt Corollary**—US will intervene in financial disputes between Europe and countries in the Americas
- **Panama Canal**—finished in 1914

American Expansionism and the Spanish-American War, 1898

- **After 1865 the European powers used their financial power to penetrate Latin America, but they avoided territorial conquest.**
- **The Monroe Doctrine prohibited European intervention in the Western Hemisphere, but this did not prevent the United States from intervening in the affairs of Latin American nations.**

- **After defeating Spain in the Spanish-American War, the United States took over Puerto Rico, while Cuba became an independent republic subject to intense interference by the United States.**

How do you think this influenced the life of the Cubans, Puerto Ricans etc.?

American Intervention in the Caribbean and Central America, 1901–1914

- **The United States often used military intervention to force the small nations of Central America and the Caribbean to repay loans owed to banks in Europe or the United States.**
- **The United States occupied Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Honduras, and Haiti on various occasions during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.**

- **The United States was particularly forceful in Panama, supporting the Panamanian rebellion against Colombia in 1903 and then building and controlling the Panama Canal.**

Effects of the Panama Canal:

- **U.S. gained control of important economic holdings in Latin America**
- **Latin Americans not totally independent**
- **U.S. gained interests in other islands for economic goals (Hawaii, Philippines)**