



UNIT 7 CONTESTED TERRITORIES

SESSION PREPARATION

Read the following material before attending the workshop. As you read the excerpts and primary sources, take note of the **“Questions to Consider”** as well as any questions you have. The activities in the workshop will draw on information from the readings and the video shown during the workshop.

UNIT INTRODUCTION

The United States acquired vast territories between the time of the Revolution and the Civil War, paying a price economically, socially, and politically. This unit examines the forces that drove such rapid expansion, the settlers moving into these regions, and the impact on the Native Americans already there.

UNIT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading the text materials, participating in the workshop activities, and watching the video, teachers will understand

- the factors driving territorial expansion;
- the impact of this expansion on different groups and individuals;
- how territorial expansion contributed to increasing sectional tensions, which culminated in the Civil War.

UNIT FEATURES

- Textbooks excerpts (sections of U.S. history surveys, written for introductory college courses by history professors)
- Primary sources (documents and other materials created by the people who lived in the period), including an emigrant guide, public and private letters, an autobiography, a speech, and a painting
- A timeline at the end of the unit, which places important events in the history of western expansion

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CONTENT OVERVIEW

The settling of what some call the “western frontier” is a well-known part of U.S. history, but the term obscures some important processes and developments. Anglo American explorers, fur traders, and settlers of the nineteenth century did not find the vacant wilderness they expected in the West; instead, they found other peoples and lands that had been already inhabited and modified by Native Americans and Spaniards. However, many of the newcomers to these lands were coming north and east, not west. People from northern Mexico continued to move into what would become the Southwestern United States and, in the early 1850s, thousands of Chinese came to California. African Americans (enslaved and free) and immigrants from European nations also joined white Americans in these new lands. What seemed like a “frontier” to some was in reality a constantly changing borderland, where people from many backgrounds intersected.

Powerful political, economic, social, and biological forces shaped these interactions, though. Indian wars—and the dispossession that went with them—continued across the extensive land west of the Appalachian Mountains between 1800 and 1860. The Southwest was gained by force-of-arms in the Mexican-American War (1846–48), and the Anglo Americans who settled there often viewed Native Americans and Hispanics as inferior. Southern plantation agriculture, driven by the labor of millions of African American slaves, became more profitable during the early nineteenth century, causing planters to push into land traditionally held by Native American tribes. Indeed, questions over whether new U.S. territories and states would allow slavery or not played a major role in the debates, eventually leading to the Civil War. What some would label “expansion,” then, was to Native Americans and Mexicans “invasion” and “dispossession,” and a factor in expanding the institution of slavery.

The majority of newcomers to the contested West came voluntarily, drawn by the possibilities of trading, other forms of commerce, mining, ranching, and farming. For Anglo Americans, the American West symbolized boundless economic opportunity—though only a small minority of these arrivals ever became wealthy.

Theme 1:

Over the first six decades of the nineteenth century, multiple political, social, and economic factors drove American territorial expansion.

Theme 2:

Expansion affected different groups of people in a variety of ways — offering opportunities to some, and causing dispossession, loss, and conflict for many others.

Theme 3:

The struggle of incorporating new lands as states exacerbated existing sectional rivalries, leading to a series of political crises that culminated in the Civil War.

VIDEO RELATED MATERIALS

Historical Perspectives

When interpreting the term “westward expansion,” one must consider the perspective of the author and understand that expansion caused hardship for many. The invention of the cotton gin in 1793 fuelled an expansion of slavery into the Deep South, and led to the expulsion of several Indian tribes who had partially acculturated to the white ways of doing things. Slavery also played a large role in Texan independence and the Mexican-American War, exacerbating sectional tensions and pushing the nation towards war.

Faces of America

The acquisition of territory in the West was a process of dispossessing both Native Americans, who were the original inhabitants, and European groups that had settled there. At the same time, the West offered opportunity, attracting new groups that exploited its natural resources.

Black Hawk was one of several Sauk leaders who rejected white settlement in what would become Illinois. He eventually withdrew across the Mississippi River but returned in 1832 with several hundred followers in search of food.

Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo was a well-educated and wealthy Californio, who hoped that the U.S. would take over California. After the U.S. acquired California, however, Vallejo was imprisoned, and eventually lost most of his land and fortune.

Yee Ah Tye came to California from China. Although he faced great prejudice, his knowledge of English set him apart and made him a leader in the Chinese community.

Hands on History

Archaeologist Eric Blind works at the Presidio of San Francisco. He believes that archaeology offers an opportunity to “democratize the past” by studying all people’s lives. He relies on technology to create three-dimensional images of the rooms he excavates, so that subsequent generations of researchers can view them as he did.



THEME ONE

Theme One: Over the first six decades of the nineteenth century, multiple political, social, and economic factors drove American territorial expansion.

Overview

Before the Revolution, Great Britain attempted to keep colonists from moving across the Appalachian Mountains and into the frontier, where they might incite costly conflicts with Native Americans and grow still more independent. This repression was one several colonial grievances that led to the American Revolution. After the war, thousands of Americans poured into the Ohio River Valley and other areas, where they seized and then farmed lands long controlled by native peoples.

This Anglo American expansion quickened from 1800 to 1860. The Louisiana Purchase more than doubled the young nation's size, and a treaty with Mexico added a vast expanse of land to the southwest. Thousands of ambitious planters, small farmers, traders and entrepreneurs, miners, and others sought their fortunes in these lands.

1. International Context for American Expansionism

For hundreds of years, explorers, soldiers, settlers, and missionaries had marched north from Mexico to explore and settle the lands lying beyond the Rio Grande and to spread Spanish culture to native peoples. Eventually, Spanish holdings included present-day Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah, western Colorado, California, and small parts of Wyoming, Kansas, and Oklahoma. Spanish rulers tried to keep foreigners out of its northern frontier areas but increasingly found this policy difficult to enforce. Not only was the area vast, but Spain itself was experiencing internal difficulties that weakened its hold on its New World colonies . . . In 1821, Mexico took advantage of Spain's difficulties and declared its independence from Spain.

[The northern half of Mexico contained only about 75,000 Spanish-speaking inhabitants. Native Americans were much more numerous, and most of them remained beyond Mexico's direct control.] While maintaining control of this distant region and its peoples would have been difficult under any circumstances, Mexico was not successful in forming a strong or a stable government until the 1860s. Wracked by financial, political, and military problems, Mexico was in a weak position to resist the avid American appetite for expansion.

North of California lay Oregon country, a vaguely defined area extending to Alaska. Russia, Spain, Great Britain, and Spain all had claims to Oregon, but negotiations with Russia and Spain in 1819 and 1824 left just the United States and Britain in contention for the territory. Joint British–American occupation, agreed upon in 1818 and 1827, delayed settling the boundary question . . . The future of Oregon would depend partly on how Britain, the world's richest and most powerful country, defined its interests there as Americans began to stream into Oregon in the 1840s.

Gary B. Nash and others, eds. *The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society*, 6th ed. (New York: Pearson Education, 2004), 442.

THEME ONE SECONDARY SOURCE

MEXICO IN 1821

The Mexican-American War would end with the United States acquiring the northern half of Mexico.

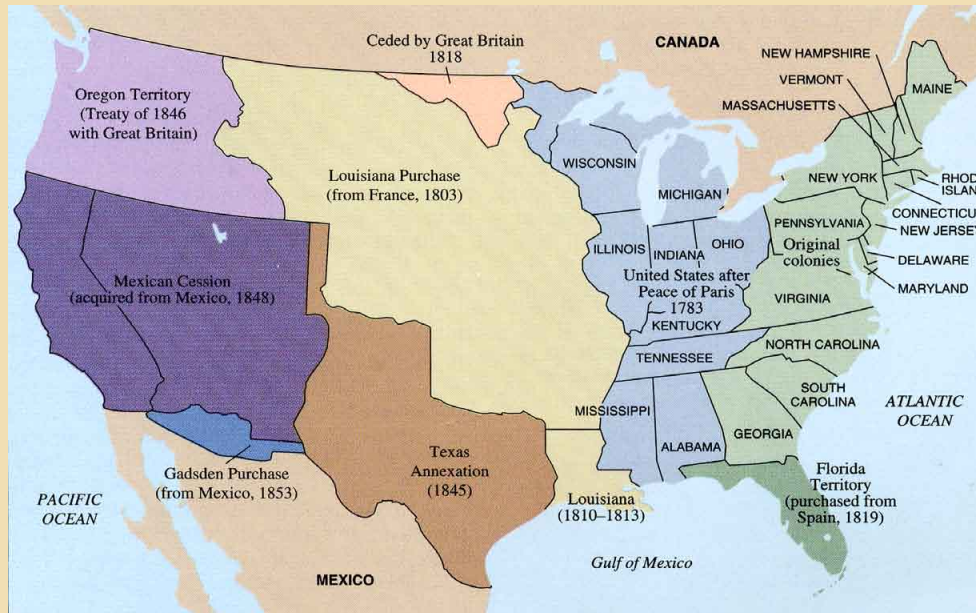


Item 3384
Nash et al., 444

THEME ONE SECONDARY SOURCE

UNITED STATES TERRITORIAL EXPANSION BY 1860

From the 1780s to the 1840s, the United States acquired land occupied by dozens of indigenous nations, and settled or claimed by Mexico, France, Spain, and Great Britain. What most surprises you about this map?



Item 3341
Nash et al., 447.

2. Manifest Destiny

Bursts of florid rhetoric accompanied territorial growth, and some Americans used the slogan “Manifest Destiny” to justify and account for it. The phrase, coined in 1845 by John L. O’Sullivan, editor of the Democratic Review, expressed the conviction that the country’s superior institutions and culture gave Americans a God-given right, even an obligation, to spread their civilization across the entire continent.

Nash et al., 445.

THEME ONE PRIMARY SOURCE

WESTWARD THE COURSE OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY

Questions to Consider

1. How did Leutze use light and other features of the landscape to convey a message? What is that message?
2. How are Native Americans depicted compared to whites? Women compared to men?



Item 1334
Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze, WESTWARD THE COURSE OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY
(1861). Courtesy of the Smithsonian American Art Museum,
Washington, DC/Art Resource, NY [ART27770].

See Appendix for larger image – pg. 51

Creator:	Emanuel Leutze
Context:	Leutze had been commissioned by Congress to create a mural depicting westward expansion.
Audience:	Members of Congress and the nation's general public
Purpose:	To celebrate the nation's expansion

Historical Significance:

Since at least as early as the nineteenth century, westward expansion has resided at the heart of American mythology and self-identity—in fiction, movies, popular and academic history, and art. “Westward the Course of Empire Takes Its Way” is an oil-on-canvas mural study depicting emigrants at the continental divide. Congress commissioned the mural in 1860 for the nation's Capitol building. German-born Emanuel Leutze had already painted another iconographic American scene: “Washington Crossing the Delaware.” He traveled in the West to prepare himself for creating this painting.

3. Early Interest in the West

[Early in the nineteenth century, many Native Americans and Mexicans were concerned over how quickly the United States was expanding.] Americans had penetrated the trans-Mississippi West long before the great migrations of the 1840s and 1850s. Commercial goals fueled early interest as traders first sought beaver skins in Oregon territory as early as 1811 and then bison robes prepared by the Plains tribes in the area around the upper Missouri River and its tributaries. Many of the men in the fur business married Indian women, thereby making valuable connections with Indian tribes involved in trapping . . .

In the Southwest, the collapse of the Spanish Empire gave American traders an opportunity they had long sought. Each year, caravans from “the States,” loaded with weapons, tools, and brightly colored calicoes, followed the Santa Fe Trail over the plains and mountains. New Mexico’s 40,000 inhabitants proved eager buyers, exchanging precious metals and furs for manufactured goods. Eventually, some “Anglos” settled there. Their economic activities prepared the way for military conquest. [Indeed, many leading Mexicans cooperated with the newcomers.]

To the south, in Texas, land for cotton rather than trade or missionary fervor attracted settlers and squatters in the 1820s at the very time that the Tejano population of 2,000 was adjusting to Mexican independence. The lure of cheap land drew more Americans to that area than to any other. By 1835, almost 30,000 Americans were living in Texas. They constituted the largest group of Americans living outside the nation’s boundaries at that time. [Mexico’s leaders hoped that these newcomers would become loyal and productive Mexican citizens.] . . .

. . . [In 1769, Spain began establishing California missions, where thousands of Indians labored, many who had been captured and were held against their will. Private Mexican citizens (Californios) gained control of this land and labor in the 1820s and 1830s, and developed a strong trade in cattle hides and tallow.]

[As the nineteenth century progressed, United States citizens were crossing the Mississippi River into lands occupied by Native Americans, the British, and Mexico.] By the 1840s, a growing volume of published information fostered dreams of possession. Government reports by explorers like Zebulon Pike and John C. Frémont provided detailed information about the interior, and guidebooks and news articles described the routes that fur trappers such as Jim Bridger, Kit Carson, and Jedediah Smith had mapped out. Going west was

THEME ONE EXCERPTS

clearly possible. Lansford Hastings's *Emigrants' Guide to Oregon and California* (1845) provided not only the practical information that emigrants would need but also the encouragement that heading for the frontier was the right thing to do.

Hastings's belief that Americans would obtain rights to foreign holdings in the West came true within a decade. In the course of the 1840s, the United States, through war and diplomacy, acquired Mexico's territories in the Southwest and on the Pacific (1,193,061 square miles, including Texas) as well as title to the Oregon country up to the 49th parallel (another 285,580 square miles).

Nash et al., 445–46.

EXCERPTED FROM *THE EMIGRANTS' GUIDE TO OREGON AND CALIFORNIA*
BY LANSFORD W. HASTINGS

Questions to Consider

1. Do Hastings's descriptions ring true? Why or why not?
2. What aspects of the area does he dwell on? What aspects does he ignore?

The portion of this section, which is found south of the Columbia river, contains much the most extensive and productive plains and valleys of all Oregon, which are in all respects, by far, the most valuable portions of that country. The most extensive valley here found, is the Wallamette valley, which lies upon the Wallamette river, and is about one hundred and fifty miles in length, and thirty or forty in width, on each side of the river. It is a very beautiful and productive valley, and as it is well timbered, well watered, and as it yields a superabundance of all the grasses, and the various other kinds of vegetation, it is admirably suited to agricultural, and grazing purposes. In the vicinity, and northwest from this valley, are the Fualatine plains, which are about fifty miles in length, and fifteen in width. These are equal in beauty and productiveness, if not superior to the Wallamette valley. They produce the various kinds of vegetation, with much profusion, and they are very well timbered, and well watered; hence their adaptation to the purposes of grazing and farming, are readily seen.

Lansford Hastings, *The Emigrants' Guide to Oregon and California*. 1st ed. (Cincinnati: George Conclin, 1845). E-book available from www.forbesbookclub.com/bookpage.asp?prod_cd=ICVLC (2001).

Creator:	Lansford Hastings
Context:	Thousands of people east of the Mississippi River considered moving west in the 1840s, but they often did not know what to expect.
Audience:	Prospective emigrants
Purpose:	To persuade readers to come West and to prepare them for what they would find
Historical Significance:	
Lansford Hastings came to Oregon in 1842 and soon moved to California. He was one of the leading advocates of U.S. settlement of these areas, and his influential guide was published in 1845.	

4. Ways West

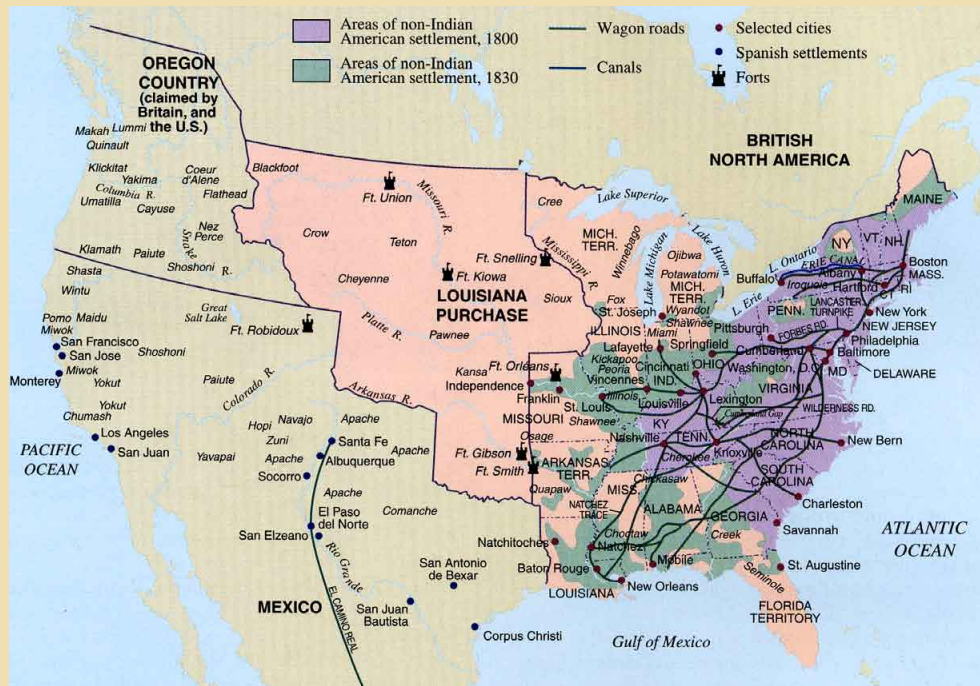
[Boosters like Hastings were aided by the federal government, which had encouraged westward expansion long before the 1840s.] The Land Act of 1820 enabled westerners to buy a minimum 80 acres at a price of \$1.25 an acre in cash—even in those days, a bargain homestead. Built with the help of government legal and financial aid, new roads and canals, steamboats, and, after the early 1830s, railroads facilitated migration. Between 1820 and 1860, the number of steamboats plying the Mississippi River jumped from 60 to more than 1000. Canals linked western producers to eastern consumers of grains and cattle and connected western consumers to eastern producers of manufactured goods. Shipping costs and times between Buffalo and New York shrank. Cities such as Rochester and Syracuse, New York, and Cincinnati, Ohio, flourished because of their geographic position along waterways.

Peter H. Wood and others, *Created Equal: A Social and Political History of the United States* (New York: Pearson Education Inc., 2003), 363.

THEME ONE SECONDARY SOURCE

NATIONAL EXPANSION AND THE MOVEMENT WEST TO 1830

Native Americans and Mexicans still outnumbered Anglo American settlers west of the Mississippi River in 1830.



Item 3342
Nash et al., 363.

5. Migrant's Motives

[People from the United States were drawn to the trans-Mississippi West by a variety of possibilities.] Thousands sought riches in the form of gold. Others anticipated making their fortune as merchants, shopkeepers, and peddlers. Some intended to speculate in land, acquiring large blocks of public lands and then selling them later to settlers at a handsome profit. The possibility of professional rewards gained from practicing law or medicine attracted still others.

Most migrants dreamed of bettering their life by cultivating the land. As one settler explained, “The motive that induced us to part with pleasant associates and dear friends of our childhood days, was to obtain from the government of the United States a grant of land that ‘Uncle Sam’ had promised.” Federal and state land policies made the acquisition of land increasingly alluring. Preemption acts during the 1830s and 1840s gave “squatters” the right to settle public lands before the government offered them for sale and then allowed them to purchase these lands at the minimum price once they came on the market. At the same time, the amount of land a family had to buy shrank to only 40 acres. In 1862, the Homestead Act went further by offering 160 acres of government land free to citizens or future citizens over 21 who lived on the property, improved it, and paid a small registration fee. Oregon’s land policy, which predated the Homestead Act, was even more generous. It awarded a single man 320 acres of free land and a married man 640 acres, provided he occupied his claim for four years and made improvements.

Others pursued religious or cultural missions in the West. Missionary couples like David and Catherine Blaine, who settled in Seattle when it was a frontier outpost, were determined to bring Protestantism and education west. Stirred by tales of the “deplorable morals” on the frontier, they willingly left the comforts of home to evangelize and educate westerners. Still others, like the Mormons, made the long trek to Utah to establish a society in conformity with their religious beliefs.

Nash et al., 454–55 (selections).

6. Mining Western Resources

The mineral riches of the trans-Mississippi West prompted people to leave their ordinary lives behind and set out to make their fortunes. News of the discovery of gold in 1848 in California swept the country like “wildfire,” according to one Missouri emigrant. Thousands raced to cash in on the bonanza. Within a year, California’s population ballooned from 14,000 to almost 100,000. By 1852, that figure had more than doubled.

California was the first and most dramatic of the western mining discoveries. But others followed. Rumors of gold propelled between 25,000 and 30,000 emigrants, many from California, to British Columbia in Canada in 1858. A year later, news of gold strikes in Colorado set off another rush for fortune. Precious metals unearthed in the Pacific Northwest early in the decade and in Montana and Idaho a few years later kept dreams alive and prospectors moving. In the mid-1870s, more gold, this time in the Black Hills of North Dakota, attracted hordes of fortune seekers.

Nash et al., 460–61 (selections).

THEME ONE PRIMARY SOURCE

EXCERPTED FROM A LETTER FROM ELIJAH ALLEN SPOONER TO HIS WIFE, 20 OCTOBER 1849, SACRAMENTO

Questions to Consider

1. What most surprised Spooner about California?
2. Does his depiction of California agree with depictions in popular culture of westward opportunity?

The prospects for obtaining gold are not as good as we had been led to anticipate, though it may appear better when the rain begins to fall We have dug but very little as yet having been prospecting and looking after our Cattle and building some log shanties for the winter &c. &c. This is one of the poorest rich countries that I ever heard of-So for as I have seen there is scarce an acre of land that is tillable. The summer drouth is alone sufficient to prevent almost every thing from growing (no water falling between the months of March and November) but there is but little that would be called good were this objection obviated - Prices of all kinds of provisions and labor are very high Fresh beef 25 to 35 cts pr lb. Flour 25 c lb, Sugar 25 c, Hams \$1..00 to 1..25¢ lb, Cheese \$1..00 lb Pork (Salt) 50c lb, Potatoes 40c lb, (seen none) Onions \$1..50 lb Molasses \$3..00 pr gall, Vinegar \$1..00 pr gall, Saleratus \$1..50 pr lb Coffee 15¢. Bro. Sugar 15 to 18¢ and washing 2/- to 4/- a piece Mechanics get for their labor from 10 to 20 dollars pr day-Mr Gleason from Adrian I understand is clerking in Sacramento City (formerly Sutters Fort) for two hundred dolls pr month, this is considered rather low wages. The above quotations are mostly for a village near where we are, which is some 50 miles north east of Sacramento. We have some idea of going into the gardening business another season if we can find a suitable piece of land, and can make other arrangements to suit - Think it would be a more healthy employment than digging gold and probably as certainly profitable, as all kinds of vegeta-bles are extremely high, their cultivation having been almost entirely neglected Gold digging is becoming a more laborious business than formerly and though there is an obun-dance of it here, the country has been so overrun and the rich deposits worked out, that it is more precarious business than formerly and requires much harder toil. Indeed old miners say that ounces are as hard to be obtained now as pounds were a year ago - But I think we will manage to get hold of some of it before another year rolls round, if we are blessed with health and strength --

Elijah Spooner. "To His Wife." 20 Oct. 1849. Letter 8 in *Letters and Diary, 1849–1850* (Harold B. Lee Library. Provo, UT: Brigham Young University).

Creator:	Elijah Allen Spooner
Context:	Spooner was among thousands of hopeful gold miners who left their families for California.
Audience:	His wife
Purpose:	To reassure her, tell her of how he was doing, and to defend his decision

Historical Significance:

Many Americans of the mid-nineteenth century believed that gold was the shortest and surest route to great fortune. The discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill, in Central California, precipitated a stampede of hopeful miners from across and beyond North America. Elijah Allen Spooner was among them. He left his Michigan home in 1849 to travel overland. Below is a portion of one of the several letters he wrote to his wife during his absence. Spooner and his wife eventually settled in Kansas, where he farmed and held local offices.

7. White and Black Migrations in the South

[Newcomers created a much different economy and society in the fertile lands of the lower Mississippi River valley.] Seeking profits . . . from the worldwide demand for cotton, southerners migrated southwestward in huge numbers between 1830 and 1860. Southern farmers, like their northern counterparts, followed parallel migration paths westward. From the coastal states they trekked westward into the lower Midwest and down into the Lower South. By the 1830s, the center of cotton production had shifted from South Carolina and Georgia to Alabama and Mississippi. This process continued in the 1850s as southerners forged into Arkansas, Louisiana, and eastern Texas.

Nash et al., 375.

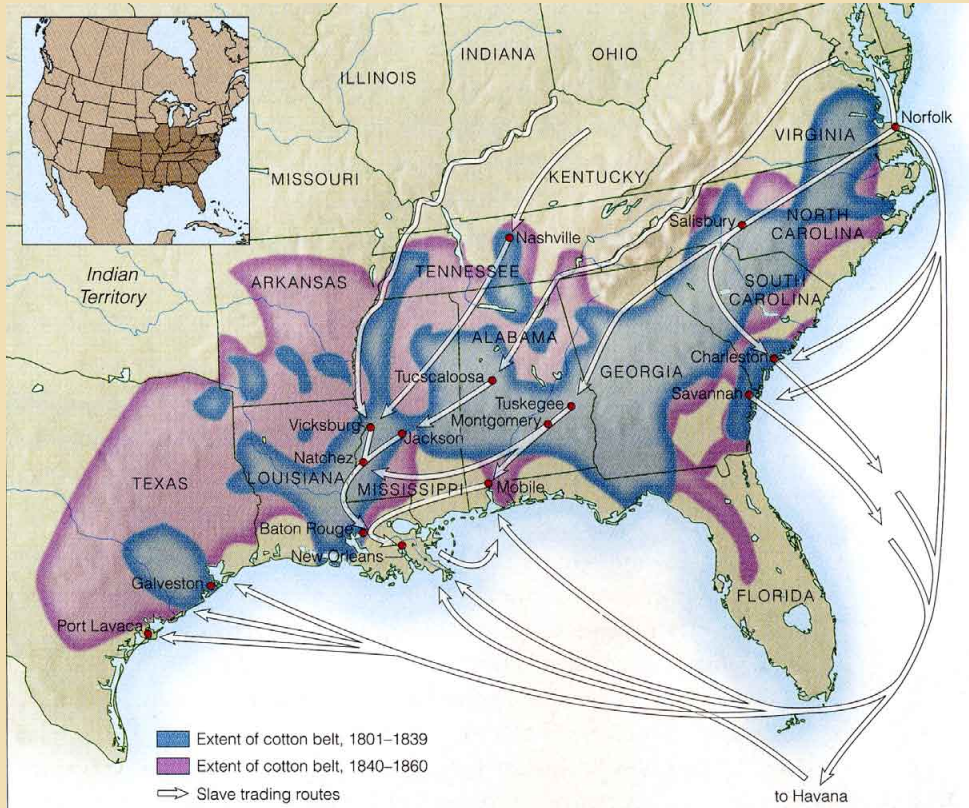
8. The Slave Trade

[The expansion of plantation agriculture meant the expansion of slavery.] Between 1800 and 1860, the average price of slaves quadrupled, revealing a growing demand for bound labor. The slave market responded accordingly. In the last three decades before the Civil War, approximately 670,000 people were bought and sold. As many as one out of every ten slave children in the Upper South was sold to the Lower South (many to cotton planters) between 1820 and 1860.

Wood et al., 398–400 (selections).

THEME ONE SECONDARY SOURCE

Owners in search of high profits in the emerging cotton belt expanded the extent of slavery and plantations between 1800 and 1860.



Item 3343
Wood et al., 399.

THEME ONE

Conclusion

The United States grew dramatically in size from 1803 to 1848, and a great deal of excitement accompanied that expansion. Waves of adventurers and settlers from the United States sought their fortunes in places that had been controlled by Native Americans or Mexicans. Many would be disappointed at what they found, and all encountered and often struggled with people who had made themselves at home on the land for decades, centuries, or millennia.

Questions to Consider

1. Was the pursuit of wealth the only significant motivation for those who settled the West?
2. What sorts of people were most likely to find what they were seeking in the West?

THEME TWO

Theme Two: This expansion affected many different groups of people in a variety of ways — offering opportunities to some, and causing dispossession, loss, and conflict for many others.

Overview

The movement of new peoples onto land that belonged to indigenous nations and Mexico created loss along with opportunity. Hundreds of thousands of Indians were dispossessed of their territories, livelihoods, and autonomy. Even groups like the Cherokee of the Deep South, who assimilated many elements of Anglo American culture, were forced from their lands, though not before ultimately challenging white encroachment in federal courts. Many Mexicans also lost their land, although the process of dispossession was more gradual and less complete. Hundreds of thousands of enslaved African Americans were taken west to Alabama, Mississippi, and beyond.

Many white men sought economic opportunity in the West, often through farming and mining. Many of them, however, did not find what they were looking for. Some groups of people—such as African Americans, Mexicans, Irish and eastern European immigrants, and women—faced steeper odds, for Western society was very race-conscious and male-dominated.

1. Judicial Federalism and the Limits of Law

With the expansion of cotton cultivation into upland Georgia in the early nineteenth century, white residents of that state increasingly resented the presence of their Cherokee neighbors.

Wood et al., 371.

2. Jackson's Indian Policy

By 1825, the Creek, Cherokee, and Chickasaw had each resolved to restrict land sales to government agents . . . Indian determination to resist pressure confronted white resolve to gain southern lands for cotton planting and mining. Jackson's election in 1828 boosted efforts to relocate the Indians west of the Mississippi . . .

. . . In 1830, the Cherokee were forbidden to defend their interests by bringing suits against whites into the Georgia courts or even by testifying in such cases. Without legal recourse on the state level, the Cherokee carried their protests to the Supreme Court. In 1832, Chief Justice Marshall supported their position in *Worcester v. Georgia*, holding that the Georgia law was "repugnant to the Constitution," adding that state laws could "have no force" over the Cherokee.

Legal victory could not, however, suppress white land hunger. With Jackson's blessing, Georgians defied the Court ruling. By 1835, harassment, intimidation, and bribery had persuaded a minority of chiefs to sign a removal treaty. That year, Jackson informed the Cherokee, "You cannot remain where you are. Circumstances . . . render it impossible that you can flourish in the midst of a civilized community." But when many Cherokee refused to leave, the nation split into two factions . . . In 1837 and 1838, the U.S. Army searched out and seized those opposed to migration westward and gathered them in stockades before herding them west to the "Indian Territory" in Oklahoma. An eyewitness described how the Cherokee trek began:

Families at dinner were startled by the sudden gleam of bayonets in the doorway and rose to be driven with blows and oaths along the weary miles of trail that led to the stockade. Men were seized in

THEME TWO EXCERPTS

their fields, or going along the road, women were taken from their [spinning] wheels and children from their play. In many cases, on turning for one last look as they crossed the ridge they saw their homes in flames, fired by the lawless rabble that followed on the heels of the soldiers to loot and pillage.

The removal, whose \$6 million cost was deducted from the \$9 million awarded the Cherokee for its eastern lands, killed perhaps a quarter of the 15,000 who set out. The Cherokee “Trail of Tears” followed those of other southeastern Indian nations. Tribal communities in the Old Northwest between 1821 and 1840 were also forced westward to Kansas and Oklahoma. The Chickasaw suffered as high a death rate as the Cherokee during their removal, while the Seminole and the Sac and Fox fought back. Although Jackson and the Removal Act of 1830 had promised to protect and forever guarantee the Indian lands in the West, within a generation those promises, like others before and since, would be broken.

Nash et al., 414–15.

THEME TWO SECONDARY SOURCE

INDIAN REMOVALS: SOUTHEAST AND MIDWEST

The Cherokee were one of many Indian nations forced to leave their lands and move across the Mississippi in the early 1800s.



Item 3344
Nash et al., 415.

THEME TWO PRIMARY SOURCE

SELECTIONS OF “INDIANS MEMORIAL (OF THE CHEROKEE LEGISLATURE)”

Questions to Consider

1. How did the memorial use history to make its argument?
2. Were the Cherokee trying to awaken white readers' pity or sense of justice?

To the Honorable, Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress Assembled:

The authorities of Georgia have recently and unexpectedly assumed a doctrine, horrid in its aspect; and fatal in its consequences to us, and utterly at variance with the laws of Nations of the United States, and the subsisting Treaties between us, and the known history of said state, of this Nation and of the United States. She claims the exercise of Sovereignty over this Nation, and has threatened and decreed the extension of her jurisdictional limits over our people. The Executive of the United States through the Secretary of War, in a letter to our Delegation of the 18th April last, has recognized this right to be abiding in, and possessed by the State of Georgia, by the Declaration of Independence and the Treaty of Peace concluded between the U. States and Great Britain in 1783, and which it is urged vested in her all the rights of sovereignty pertaining to Great Britain, which in time previously she claimed and exercised within the limits of what constituted the “thirteen United States.” It is a subject of vast importance to know whether the power of self Government abided in the Cherokee Nation at the discovery of America, three hundred and thirty seven years ago, and whether it was in any manner effected or destroyed by the Charters of European Potentates? It is evident from the facts deducible from known history, that the Indians were found here by the white man in the enjoyment of plenty and peace and all rights of soil and domain, inherited from their ancestors from time immemorial well furnished with Kings, Chiefs, and Warriors, and bulwarks of liberty and the pride of their race. Great Britain established with them relationships of friendship and alliance, and at no time did she treat them as subjects and as tenants at will to her power. In war she fought them as a separate people, and they resisted her as a Nation- In peace she spoke the language of friendship, and they replied in the voice of independence, and frequently assisted her as allies, at their choice, to fight her enemies in their own way and discipline subject to the control of their own chiefs and unaccountable to European officers and military law. Such was the connexion [sic] of their nation to

Creator:	Cherokee leaders
Context:	The state of Georgia was trying to force the Cherokee off of their (the Cherokees') land.
Audience:	White opinion makers and leaders
Purpose:	To persuade these people to intervene on behalf of the Cherokee

Historical Significance:

The Cherokee were well aware of the irony that U.S. citizens were requiring them to move aside for people considered more “civilized,” despite the fact that the Cherokee had adopted many elements of Anglo American life. Their familiarity with U.S. politics helped them create what they hoped would be persuasive arguments against the forced migration.

THEME TWO PRIMARY SOURCE

Great Britain, to wit, that of friendship and not allegiance, to the period of the Declaration of Independence by the United States, and during the revolutionary contest down to the Treaty of peace between the United States and Great Britain forty six years ago, when the latter abandoned all hopes of conquest, and at the same time abandoned her Cherokee allies to the difficulties in which they had been involved, either to continue the war or procure peace on the best terms they could, and close the scenes of carnage and blood, that had so long been witnessed and experienced by both parties. Peace was at last concluded at Hopewell in '85 by "the commissioners Plenipotentiary of the United States in Congress assembled." and the Cherokees were received "into favor and protection of the United States of America." It remains to be proved, under a view of all these circumstances, and the knowledge we have of history, how our right to self Government was effected and destroyed, by the Declaration of Independence which never noticed the subject of Cherokee Sovereignty, and the Treaty of Peace in '83, between Britain and the United States, to which the Cherokees were not a party, but maintained hostilities on their part to the Treaty of Hopewell afterwards concluded. If, as it is stated by the Hon. Secretary of War, the Cherokees were tenants at will, and were only permitted to enjoy possession of the soil to pursue game, and if the State of North Carolina and Georgia were sovereigns in truth and in right over us, why did President Washington send "commissioners Plenipotentiaries" to treat with the subjects of those States? Why did they permit the Chiefs and warriors to enter into treaty, when if they were subjects, they had grossly rebelled and revolted from their allegiance and why did not those sovereigns make their lives pay the forfeit of their guilt, agreeably to the law of said States. The answer must be plain,- they were not subjects, but a distinct Nation, and in that light viewed by Washington and by all the people of the union at that period.

Cherokee leaders, "Indians Memorial (of the Cherokee Legislature)" *Cherokee Phoenix and Indians' Advocate*, 2, no. 52 (April 14, 1830), page 1, col. 1b–5b to page 3, col. 1a.

THEME TWO PRIMARY SOURCE

EXCERPTED FROM *BLACK HAWK'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY*

Questions to Consider

1. What does this excerpt reveal about Sauk political structure and decision-making?
2. Why do you think Black Hawk wanted to dictate his life story?

The great chief at St. Louis having sent word for us to come down and confirm the treaty, we did not hesitate, but started immediately that we might smoke the peace pipe with him. On our arrival we met the great chiefs in council. They explained to us the words of our Great Father at Washington, accusing us of heinous crimes and many misdemeanors, particularly in not coming down when first invited. We knew very well that our Great Father had deceived us and thereby forced us to join the British, and could not believe that he had put this speech into the mouths of those chiefs to deliver to us. I was not a civil chief and consequently made no reply, but our civil chiefs told the commissioner that, "What you say is a lie. Our Great Father sent us no such speech, he knew that the situation in which we had been placed was caused by him." The white chiefs appeared very angry at this reply and said, "We will break off the treaty and make war against you, as you have grossly insulted us."

Our chiefs had no intention of insulting them and told them so, saying, "we merely wish to explain that you have told us a lie, without any desire to make you angry, in the same manner that you whites do when you do not believe what is told you." The council then proceeded and the pipe of peace was smoked.

Here for the first time, I touched the goose quill to the treaty not knowing, however, that, by the act I consented to give away my village. Had that been explained to me I should have opposed it and never would have signed their treaty, as my recent conduct will clearly prove.

What do we know of the manners, the laws, and the customs of the white people? They might buy our bodies for dissection, and we would touch the goose quill to confirm it and not know what we were doing. This was the case with me and my people in touching the goose quill for the first time.

Creator:	Black Hawk and editors
Context:	Black Hawk had just surrendered after many years of resisting white expansion onto his people's land.
Audience:	The general public
Purpose:	To explain the plight of his people and justify the choices he had made

Historical Significance:

Indian nations were also forced from the "Old Northwest," the lands between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River, during the first decades of the 1800s. Black Hawk (Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak) emerged by 1808 as a leading Sauk opponent of U.S. expansion in what would become western Illinois. He fought many battles against U.S. settlers and soldiers, and did not surrender until 1832. He dictated his autobiography a year later to a French-speaking interpreter. This version was then edited by an English-speaking newspaperman, who had it published. This excerpt describes an 1816 meeting with representatives of the United States.

THEME TWO PRIMARY SOURCE

We can only judge of what is proper and right by our standard of what is right and wrong, which differs widely from the whites, if I have been correctly informed. The whites may do wrong all their lives, and then if they are sorry for it when about to die, all is well, but with us it is different. We must continue to do good throughout our lives.

If we have corn and meat, and know of a family that have none, we divide with them. If we have more blankets than we absolutely need, and others have not enough, we must give to those who are in want.

Black Hawk, *Black Hawk's Autobiography*, ed. Roger L. Nichols. 1st ed. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1964), 86.

3. Living in the West

[The settlers who moved west to occupied land taken from Indian nations were often disappointed to find that life on the frontier was often not what they had imagined it would be.] As they turned toward building a new life, they naturally drew on their experiences back East. “Pioneers though we are, and proud of it, we are not content with the wilds . . . with the idleness of the land, the rudely construct[ed] log cabin,” one Oregon settler explained. “Pioneers are not that kind of folks.”

Nash et al., 458–60.

4. Farming in the West

[Women were particularly eager to settle down. Many, like this wife, resented men who never seemed satisfied with present circumstances.] When her husband announced that they were to move once again, she commented, “Perhaps I was not quite so enthusiastic as he. I seemed to have heard all this before.”

Nash et al., 458–60.

THEME TWO PRIMARY SOURCE

LETTER FROM POLLY WILSON MCGEE TO JOSHUA LACY WILSON

Questions to Consider

1. What does she hope to gain from her brother?
2. Is she optimistic about the future of her neighborhood?

February 24 1814

Dear Brother it is a long time since I had a line from you but I hope that this will not always be the case we at present contemplate a peace with the savage this will furnish us with opportunities of conveyance and a letter from you or Sister Sally or any of your children that can write would be a comfort to me in this wilderness those that live under the stated means of grace can form but faint Ideas of the darkness that pervades this frontier and I hope of our Lives are spared a few years that you will come and preach or drift for people is moving out dayly the runaways will soon all be here again with a great many others but we can place no confidence in those that fled a number of them I heard howling and praising god for shaking the earth and wishing he would do it a gain for the sooner that nature would under go her last convulsive shotk the sooner their souls would be at rest but I soon found that those people were in reality as feard to die as I was for as soon as the Indians come and killed one man they rose up with one consent and fled to find a place of safety leaving a part of their stuff behind them

Polly W Mcgee

(Page 2)

Last Sitting of the Legislative we were struck of into the new county they call it Washington the county seat near [Rees Lick?] is called Mount Vernon —

My love to Sally all you and all your children — —

PWM

Mary Ann Wilson McGee, *Letter From Polly Wilson McGee to Joshua Lacy Wilson* (1814). Reuben T. Durrett Collection on Kentucky and the Ohio River Valley. Joshua Lacy Wilson Papers (Chicago: Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library).

Creator:	Mary Ann Wilson McGee
Context:	Women living in places that had been recently settled by whites, commonly wrote letters to family members they never expected to see again.
Audience:	Her brother
Purpose:	To keep in touch with her family
Historical Significance: Men and women faced a number of challenges in settling the frontier—from missing friends and relatives, to the difficulties to setting up a household in the wilderness. This letter from an Indiana woman to her brother, written during the winter of 1814, suggests these difficulties.	

5. Mining Western Resources

Like migrants who planned to establish farms in the West, the “forty-niners” were mostly young (in 1850, over half the people in California were in their twenties). Unlike pioneers headed for rural homesteads, however, the gold seekers were unmarried, predominantly male, and heterogeneous. Of those pouring into California in 1849, about 80 percent came from the United States, 8 percent from Mexico, and 5 percent from South America.. The rest came from Europe and Asia. [In California, they joined thousands of Californios and tens of thousands of California Indians.] California was thus one of the most diverse places in the country. Few of its residents, however, were as interested in settling the West as they were in extracting its precious metals and returning home rich. [That diversity proved problematic for U.S. settlers, and they quickly instituted laws that discriminated against Indians, Mexicans, and others.] . . .

[As the earlier letter from the California miner suggests, the merchants who supplied miners with food and supplies had a much more reliable income than the miners did.]

Although the lucky few struck it rich or at least made enough money to return home with their pride intact, miners’ journals and letters reveal that many made only enough to keep going. Wrote one, “Everybody in the States who has friends here is always writing for them to come home. Now they all long to go home But it is hard for a man to leave . . . with nothing . . . I have no pile yet, but you can bet your life I will never come home until I have something more than when I started.” The problem was that easily mined silver and gold deposits soon ran out. Chinese miners proved adept at finding what early miners overlooked But even their patient efforts brought decreasing rewards. The remaining rich deposits lay deeply embedded in rock or gravel. Extraction required cooperative efforts, capital, technological experience, and expensive machinery. Eventually, mining became a corporate industrial concern, with miners as wage earners

The Mexicans, South Americans, Chinese, and small numbers of blacks seeking their fortunes in California soon discovered that although they contributed substantially to California’s growth, racial discrimination flourished. At first, American miners hoped to force foreigners of color out of the gold fields altogether. But an attempt to declare mining illegal for foreigners failed. A high tax on foreign miners proved more successful.

THEME ONE EXCERPTS

Black Americans found that their skin color placed them in a situation akin to that of foreigners. Deprived of the vote, forbidden to testify in civil or criminal cases involving whites, excluded from the bounties of the homestead law, blacks led a precarious existence . . .

For the Native American tribes of the interior, the mining rushes were disasters. Accustomed to foraging for food, they found fish and game increasingly scarce as miners diverted streams, hunted game, or drove it from mining areas altogether. When Indians responded by raiding mining camps, miners erupted with fury. They stalked and killed native men and women, sometimes collecting bounties offered by some mining communities for their scalps. Indian women were raped; children were kidnapped and offered as apprentices.

Subjected not only to violence but to white disease, Indians died by the thousands. In 1849, there had been about 150,000 Indians in California. In just over 20 years, numbers had tumbled to fewer than 30,000.

Nash et al., 460–64.

THEME TWO PRIMARY SOURCE

EXCERPTED FROM A LETTER BY CHINESE MERCHANT NORMAN ASING, IN RESPONSE TO CALIF. GOV. JOHN BIGLER'S SPEECH (1852)

Questions to Consider

1. How did Asing address racism?
2. Did Asing effectively use history in making his argument?

To His Excellency Gov. Bigler

I am not much acquainted with your logic, that by excluding population from this State you enhance its wealth. I have always considered that was wealth; particularly a population of producers, of men who by the labor of their hands or intellect, enrich the warehouses or the granaries of the country with the products of nature and art. You are deeply convinced you say "that to enhance the prosperity and preserve the tranquility of this State, Asiatic immigration must be checked." This, your Excellency, is but one step towards a retrograde movement of the government . . .

It was one of the principal causes of quarrel between you (when colonies) and England; when the latter pressed laws against emigration, you looked for immigration; it came, and immigration made you what you are your nation what it is. It transferred you at once from childhood to manhood and made you great and respectable throughout the nations of the earth. I am sure your Excellency cannot, if you would, prevent your being called the descendant of an immigrant, for I am sure you do not boast of being a descendant of the red man! But your further logic is more reprehensible. You argue that this is a republic of a particular race that the Constitution of the United States admits of no asylum to any other than the pale face. This proposition is false in the extreme, and you know it. The declaration of your independence, and all the acts of your government, your people, and your history are all against you.

We Are Not a Degraded Race

It is true, you have degraded the Negro because of your holding him in involuntary servitude, and because for the sake of union in some of your states such was tolerated, and amongst this class you would endeavor to place us; and no doubt it would be pleasing to some would-be freemen to mark the brand of servitude upon us. But we would beg to remind you that when your nation was a wilderness, and the nation from which you sprung barbarous, we exercised

Creator:	Norman Asing
Context:	The California government imposed discriminatory laws on people from China, and many whites advocated banning the Chinese altogether.
Audience:	The general public of California
Purpose:	To persuade them to tolerate the Chinese

Historical Significance:

Many white Californians demanded a ban on Chinese immigration soon after the gold rush began, as they resented competition from people they regarded as foreign and inferior. Norman Asing, owner of a San Francisco restaurant, wrote this open letter to a newspaper to rebut Governor John Bigler's criticism of the Chinese in California.

THEME TWO PRIMARY SOURCE

most of the arts and virtues of civilized life; that we are possessed of a language and a literature, and that men skilled in science and the arts are numerous among us; that the productions of our manufactories, our sail, and workshops, form no small share of the commerce of the world; and that for centuries, colleges, schools, charitable institutions, asylums, and hospitals, have been as common as in your own land . . .

And we beg to remark, that so far as the history of our race in California goes, it stamps with the test of truth the fact that we are not the degraded race you would make us. We came amongst you as mechanics or traders, and following every honorable business of life. You do not find us pursuing occupations of degrading character, except you consider labor degrading, which I am sure you do not; and if our countrymen save the proceeds of their industry from the tavern and the gambling house to spend it on farms or town lots or on their families, surely you will admit that even these are virtues. You say “you desire to see no change in the generous policy of this government as far as regards Europeans.” It is out of your power to say, however, in what way or to whom the doctrines of the Constitution shall apply. You have no more right to propose a measure for checking immigration, than you have the right of sending a message to the Legislature on the subject. As far as regards the color and complexion of our race, we are perfectly aware that our population have been a little more tan than yours.

I have the honor to be your Excellency’s very obedient servant.

Norman Asing

Norman Asing, “To His Excellency Gov. Bigler,” *Daily Alta California* (San Francisco: May 5, 1852).
http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/asian_voices/voices_display.cfm?id=13.

6. Overwhelming the Mexican Settlers

[Mexicans (Californios) had lived in California long before Anglos had arrived but, like the Chinese, faced a great deal of discrimination once the gold rush began.]

In 1848, there were 7,000 Californios and about twice as many Anglos. By 1860, the Anglo population had ballooned to 360,000. Hispanic-Americans were hard-pressed to cope with the rapid influx of outsiders . . . Taxes and terrorism ultimately succeeded in forcing most Spanish speakers out of the mines and established the racial contours of the new California.

. . . As one woman explained, her mother had been “totally unprepared for the problems that came with American rule. Not only was the language foreign to her, but also the concept of property taxes, mortgages and land title regulations.” Landowners found themselves paying American lawyers large fees, often in land, and borrowing at high interest rates to pay for court proceedings. A victory at court often proved hollow when legal expenses forced owners to sell their lands to pay debts . . .

For working-class Hispanic Americans, who became laborers for Anglo farmers or mining or railroad companies, the arrival of Anglos was the start of a steadily deteriorating situation. Whatever their employment, Hispanic Americans earned less and did more unpleasant jobs than Anglo workers. By 1870, the average Hispanic-American worker’s property was worth only about one-third of what its value had been 20 years earlier.

Nash et al., 471–72.

THEME TWO

Conclusion

One of the ironies of Western settlement is that great opportunities for Anglo Americans were accompanied by great losses for Native Americans and Mexicans. Groups like the Cherokee, who had adopted much of white culture, were expelled from the Deep South, where westward expansion was accompanied by plantation agriculture and the expansion of slavery. In the West, the Californios, upper-class Spanish speaking residents of California, were quickly pushed aside. So were the Native Americans who lived in or around the gold fields. Even groups who had adopted much of white culture, such as the Cherokee, were expelled from the Deep South, where westward expansion was accompanied by plantation agriculture and the expansion of slavery.

Questions to Consider

1. How did the United States justify westward expansion?
2. How did Native Americans and Mexicans resist westward expansion?

THEME THREE

Theme Three: Over the first six decades of the nineteenth century, multiple political, social, and economic factors drove American territorial expansion.

Overview

Westward expansion led to an increase in both slavery and sectionalism, issues that threatened to divide the nation ever since its founding. Southerners worried that an infusion of free states would tilt the balance of power in Congress as anti-slavery sentiment grew in the North. Northerners, meanwhile, were alarmed by Southern plans for adding slave states, and by the expansion of slavery into Texas and other parts of the Deep South. Yet, the majority of citizens living in most of the West strongly opposed slavery.

1. The Specter of Sectionalism

Since 1789, politicians had labored to keep the explosive issue of slavery tucked safely beneath the surface of political life, for they understood how quickly it could jeopardize the nation. Their fears were borne out in 1819 when Missouri's application for admission to the Union raised anew the question of slavery's expansion. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 had prohibited slavery north of the Ohio River while allowing its expansion to the south. But Congress had said nothing about slavery's place in the vast Louisiana territory west of the Mississippi.

. . . Southerners were adamant that the vast area must remain open to their slave property and were determined to preserve the equal balance of slave and free states in the Senate. Already by 1819, the more rapidly growing population of the free states had given them a 105-to-81 advantage in the House of Representatives. Equality in the Senate offered the only sure protection for southern interests. Northerners, however, vowed to keep the territories west of the Mississippi open to free labor, which meant closing them to slavery.

For nearly three months, Congress debated the issue. During much of the time, free blacks, listening intently to northern antislavery speeches, filled the House gallery. "This momentous question," worried the aged Jefferson, "like a fire-bell in the night, [has] awakened and filled me with terror." Northerners were similarly alarmed. The Missouri question, declared the editor of the New York Daily Advertiser, "involves not only the future character of our nation, but the future weight and influence of the free states. If now lost—it is lost forever."

In the end, compromise prevailed. Missouri gained admission as a slave state, while Maine (formerly part of Massachusetts) came in as a counterbalancing free state. A line was drawn west from Missouri at latitude 36° 30' to the Rocky Mountains. Lands [south] of that line would be open to slavery; areas to the [north] of it would not . . .

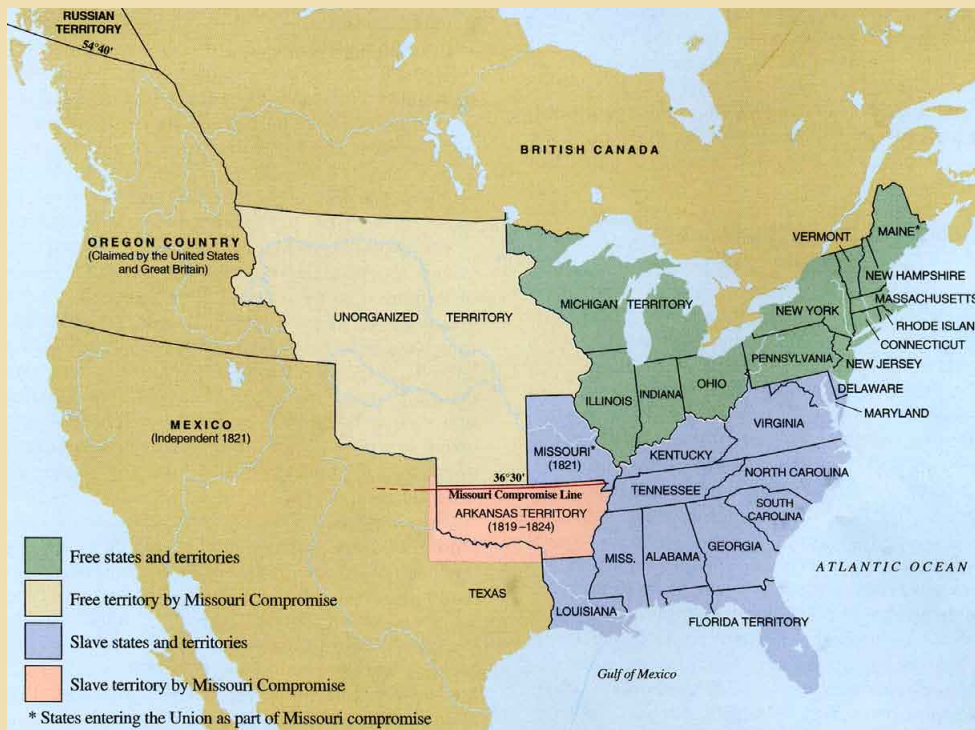
For the moment, the issue of slavery's expansion had been put to rest. It would not be long, however, before the problem would set North and South even more violently against each other.

Nash et al., 324–26.

THEME THREE SECONDARY SOURCE

MISSOURI COMPROMISE OF 1820

The Missouri Compromise sought to resolve disagreements over whether new states would be slave or free by adding one slave state (Missouri) and one free state (Maine). It also drew a line that would determine whether future states would be slave or free. What does this map suggest about the potential for future states?



Item 3345
Nash et al., 325.

2. Free Soil or Constitutional Protection?

When the war with Mexico broke out in 1846, it seemed likely that the United States would acquire new territories in the Southwest. Would they be slave or free? Philadelphia Congressman David Wilmot added an amendment to a war appropriations bill declaring that “neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall ever exist” in any territories acquired from Mexico. The debates in Congress over the Wilmot Proviso were significant because legislators voted not as Whigs and Democrats but as northerners and southerners.

. . . [Those who opposed slavery did so for many reasons.] For some, slavery was a moral evil to be attacked and destroyed because it trampled on principles of liberty and equality. But for many northern white farmers looking to move westward, the threat of economic competition with an expanding system of large-scale slave labor was even more serious. Nor did they wish to compete for land with free blacks. As Wilmot put it, his proviso was intended to preserve the area for the “sons of toil, of my own race and own color.” Other northerners supported the Proviso as a means of restraining what seemed to them the growing political power and “insufferable arrogance” of the “spirit and demands of the Slave Power.”

Opposed to the free-soil position were the arguments of Senator John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, expressed in several resolutions introduced in the Senate in 1847. Not only did Congress lack the constitutional right to exclude slavery from the territories, Calhoun argued, but it had a positive duty to protect it. The Wilmot Proviso, therefore, was unconstitutional, as was the Missouri Compromise and any other federal act that prevented slaveholders from taking their slave property into the territories of the United States.

Economic, political, and moral considerations stood behind the Calhoun position. Many southerners hungered for new cotton lands in the West and Southwest, even in Central America and the Caribbean. Politically, southerners feared that northerners wanted to trample on their liberties—namely, the right to protect their institutions against abolitionism. Southern leaders saw the Wilmot Proviso as a moral issue that raised questions about basic republican principles. One congressman called it “treason to the Constitution,” and Senator Robert Toombs of Georgia warned that if Congress passed the proviso, he would favor disunion rather than “degradation.”

Nash et al., 478–79.

THEME THREE PRIMARY SOURCE

“SPOT” RESOLUTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES [1] DECEMBER 22, 1847

Questions to Consider

1. What most offends Lincoln about the war?
2. In what ways does Lincoln suggest that the war against Mexico is contrary to the values of the United States?

First: Whether the spot of soil on which the blood of our citizens was shed, as in his messages declared, was, or was not, within the territories of Spain, at least from the treaty of 1819 until the Mexican revolution.

Second: Whether that spot is, or is not, within the territory which was wrested from Spain, by the Mexican revolution.

Third: Whether that spot is, or is not, within a settlement of people, which settlement had existed ever since long before the Texas revolution, until it's inhabitants fled from the approach of the U.S. Army.

Fourth: Whether that settlement is, or is not, isolated from any and all other settlements, by the Gulf of Mexico, and the Rio Grande, on the South and West, and by wide uninhabited regions on the North and East.

Fifth: Whether the People of that settlement, or a majority of them, or any of them, had ever, previous to the bloodshed, mentioned in his messages, submitted themselves to the government or laws of Texas, or of the United States, by consent, or by compulsion, either by accepting office, or voting at elections, or paying taxes, or serving on juries, or having process served upon them, or in any other way.

Sixth: Whether the People of that settlement, did, or did not, flee from the approach of the United States Army, leaving unprotected their homes and their growing crops, before the blood was shed, as in his messages stated; and whether the first blood so shed, was, or was not shed, within the inclosure of the People, or some of them, who had thus fled from it.

Creator:	Abraham Lincoln
Context:	Polk had successfully brought the United States into a war with Mexico.
Audience:	Congress and his Illinois constituents
Purpose:	To persuade people to oppose the war

Historical Significance:

Many intellectuals, particularly in New England, were very critical of the Mexican War, and not just because it was likely to expand slavery. Opponents of the war argued that the nation was acting immorally in declaring war on and invading Mexico.

Abraham Lincoln, a young Congressman from Illinois, also argued against Polk's decision for war. Lincoln's questioning of the war prompted many of his constituents to question his patriotism, and he decided not to run for re-election. He would emerge a decade later as one of the nation's leading opponents to the geographic expansion of slavery.

THEME THREE PRIMARY SOURCE

Seventh: Whether our citizens, whose blood was shed, as in his messages declared, were, or were not, at that time, armed officers, and soldiers, sent into that settlement, by the military order of the President through the Secretary of War---and

Eighth: Whether the military force of the United States, including those citizens, was, or was not, so sent into that settlement, after Genl. Taylor had, more than once, intimated to the War Department that, in his opinion, no such movement was necessary to the defence or protection of Texas.

[1] AD, DNA RG 233 HR 30 A B 3 (1); Congressional Globe, Thirtieth Congress, First Session, 1848, p. 64. The resolutions were read and laid on the table. The text of the resolutions as printed in the Globe was considerably altered from Lincoln's original, which is here followed in detail.

Reprinted in Roy P. Basler, ed., *Abraham Lincoln: His Speeches and Writings* (Cleveland, Ohio: World Publishing Company, 1946), 199–201.

3. The Compromise of 1850

[The objections raised by Lincoln and others of course did not stop the Mexican-American War, a conflict that ended with the United States acquiring a great expanse of territory and exacerbated divisive debates on the expansion of slavery. Louisiana's Zachary Taylor, a Whig, won the presidential election in 1848 by avoiding the slavery question. But California was soon ready for statehood, a move that threatened to disturb the balance established by the Compromise of 1820 between North and South.]

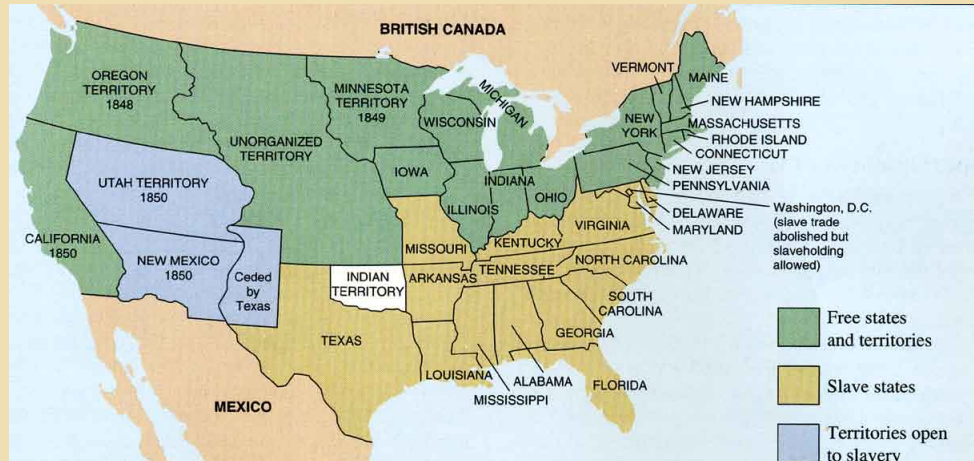
The unresolved status of the Mexican cession in the Southwest posed a second problem. The longer the area remained unorganized, the louder local inhabitants called for an application of either the Wilmot Proviso or the Calhoun doctrine. The Texas–New Mexico boundary was also disputed, with Texas claiming everything east of Santa Fe. Northerners feared that Texas might split into five or six slave states.

. . . [Senator Henry Clay, long the leading light of the Whig Party, fashioned the careful Compromise of 1850.] First, California entered the Union as a free state, ending the balance of free and slave states, 16 to 15. Second, territorial governments were organized in New Mexico and Utah, letting local people decide whether to permit slavery. This introduced the principle of popular sovereignty into the debate over the extension of slavery. The Texas–New Mexico border was settled, denying Texas the disputed area. In return, the federal government gave Texas \$10 million to pay debts owed to Mexico. Third, the slave trade, but not slavery, was abolished in the District of Columbia. [Fourth, the Fugitive Slave Act made it much easier for slave owners to recapture escaped slaves who had fled to the North.]

Nash et al., 482–84.

THEME THREE SECONDARY SOURCE

The Compromise of 1850 tried to maintain a balance between free and slave states and territories. Does the map suggest that the compromise was balanced?



Item 3346
Nash et al., 483.

4. The Kansas–Nebraska Act

[The West figured prominently in Congressional debates over slavery in 1854, too. Stephen Douglas, a Democrat, proposed a bill stating that the question of slavery in Nebraska Territory (including Kansas) would be determined by popular sovereignty (vote of the white male citizens).] . . .

. . . Many southerners, especially neighboring Missouri slaveholders, opposed organizing the Nebraska Territory unless it were open to slavery. The problem, as Douglas knew well, was that the entire Nebraska Territory lay north of the line where the Missouri Compromise had prohibited slavery.

. . . Eventually his bill passed, but not without seriously damaging the political party system . . . What began as a way of avoiding conflict ended up in violence over whether Kansas would enter the Union slave or free. What began as a way of strengthening party lines over issues ended up destroying one party (Whigs), planting deep, irreconcilable divisions in another (Democrats), and creating two new ones (Know-Nothings and Republicans).

Nash et al., 486–87.

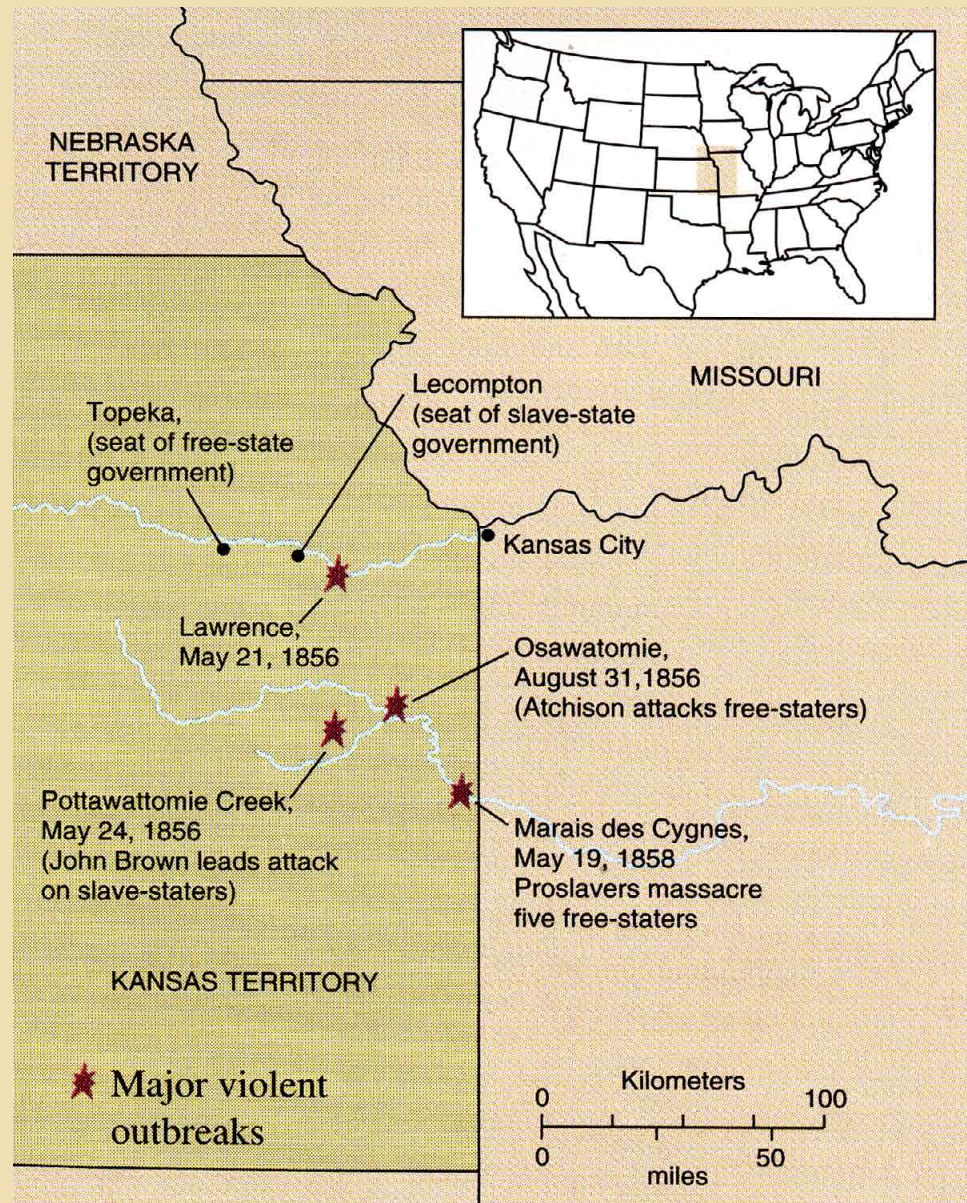
5. Bleeding Kansas

[The possibility of slavery in Kansas drew many proponents and opponents of slavery to the territory, for popular sovereignty would determine whether Kansas would become slave or free. Violence soon followed.] In May 1856, supported by a pro-southern federal marshal, a mob entered Lawrence, smashed the offices and presses of a free-soil newspaper, fired several cannonballs into the Free State Hotel, and destroyed homes and shops. Three nights later, believing he was doing God's will, John Brown led a small New England band, including four of his sons, to a proslavery settlement near Pottawatomie Creek. There they dragged five men out of their cabins and, despite the terrified entreaties of their wives, hacked them to death with swords.

Nash et al., 493–94.

THEME THREE SECONDARY SOURCE

Violence between free-state and slave-state factions erupted in eastern Kansas in the spring and summer of 1856.



Item 3356
Nash et al., 494.

THEME THREE

Conclusion

It could be argued that the Civil War began not at Fort Sumter, but west of the Mississippi River, in Kansas. Slavery had threatened to pull the nation apart from the creation of the Constitution in 1789. The question of whether the nation would be slave or free was revisited time and time again as it acquired new territory and added new states, as North and South sought to create the West in its own image and to protect its own political interests.

Questions to Consider

1. Why did people living in the West so often oppose slavery? How did slavery contradict or challenge the impulse that lay behind settling the West?
2. To what extent did people living in the West play an active role in rising sectional tensions?

Unit Conclusion

People in the United States have typically seen in the topic of “westward expansion” a story of triumph and optimism. This was certainly true in the decades before the Civil War, as millions of hopeful citizens took their chances in Michigan, Mississippi, California, and elsewhere.

But most did not find what they expected and hoped to. Fortune was often hard to come by, and conditions were more raw and trying than had been expected. African Americans—who usually came west involuntarily, as slaves—and the Chinese—who usually came voluntarily, but faced a great deal of discrimination—faced additional difficulties functioning in a hostile society.

Where opportunity flourished, moreover, prejudices and inequalities usually increased. Every successful settlement entailed taking land from Native Americans or Mexicans, often by force. This was certainly true in the California gold fields, but it was also true in the prosperous cotton fields of the South.

But westward expansion fueled opposition to, as well as the growth of, slavery. The prospect and the question of what sort of place the West would become would ultimately be settled not through debate and compromise, but by force of arms.

TIMELINE

- 1787** Northwest Ordinance creates first organized territory of the United States
- 1794** Eli Whitney patents cotton gin
- 1803** Louisiana Purchase doubles the size of the United States
- 1803–6** Lewis and Clark expedition
- 1804** Sauk leaders sign treaty ceding 15 million acres to the U.S. government
- 1812–15** War of 1812 fought between United States and England
- 1818** Treaty on joint U.S.–British occupation of Oregon
- 1820** Missouri Compromise maintains balance of free and slave states in Union
- 1821** Mexican independence from Spain; opening of Santa Fe Trail between Missouri and New Mexico
- 1821–40** Indian removals in Deep South and Old Southwest
- 1830** Mexico abolishes slavery in Texas
- 1832** Black Hawk War
- 1836** Texas declares independence from Mexico
- 1837–38** Cherokee travel from southeastern homelands to Oklahoma on the “Trail of Tears”
- 1844** James K. Polk elected president on expansionist platform
- 1845** Term “Manifest Destiny” coined by newspaper editor John L. O’Sullivan; United States annexes the Republic of Texas
- 1846** United States and Mexico go to war; Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo taken prisoner in Bear Flag rebellion
- 1846–48** Mormon migration to Utah
- 1848** Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ends Mexican American War; gold discovered at Sutter’s Mill in California
- 1850** California admitted to the Union; Compromise of 1850
- 1851–60** More than 41,000 Chinese travel to United States to work
- 1852** Ah Tye arrives in California from China
- 1854** Kansas–Nebraska Act nullifies Missouri Compromise
- 1856** John Brown leads Pottawatomie Massacre in Kansas
- 1860** Abraham Lincoln elected president; cotton production and prices peak

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FURTHER READING

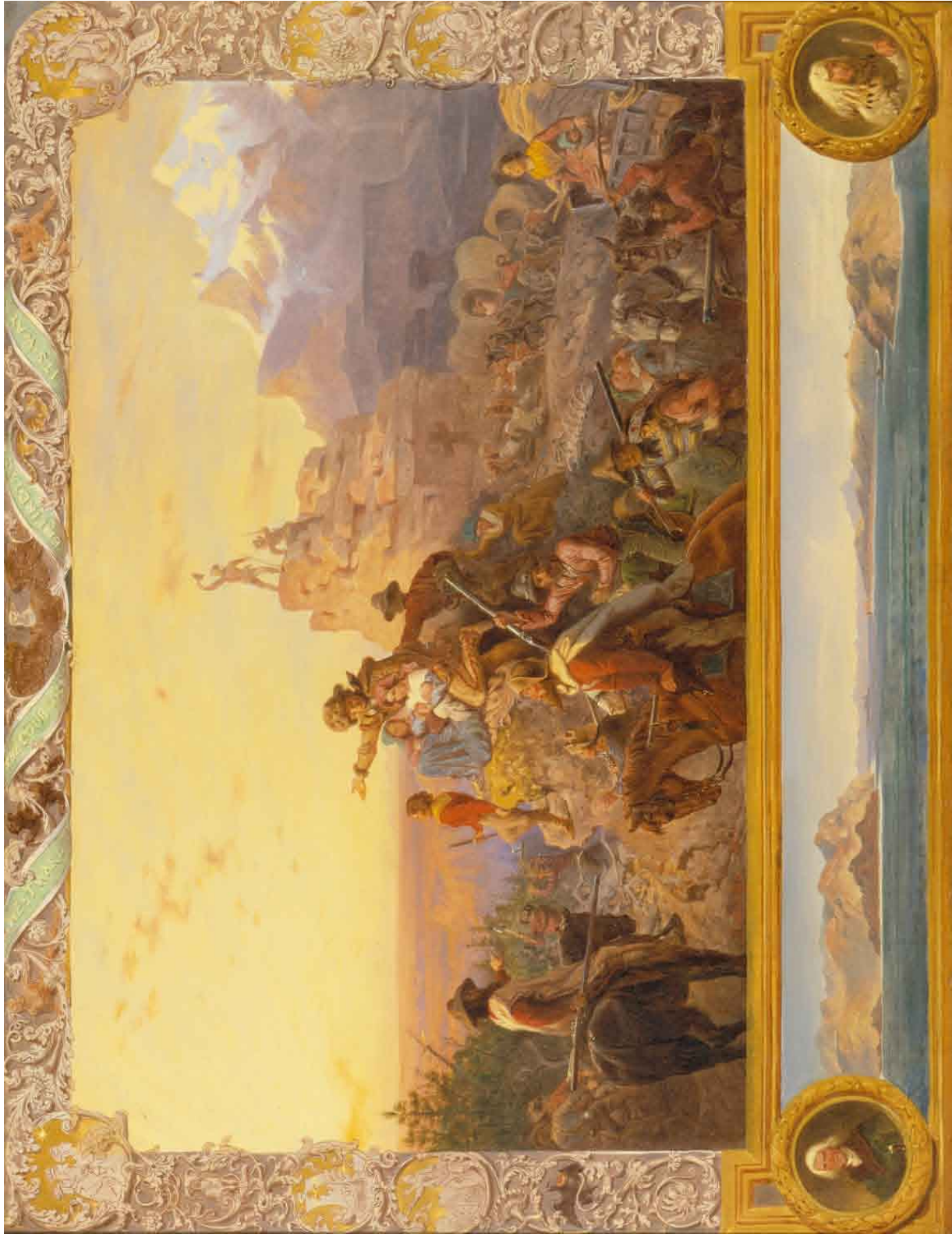
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APPENDIX 1-1



THEME ONE PRIMARY SOURCE
Item 1334

Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze, WESTWARD THE COURSE OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY (1861);
Courtesy of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC/Art Resource, NY [ART27770].