



U. S. History: From the Colonial Period to 1877

Dr. Edrene S. McKay ■ (501) 855-6836 ■ Email: esmnet@cox-internet.com

16.2 THE CIVIL WAR IN PERSPECTIVE

<p>TRANSITION PERIODS</p>	<p>At the beginning of this course, we discussed how the settlement of America and development of American institutions occurred during the TRANSITION PERIOD BETWEEN MEDIEVAL AND MODERN and how we were in a similar transition period now.</p>
<p>From Medieval to Modern</p>	<p>During that first transition period, we went from a highly stratified social system to one that was less stratified, from feudalism to democracy, from manorialism to capitalism, and from religious unity (Roman Catholicism) to religious diversity (Protestantism).</p>
<p>From Modern to PostModern</p>	<p>Let's look briefly at the CULTURAL SITUATION commentator Joan Chittister describes for us TODAY:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In our lifetimes, we have experienced major shifts in the national belief-value system. Family patterns have changed; sex roles have changed, and governments that talked freedom and justice and human rights have been overrun with one corruption after another. 2. This generation, too, saw scientific progress that was often as threatening as it was helpful. In just a few years, science changed life and changed death, changed family and changed sex, changed birth and changed war from struggle to annihilation. 3. In this era, military security became our highest priority, our greatest expenditure, and -- our scarcest commodity. Thanks to our "military security," indeed, we have created the end of the world and we are storing it in the corn-fields of Kansas. 4. In this same time frame, integration challenged white supremacy. And feminism challenged the white male system. 5. Now, too, great poverty in the midst of great affluence -- that 20% of Americans who either can't find full-time work, or the 6 million who work as many as 2 jobs without full-time pay -- challenge all the American myths ever made about freedom and justice for all. 6. And all of this has happened in a society where 10% of the world -- Western Europeans and North Americans -- consume, hoard, waste or control two-thirds of the resources of the world. <p>Indeed, she points out, SOCIAL CONSENSUS ON VALUES AND BELIEFS HAS BROKEN DOWN. An annual survey of college freshmen found that, unlike their predecessors, this period's college freshmen were less concerned about pollution, more approving of the death penalty, less obligated to help others in difficulty, considerably less concerned about developing a philosophy of life, and extremely more interested in being "very well off financially."</p> <p>And all of this while the government spent only 20 cents of every disposable dollar on human resources -- education, employment, job training, social services, and health -- but spent 64 cents of every disposable dollar on the military.</p> <p>Indeed, she explains, the spirit is dying in the most church-going nation in the world. The</p>

<p>Anthony F.C. Wallace's Theory of REVITALIZATION</p>	<p>current spiritual-cultural dilemma looms large and clear: INDIVIDUALISM RUNS RAMPANT -- at a time when GLOBAL COMMUNITY IS URGENT if both this planet and its peoples are to be saved.</p> <p>Our current spiritual dilemma, then, lies IN HOW TO LINK THE PERSONAL WITH THE PUBLIC dimensions of life in a world fiercely private and dangerously public at the same time.</p> <p>The anthropologist ANTHONY F. C. WALLACE teaches that major transformations of thought and behavior happen in a society when what was once a common set of religious/philosophical understandings have become impossible to sustain.</p>
<p>Individual Stress</p>	<p>At that point, Wallace says, the society undergoes a "REVITALIZATION MOVEMENT" of FOUR MAJOR STAGES: Stage one, Wallace teaches is a period of serious <u>INDIVIDUAL STRESS</u>. In this stage people begin to question what the generation before them took for granted -- about the nature of family or the morality of racism, for instance.</p>
<p>Social Stress</p>	<p>In stage two, wide-reaching <u>SOCIAL STRESS</u> becomes apparent. People begin to decide that their problems aren't personal. Their problems, they decide, are a result of failure in the anchor institutions they had depended on for stability and direction: the churches, the schools, the government, they argue, are out of tune and remote, corrupt and corrupting.</p>
<p>Nativist or Traditionalist Movement</p>	<p>In stage three of the revitalization process, people agree that there's a problem but they can't agree on how to cope with it: some want to change the system entirely; some want to send in the troops to maintain it. And they quarrel and divide and blame authority. During this stage, a <u>NATIVIST OR TRADITIONALIST MOVEMENT</u> arises. Traditionalists argue that the danger has come from the failure of the people to adhere to old beliefs and values and behavior patterns. They want the "old time religion" and they find scapegoats aplenty: the economy would be all right, you hear, if it weren't for unions; marriages would be all right if it weren't for feminism, and the country would be fine if it weren't for liberalism or welfare or Japanese industry.</p>
<p>New World View</p>	<p>But, then, in the fourth and final stage of a revitalization movement, Wallace teaches, a <u>NEW WORLD-VIEW</u> emerges. In simpler societies, the leadership for this rebuilding of society usually came from a single charismatic person. In complex cultures, like our own, the leadership for rebuilding must come from multiple spokespersons who bring people to new understandings about old values.</p>
<p>DISCUSSION QUESTIONS</p>	<p>Using Wallace's model of the four stages of revitalization (individual stress, social stress, nativist or traditionalist movement, new world-view) and your knowledge of United States history, give examples of how the Civil War experience (viewed as an effort to abolish slavery and slavery expansion), might be seen as a revitalization movement. Give examples in each of the following categories:</p> <p>Individual Stress: People begin to question what the generation before them took for granted (e.g., the morality of slavery)</p> <p>Social Stress: People begin to decide that their problems aren't personal but a result of failure in the institutions they had depended on for stability and direction. (e.g., the churches, the schools, the government that did not speak out against slavery).</p> <p>Nativist or Traditionalist Movement: People agree that there's a problem but they can't agree on how to cope with it. They quarrel and divide and blame authority. Traditionalists argue that the danger has come from the failure of the people to adhere to old beliefs and values and behavior patterns (e.g., the traditional way of life in the South).</p>

	<p>New World-View: In simpler societies, the leadership for this rebuilding of society usually came from a single charismatic person. In complex cultures, the leadership must come from multiple spokespersons who bring people to new understandings about old values (e.g., the political parties that objected to slavery expansion).</p> <p>Select one of the conditions that Chittister describes as part of today's cultural situation. Using your knowledge of the Civil War experience, discuss how an agent of constructive change might go about constructing a new world-view.</p>
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