

US Civilization

I. Geography

The United States is one of the biggest countries in the world. It is seventeen times as big as France. It is mainly composed of wide open spaces that have attracted immigrants and have shaped the national identity. The distance between San Francisco on the west coast and Boston on the east coast is greater than the distance from Paris to Baghdad.

USA are also more to the south than Europe. Washington is on the same parallel of latitude as Lisbon, and Seattle is on the same parallel of latitude as Nantes.

A. Mountains

There are 3 mountain ridges in the United States running North to South.

- On the East, the Appalachia
- On the West, the Sierra Nevada and the Rocky Mountains

In American history, mountains have been barriers to settlements.

B. Rivers/Lakes

If mountains have been obstacles to colonization, rivers and lakes, on the contrary, have been roads for settlers.

The main river in the USA is the Mississippi-Missouri river system. It runs all along the middle of US, from the plains to the north to the gulf of Mexico. The Mississippi is four times as long as Loire.

There are 5 great lakes in the North of US along the Canada border. They are as great as inner seas, but they are made of fresh water. Together, they form the largest body of fresh water in the world.

The Great Lakes are interconnected by straits and rivers. Moreover, the St Laurent River has been made navigable for ocean going ships, which means sea-freighters can go up to Chicago.

C. Climate

USA are mainly dominated by a harsh continental climate. Weather is conditioned by 2 main factors:

- Mountain ridges limit the influence of the ocean
- All of the mountain ridges run from North to South, which means there are no barriers to stop cold air coming down from Canada nor hot air coming up from central America.

USA are divided in two on the 100° West longitude.

- West of the 100° West longitude:
 - East of Sierra Nevada:
 - North: dry continental climate with hot summers and cold winters
 - South-West: desert (in which the Death Valley is the hottest place on Earth)
 - West of Sierra Nevada:

- North-West: oceanic, rainy climate
- South-West: Mediterranean, dry climate
- East of the 100° West longitude:
 - North-East: Wet temperate climate
 - North: Rainy
 - South: Sub-tropical climate

D. Natural Hazards

- Hurricanes: South-West
- Flooding: Mississippi basin
- Tornadoes: Mississippi basin
- Volcanoes: Alaska, North-West, Hawaii
- Earthquakes: California, Missouri, Alaska, South Carolina
- Lightning storms: Florida, Mojave desert
- Snow falls: Middle West

E. Agriculture

3 types of agriculture can be found in the USA:

- Agribusiness: large corporations have taken control of agriculture in California (fruits, vegetables); Florida (citrus fruits); Western California and Texas (cotton, cattle); Hawaii (citrus fruits, sugarcane); and in the Columbia river valley (fruits).
- Family farming: family farming can still be found in the Midwest (Ohio, Iowa, Illinois: corn); North and South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas (wheat); Wisconsin and Northern Appalachia (dairy cattle); Tobacco belt (North and South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama: tobacco and poultry); and also around big cities.
- Uncultivated lands: in woody areas and Pacific North-West (lumber); Montana (cattle and sheep)

F. Urbanization

USA have been an urban country for a long time. Since 1920, more than half the population has lived in cities. Nowadays, 80% of the population is urban. Only 2% of Americans still lives in cities, and 52 urban areas count more than 1 million inhabitants.

The history of urbanization can be divided in 4 periods:

- From the 1900s to the 1950s, the great cities and the firsts skyscrapers were built. In the second half of this period (1925 -> 1950), the first suburbs appeared together with the development of automobile.
- From the 1950s to the 1970s, the suburbs massively expanded. Moreover, with the development of industrial and service jobs inside the suburbs, these became independent from the central cities.

- From the 1970s to the 1990s, we assisted to a continued growth outside the cities. Inhabitants moved outside of suburbs to live in the country.
- Since the 1990s, the whole process is reversed: upper and middle class come back into the central cities (gentrification). Neighborhoods are rehabilitated and prices go up, chasing poor people to the suburbs.

There are 3 major population areas:

- New-York (20 million inhabitants)
- Los Angeles (15,5)
- Chicago (8,6)

All of them are world financial centers.

G. Industry

The industrial center of America is the North-East (New-York, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Illinois), also known as the "rust belt". It is where the first factories were established. There can be found the major manufacturing centers (iron, steel, plastic, rubber, food processing, etc.).

But since the 60s, industries moved away from North to the Sun Belt because of its cheap workforce (low level of unionization) and low land prices. Chemicals are processed in Texas and Louisiana.

II. Political System

A. The Constitution

American political democracy is based on the Constitution. It has been written in 1787. It is the oldest written constitution still in use.

Americans feel reverent toward their Constitution and estimates that it is a good model, since it works.

Still, it is an imperfect document. For instance, the original document said that afro-Americans, Indians, women and white men who did not own property were second class citizens, that is, that they were inferior in status to white men owning property.

But the Constitution is changeable, and Americans have changed it. They are fascinated that a group of rich white men could write a document that can still be used today. They often consider it as a modern version of the "10 commandments".

A first group of 10 amendments has been voted 4 years later (in 1791). It is known as the "bill of rights". It guaranties basic democratic rights (freedom of speech, of the press, of religion, and right to have a fair trial).

Most Americans are familiar with the rights they have.

17 other amendments have been voted, including abolishing slavery, giving citizenship to afro-Americans, right to vote to women, limiting the number of times a person can become president.

Though it changed a lot, Americans feel that the original democratic spirit of the Constitution is still alive.

One of the basic ideas of the Constitution is division of the political power. Americans thought of the

British King as a tyrant, and after the independence, they wanted to make sure no one could concentrate all political powers in its hands.

B. Federal and State Governments, Divided Sovereignty

"Divided sovereignty" means division between national government and federal government. USA is a federal republic (50 states). According to the Constitution, all powers that are not explicitly given to national government are kept by state governments.

In the beginning, the national government was responsible for 4 things:

- Foreign policy
- National defense
- International commerce
- Commerce between the states

State governments were responsible for everything else. They were more important than the national government.

Nowadays, the situation is reversed. The industrial revolution and the division of the world into spheres of interest made a strong national government necessary. The turn took place in the late 19th century.

Still, state governments keep many powers. Each state has its own constitution, 3 branch of government, a legislature, a governor (that enforces the laws) and a judicial system. State laws are different from one state to another. There are differences in the criminal justice system, school system, health system, tax laws, welfare, etc.

C. The System of Checks and Balance

The Constitution divides the national government into 3 branches: legislative, judicial and executive.

Each one limits the powers of the other two so that no branch can concentrate all political powers.

For instance:

- Legislative power can remove the president if he abuses of his powers
- Judicial power can stop the legislative from making unconstitutional laws
- Executive power (the president) can veto laws

D. The Legislative Branch: Congress

Writers of the Constitution believed that People should democratically control their government.

Representatives of the people should play the main role. Therefore, the Legislative is the most important one in the original Constitution.

Legislative power is incorporated in the "Congress". Its main function is to write laws.

It is divided into 2 houses:

- the House of Representatives (represents people who live in their district)
- the Senate (represents the states they are elected from)

Both Houses are directly elected by the People.

1. The House of Representatives

435 members.

Each "congressman" represents more or less the same number of people. Therefore, states that have a large population (New York, California) have many representatives, whereas those who have a small population (Alaska) have a very few.

Every ten years, a census counts the number of people and congressional districts are redrawn to reflect changes in the population. Lately, people have moved away from North-East, and consequently, states in the North East have fewer representatives than they used to.

Since congressmen represent people, it is felt people should be able to control them. Therefore, a congressman is elected only for 2 years. The possibility to change representatives reflects the will of the People. Congress writes budget for the national government.

Today, there are 232 republican representatives, 201 democrats, 1 independent and 1 vacant position.

2. The Senate

Senators represent the states.

All of the people in a state vote to choose 2 senators who will represent their state (2x50=100 senators). Each state has an equal representation in senate.

Today, there are 55 republican senators, 44 democrats and 1 independent.

Each senator is elected for 6 years but not all are elected at the same time: every 2 years, 1/3 of senators stand for elections. Therefore, the Senate is continually renewed.

3. Committees in the House of Representative and the Senate

The role of houses is to write laws, but it is impossible for all congressmen to participate in writing all laws. Therefore, they are divided into specialized committees. For instance, "ways and means committee" works on all of budget laws; or the "armed force committee".

Once laws are written, all of the members of each House vote on it. For a law to become valid, it must be approved by majority in both houses and signed by the President.

Some committees are permanent, others are temporary. There are 23 permanent committees and hundreds of subcommittees.

Each committee includes both republicans and democrats in order to reflect the composition of the Houses. The political party that has a majority chooses the chairmen of all committees. It is the chairman that writes the agenda for his committee.

Committees also have a second role: to investigate. In particular, to investigate the activities of the President and the executive branch to make sure they do not do illegal things. They can investigate any problem in the USA.

4. The Limiting Powers of Congress

a. The Power of the Purse

Congress controls taxation and use of tax money by the executive branch.

b. The Power of Impeachment

Congress can put government officials and federal judges on trial for treason, corruption and serious crimes. This is called "impeachment".

First, the House of Representatives investigate to decide if it is likely a crime has been committed. If yes, they accuse the government officials involved and Senate holds a trial. The members of the jury are the 100 senators. They vote to decide whether the accused is guilty or not after hearing to the evidences.

3 presidents have been through an impeachment procedure:

- Andrew Johnson (not guilty)
- Richard Nixon (resigned before a trial could be held)
- Bill Clinton (not guilty)

c. The Special Powers of Senate

Senate also has the power:

- to limit other branches of government
- all people the president chooses for important position must be approved by Senate
- all people the president chooses to become judges of the Federal Court system must be approved by Senate
- all treaties must be approved by Senate
- Senate limits and influences the judicial system

E. The Judicial Branch: The Federal Courts

1. Composition of the Judicial Branch

Federal Court is the highest Supreme Court. It has 9 judges called "justices". When a Justice retires or is removed or dies, the president chooses a new Justice (who must be approved by Senate).

According to statistics, senate has refused 1/5 of presidential choices.

Justices are named for life; they remain until they retire or are removed or die.

2. The Role of the Supreme Court: Judicial Review

Supreme Court decides of cases between states and is the last court of appeal. It interprets the Constitution to decide if a state or national law violates the constitution. This is called "judicial review".

The final authority on Constitution is the Supreme Court.

It makes its decision by majority vote.

3. The Power of the Supreme Court

Supreme Court limits the power of Congress and of the President. Using judicial review, it can decide that a law voted by Congress and signed by the President is unconstitutional. In this case, law is nullified.

It can also decide that an action taken by the executive branch is unconstitutional and can order it to stop it.

Examples:

- The US Congress used to allow states to segregate schools according to race. In 1952, Supreme Court decided this was unconstitutional: "schools must be integrated".
- In different states, laws said that "children in schools must pray to god". In 1962, it was declared unconstitutional.
- In 1972, Nixon refused to give documents to the Congress. The Supreme Court declared his behaviour to be unconstitutional and ordered the President to stop refusing.

III. The Presidency and Presidential Elections

A. Who can become President?

Must be born in the USA and be at least 35 year old.

Is elected for 4 years and can be re-elected 1 time.

B. The Role of the President

According to the Constitution, the President is the head of the executive branch and Head of State.

He names:

- secretaries (=ministers) to run for departments of government (=ministries)
- ambassadors
- Supreme Court Justices
- Federal Judges
- Heads of bureaucratic organisations (councils, organisations, etc.)

He is commander in chief of the armed forces: he can use US troops to attack other countries. He can negotiate treaties with other countries and can pardon criminals (Jimmy Carter, in 1977 pardoned all men who refused to fight in Vietnam).

President must sign laws made by congress for laws to be applied. He can refuse: this is "presidential veto".

He has official powers, but also 3 unofficial powers:

- he is head of his political party: he can order his supporters to follow his policies on several issues
- he is elected by the US people and is traditionally supposed to have a popular mandate. Therefore, Congress is supposed to listen to the president. He is involved together with his supporters in Congress in writing many of the laws
- he is the centre of attention for the media: it is easier for him to appear in medias

C. How the Executive Branch Works

The president has secretaries, advisors and experts. In recent years, the vice-president has also been given more work to do. Most important secretaries meet together in "cabinet", an unofficial

structure where they make policy and decisions on running the USA.

The president has a special organisation called the "Executive Office of the President". Included in are the "council of economic advisors", "national security council", the "office of management and the budget", and about nearly 40 other federal agencies (NASA, CIA, etc.).

D. Presidential Elections: the Road to the White House

1. Become a national figure and get campaign contributions
2. Win the primary elections and the state caucuses to obtain delegates to the national convention who will nominate you as the party candidate
3. Win the party nomination at the national convention, choose a running mate (=candidate for vice-presidency), writes the party platform (= program): usually, a candidate obtains a majority early in the election year (by March), so there is little suspense.
4. Campaign the other candidates. Get good media coverage. The campaign usually begins on Labour Day (1st Monday in September) and lasts 2 months till the Election Day (1st Tuesday in November).
5. Win the popular vote in the key states on Election Day. Voters go to polls to vote from 8 o'clock to 8 o'clock. Results and projections are broadcasted, so that people on the West coast know what people on the East coast have voted.
6. Win the electoral vote in the Electoral College. The president is not directly elected by people. It is elected by Electors member of a College, not by voters. Each state has a number of electors equal to its number of senators and representatives. Popular vote determines how they will vote, according to the "winner takes it all" system.
7. Be inaugurated and give an inaugural address. It is done on 21st of January. President must swear an oath to do his job well and to respect the Constitution. He gives a speech on what policies he will pursue.

E. The Increase in Presidential Power

Since USA was created, presidential power has kept increasing.

In the beginning, Congress was powerful. It created enormous bureaucracy controlled by the President.

Some people say that the increase in presidential power was necessary because otherwise, nothing could have been done. Others say that it is a danger and a threat to democracy.

Steps:

- Presidency of Roosevelt (1932-1945). During the Great Depression between 1933 and 1938, Roosevelt got a lot of measures passed to solve the problem of the depression: the "New Deal". It increased presidential power and created a welfare state. It was first opposed by the Supreme Court, but it was eventually accepted. The president gained power in controlling the US economy.
- Presidency of Richard Nixon (1969-1974). Nixon used his powers as commander in chief of the US army to conduct a secret war in Laos and Cambodia. He also used US intelligence services to spy and disrupt the Democrat party to win the 1972 presidential elections. This was later revealed by the "Watergate Affair" forcing Nixon to resign. The Congress then passed laws to

control the executive branch (and particularly army power and spy agencies through a system of "checks and balances".

- George W. Bush: under his presidency; executive powers have grow again.
 - Relationship between the executive branch and Congress :
 - The Federal governments accounting practices have become unreliable. Congress can no longer use the checks and balance system to control the executive or they no longer know what tax money is used for.
 - In November 2004, the new director of CIA told its employees that they were no longer supposed to cooperate with political opponents of the president (even if they are congressmen).
 - Judicial System: in 02/03, Bush declared that "the Geneva conventions and American laws do not apply to prisoners captured in Afghanistan" (detained in Guantanamo). Apparently, these prisoners were tortured. In June 2004, the Supreme Court declared that this was unconstitutional and president had to stop and allow the prisoners access to the court system. Later in 2004; a federal court stated that Bush hadn't complied with this order.
 - War powers: in 2002, the executive branch adopted the doctrine of pre-emptive war.
 - Domestic spying: in October 2001, the "Patriot Act" was passed. It was supposed to be used only in terrorism-related affairs, but it seems it was also used in numerous criminal cases not linked with terrorism.

IV. 2004 Elections

A. Primary Election Campaign

1. Democrats

For the Democrats, the presidential campaign started early. In May 2002, Howard Dean entered the Race. There were 9 declared candidates in 2003.

In 02/03, Howard Dean inspired the Democrat party with opposition to the war in Iraq, which indicated the party would move to the right. During the summer of this year, Al Gore was persuaded not to run for elections because he was considered too left winged. This was the sign of a struggle inside the party.

Officials of the Democrat party set up the schedule for primary elections in early 2004 so that a strong candidate could eliminate its rivals early. The eventual winner would have more time to collect campaign contributions.

In December 2003, polls speculated that John Kerry would be forced out of the race, and thought Howard Dean to be the winner. But in 2004, Kerry was found out to be the front runner. The 2/03/04, Kerry had eliminated his rivals and was invested as the official democrat candidate.

2. Ralph Nader

In 2000, Ralph Nader was the presidential candidate for the Green Party. He collected 2.7% votes. But in 2004, he offended the green party and they did not choose him. Nader chose to run independently. He was the candidate of 4 little parties.

3. Republican

There was token opposition to Georges Bush. The 10/03/04, he gained the Republican nomination.

B. Campaign for Presidency

1. Kerry

Throughout the campaign, the left wing of the Democrat party criticized Kerry for being not dynamic enough and for saying that he would send more troops in Iraq. He was also known for his conservative position on globalization and free trade.

In July, he announced he would choose John Edwards for Vice-President. Edwards was more left-wing and more dynamic.

2. Campaign Finance

In 2002, the "McCain-Feingold reform law" was passed. It limited fund-raising activities by political parties and candidates. Yet, there was a loophole in the law: the "527 groups" could raise wide amounts of money as long as they remained completely independent from political parties. Many people believed that it would help Democrats because the Republicans already had lots of money.

The most important 527 groups were "MoveOn.org", "media fund" and "America Coming Together (ACT)" on the left wing and "Swift Boat Veterans for Truth" on the right wing.

Issues in the campaign:

- The Swift Boat Veterans for Truth questioned Kerry's heroism during the Vietnam War. The Democrats stroke back by recalling that during Vietnam War, Bush remained inside USA.
- John Kerry's hesitation and indecisiveness. The Democrats attacked Bush on his behaviour during 9/11 (cf. "Fahrenheit 9/11" by Michael Moore).
- Moral issues, such has homosexual marriage and abortion right.

3. Presidential Debate

There were 3 debates (foreign policy, homeland security, domestic and economic policy). Ralph Nader was excluded from them and complained about it.

Kerry is considered to have won the first debate, and the other two ended in a tie.

208 newspapers supported Kerry, and 189 supported Bush.

4. Swing States

Swing states are states in which the population is evenly divided between Republicans and Democrats. Both parties concentrated their advertising on these states.

Because of the "winner takes it all system", simple majority gives all electoral votes to the winner.

There were 14 swing states during the 2004 elections. Among them, we find the Upper Midwest group (Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa had 27 electoral votes) and 3 other states (Ohio (20), Pennsylvania (21) and Florida (27)).

C. The Outcome of the Elections

1. The Results

These elections have been one of the most contested ones in American history. It has been a fierce battle.

Voters became polarized around 2 major party candidates. 120 million people voted. It is the largest number of votes since 1968.

It has also been the first presidential election monitored by international observers. European organisations sent observers, but in some states, state law did not allow these observers to do their job.

Both Bush and Kerry earned more votes than any another candidate in the American history.

- Bush: +62 million votes (50.7%); 286 voices in the Electoral College.
- Kerry: +59 million votes (48.3%); 251 voices in the Electoral College.

Since voters were so polarized, independent candidates had fewer votes than they had during last elections. Ralph Nader had 3 million (2.7%) votes in 2000 and only 450,000 (0.4%) in 2004.

Bush won his re-election by only 2.5%. It is the smallest re-election total of a president in history. He also had the smallest number of electoral votes that separate the two candidates since 1916.

The different states voted almost the same way that they voted in 2000 except 3 states: Iowa and New Mexico voted for Bush, and New Hampshire voted for Kerry.

2. Disputed Results

The Electoral College officially voted in 13/12/2004. But the congress met to count these votes only in 06/01/05. At that time, Congresswoman Stephanie Jones and Senator Barbara Boxer officially objected to counting the electoral votes. They estimated elections had not been properly made in Ohio and they objected at counting the votes in this state. Yet, both Houses of Congress voted to accept the votes in Ohio. Experts estimated that even without these votes, the results would not have changed.

Another disputed issue was the use of electronic machines to vote. Computer experts showed that computer systems could be manipulated to produce wrong results by hackers or by the companies that made them. Moreover, some machines did not produce any physical traces of the votes, making it impossible to recount the votes. But people who support these machines say that there is no need to recount since computers do not make mistakes.

In several states (including Colorado, Florida, Nevada or Ohio), there are legal challenges to the election results. Votes there will probably have to be recounted. Yet, once again, experts say that it will probably not change the results.

3. The Congressional Elections

Congressional Elections have been remarkable: for the first time since 1936, the president was re-elected and his party increased its number of delegates in both Houses.

V. The Formation of the American People: Immigration to America

A. Colonial Immigration

1. The 17th Century

Immigrants came from very different parts of the world.

The first two colonies were Virginia and Massachusetts.

a. Virginia

The first settlement of Virginia began in 1607. The population was almost entirely rural.

The settlers were members of the Anglican Church; they were loyal to the King.

In 1619, the first black slaves were brought to work on the plantation (mostly tobacco). By the end of the 17th century, 13% of the population was black.

b. Massachusetts

The settlement of Massachusetts began in 1620. Boston became an important town even though most of the population lived on farms.

The first settlers were dissenters from the Anglican Church and they detested the King of England.

The colony was a theocracy: you had to be a member of the puritan church to vote.

There were practically no black people in Massachusetts.

c. New York

New York was settled by the Dutch. The original name of New York was New Netherlands.

The British conquered New York in 1664, but for the next 150 years, there were still Dutch influences in the speech, the clothing and the architecture of the colony of New York.

2. The 18th Century

Fewer immigrants came from England, but black slaves continued to be imported from Africa.

The largest group came from Scotland and Ireland. Another large group of immigrants came from Germany. And there were also a small number of French immigrants, as well as immigrants from Switzerland, Wales and few Jews from Portugal.

3. Summary

By the middle of the 18th century, the English culture was dominant but it was not the only culture. There were many nationalities and ethnic groups in America that there was not in England. And even the descendents of the English in America had changed their culture to adapt to American circumstances.

English culture was strongest in the cities and weakest in the farms.

B. The Old Immigration (1830-1890)

1. 1775 – 1830

There was very little immigration to America during this period.

2. 1830 – 1860: the First Wave of Immigration

Most of the immigration came from 3 countries: Great Britain, Ireland and Western Germany.

There were 3 factors:

- Beginning of the industrial revolution: artisans could not compete with factories. Many of them sold their workshop, bought a ticket to America where there was a permanent labour shortage. Small farmers also sold their farms and came to America where there was large expenses of land.
- Political unrest: in 1830, the July Revolution in France and the rebellions in the German state were crushed. People there who wanted to live in a democracy decided to immigrate to America. In 1848, there were revolutions everywhere in Europe (Bavaria, Bohemia, Hungary, Lombardy, Moravia, Prussia, South Western Germany, and France). These revolutions were crushed too.
- Irish famine (1845 – 1847): more than 1 million people left Ireland to escape from starvation.

Most immigrants were welcome in America, for they had a craftsmanship and some money or had a democratic tradition, except Irish because they were Catholics and, most of the time, very poor.

3. 1865 – 1890: the Second Wave of Immigration

From 1860 to 1865, the civil war stopped immigration, since young men were liable to be recruited.

After the civil war, there was an increased demand for labour in America because the civil war had contributed to start the industrial revolution in America.

Most immigrants came from the same countries, but there was also a large number of people coming from Scandinavian countries.

By the end of the 19th century:

- 58 million people (22%) had at least one German ancestor
- 39 million people (15%) had at least one Irish ancestor
- 33 million people (12.6%) had at least one English ancestor

4. Efforts to limit Immigration: Exclusion of the Chinese in 1882

Beginning with the California gold rush in 1849, a large number of Chinese came to America.

Another large population came to build the railroad in the western states.

There were immediately racial problems. Chinese were accused of working for low wages and thus lowering American wages. There were repeated attacks on the Chinese in the largest Chinatown in San Francisco.

In 1862, a law is passed forbidding American ships to transport Chinese passengers.

In 1882, immigration of Chinese was prohibited.

5. Conclusion

Immigrants in this period tended to be skilled people who had a relatively large amount of money, except for Irish people.

Religious and racial prejudices led some Americans to despise immigrants they blamed for economic crises and political unrest.

C. The New Immigration (1890-1920)

1. Immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe

After 1890, the number of people coming from western and northern Europe decreased quickly. In the period called "New Immigration", fewer than 1/3rd of the immigrants came from there. The majority came from southern and eastern Europe. More than half of the people who came to USA during this period came from Austria-Hungary, Italy and the Russian Empire.

There was a lot of immigration during this period: in average, 1 million people come to USA every year.

Why did people left Southern and Eastern Europe?

- Italy: economic depression and epidemics of diseases.
- Russian Empire: Many young men immigrated to avoid serving in the Russian army.
- Eastern European Jews: Jews were persecuted for their religion. In the Russian Empire, there were frequent attacks on Jews, and Hundreds were killed.

2. The Hostility of some Americans

Immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe were not welcome the same way as immigrants from Western and Northern Europe.

There are 3 main reasons:

- Religious prejudices: these immigrants belonged to religions that were very different from the main religion in America, which is Protestantism. The Italians and the Poles were mostly Catholics (as Irish before them); many people from the Russian Empire belonged to the Orthodox Christian Church; and the Jews were not Christian at all.
- Racial prejudices: at that time, there was a belief that people from Southern and Eastern Europe were racially different from people from Western and Northern people. Many Americans believed that the new immigrants were racially and genetically inferior to Americans. They believed that if Americans married them, the quality of Americans would decrease.
- Economic crises: immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe were often extremely poor. They were able to come to the USA because the invention of steel steamships made the trip affordable for very poor people. These immigrants were accused of working for very low wages, thus reducing wages for all Americans. When there was a depression (in 1885 and 1890), the immigrants were accused of causing it.

3. The Theory of the Melting Pot

Although many Americans were hostile to new immigrants, other people welcomed them. They believed that the mixing of people from Northern and Western Europe with people from Southern and Eastern Europe would result in a new and superior race called the "Americans".

4. Efforts to Limit Immigration

On one hand, USA was an industrializing country and needed workers, but on the other hand, there were racial and religious prejudices against immigrants.

Slowly but surely, people who were against immigration grew in power. As a result, new laws were passed to limit immigration.

a. Screening and Selection

In the late 19th century, Congress passed laws to check/screen whether people had contagious diseases. If they had one, they were sent back to Europe.

b. The Exclusion of the Japanese

In the late 1890s, many Japanese immigrated to America, and were accused by Americans of lowering wages.

In 1908, USA and Japan reached an agreement: "USA will not offend the Japanese Empire by making a law to stop Japanese immigration; in exchange, the Japanese Empire promise not to allow any Japanese to come to America."

Consequently, after 1908, no more Japanese came to the USA.

5. World War I (1914-1918)

World war one made it very difficult for people to live Europe to go to the USA. From 1 million people a year, immigration dropped to 250 000 people a year.

However, after the war, immigration increased again. In 1921, 800 000 people came to the USA.

After the communist revolution in Russia, a law was passed that made it illegal for communists to come to the USA.

In 1921 and in 1924, the people who believed that people who were coming from Eastern and Southern Europe were inferior finally persuaded Congress to make laws to stop immigration from these parts of the world.

D. The Quota Acts of 1921 & 1924 (to 1965)

These laws set that each country in Europe could send a limited number of people to USA.

The number was set to 3% of the number of people who had come from these countries in 1890. It was the last year when a majority of immigrants came from Northern and Western Europe. After 1921 and 1924, a majority of people could come from Western and Northern Europe and a very tiny minority of people could come from Southern and Eastern Europe.

But since nobody was coming from Northern and Western Europe and very few people were allowed to come from Eastern and Southern Europe, almost nobody came to the USA. This period made it possible to assimilate the very large foreign population: the different immigrants became Americanized.

There were very small changes in American immigration laws. In 1943, the USA and China became allies in World War II. Therefore, a very small number of Chinese was allowed to immigrate to the USA.

In the 1940s, there were so many men in the American army that there was a shortage of workers in America. To allow workers to come to America, a law was passed to allow Mexicans to come and work in the USA temporarily (the "Bracero Program"). They could only stay one year. It was continued in the 1950s.

E. The Family Re-Unification Policy of 1965

3 things happened to change USA's attitude toward immigration laws:

- World War II was fought against Nazi Germany and the racial theories of the Nazis. Consequently, the racial theories that justified the quota acts were discredited.
- The Civil Rights Movement of Afro-American led by Dr. Martin Luther King attacked the racist segregation policies in the South. Many Americans became opposed to racial segregation and racial laws.
- After World War II, with the decolonization, many new independent countries appeared in Africa and Asia. They objected to American racial immigration policies. Because of the Cold War, USA wanted to be allied to these new countries.

Consequently, in 1965, the Quota Laws were ended. Every country in the world was allowed to send the same number of immigrants.

However, priority was given to immigrants who had relatives already living in the USA.

Since World War II, not many people came to the USA. Moreover, until the end of communism, people could not come from Eastern Europe because of the Iron Curtain. Therefore, most immigrants came from countries of South America and Asia.

By 1976, more than half of the immigrants came from 7 countries: Mexico, Philippine Islands, Korea, Cuba, Taiwan, India and Dominican Republic.

The number of immigrants increased. From 1960 to 1979, 4.3 million people came to the USA. From 1980 to 1989, 10 million people came to the USA.

The nature of immigration was also very different from the "new immigration": 35% were professional and white colour workers; 12% were skilled craftsmen; less than half were unskilled. Professional and white coloured came from Asia, India, Philippine, Korea, United Kingdom, Canada. Unskilled people came from Mexico, Central America, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Cuba and West Indies.

There were also a larger proportion of women. This is partly due to the restructuring in the American economy: there were fewer factory jobs and more office jobs.

Before 1965, there were no limit to immigration from Latin America and Canada. Quota Acts only applied to the rest of the world, no to the American continent. The Act of 1965 applied to the entire world, including Latin America. However, this law was difficult to enforce because hundreds of immigrants simply walked through the Mexican border.

F. Immigration Control and Reform Act of 1986

In 1986, a new law was passed to try to address the problem of illegal immigration. At that time,

there were between 3 million to 5 million "undocumented" workers in the USA.

The 1986 Act said that "people who could prove that they have been living in America since 1982 could be legalized". In 1990, 180,000 people were legalized. In 1991, 1.1 million people were legalized.

G. The Immigration Act of 1990

1. Skilled Immigration Wanted

USA decided to change the priority given to immigrants. Priority was no longer given to people who already had family in the USA, but to immigrants who had skills USA needed.

2. Conclusion

Today, there are 32.5 foreign born people in the USA (about 11%).

- 52% are from Latin America
- 26% are from Asia
- 14% are from Europe
- 8% are from Africa, Oceania or Canada

United States repudiated its racist immigration laws and put priority to skilled immigrants useful to its economy.

This new wave of immigration has done 3 things to USA:

- It reinforced the idea that Americans are not necessarily people born in the USA.
- It introduced new religions, cultures, languages, etc. to American life.
- It pushed in the direction to be a multi-cultural and multi-racial society.

VI. African American

A. Slavery and Segregation

1. Slavery 1619-1865

In 1619, American colonists began importing people from Africa as slaves. There were about 750,000 slaves in America by 1690, almost all were in the South.

In 1807, the importation of slaves was made illegal. By 1860, there were about 4 million African Americans in USA, most of them being slaves and living in the South.

Slavery was the main reason for the American Civil War (1861-1865).

2. The Abolition of Slavery 1865-1877

North won the Civil War. In 1865, slavery was abolished by the 13th amendment, which was followed by the 14th amendment giving citizenship to African Americans and by the 15th amendment which gave the right to vote to African American men.

From 1864 to 1877, the South was occupied by the US Army. It enforced the rights of black people.

3. The Establishment of Segregation 1877-1954

In 1877, the US army withdrew from the South. Southern States regained control of their internal affairs. Different laws were passed to segregate Whites and Blacks and to deprive African Americans from their civil rights, including the right to vote.

This was enforced by the authorities of the states, but also through extra-legal ways and lynching.

4. The Civil Rights Movement 1954-1964

During the 1950s, a movement to end segregation began, notably with the 1954 Supreme Court decision saying that school segregation was illegal.

There were boycotts, sit-ins and demonstrations everywhere in the South.

B. The "Great Society" 1964-1969

President Lyndon-Johnson succeeded John Fitzgerald Kennedy in 1963. He announced a "great society program" meant to end poverty and racial discrimination in the USA.

2 important laws were passed to implement it:

- 1964: the Civil Right Act made it illegal to segregate public facilities and to discriminate people in employment.
- 1965: the Voting Right Act made discrimination in voting illegal.

In 1965, Lyndon-Johnson issued an executive order introducing a policy of "affirmative action". It intended to be a temporary measure meant to make sure that African American enjoyed the same opportunities for job promotions, wage increases, school admissions, scholarships and financial aids as White Americans. All organizations that acted for the Federal government or received money from it had to show they worked actively for integration by hiring or admitting African Americans in the same proportion as the proportion of African American in the community.

The result was that it made it possible for a large number of African Americans to escape from poverty.

- In 1940, fewer than 6% African Americans belonged to the middle class.
- In 1970, about one third of them were middle class.

It also made it possible for African Americans to participate in political life.

- In 1965, there were only 300 Black elected officials.
- In 1970, 50 cities had African American mayors.

At the same time, some African American felt that change was coming too slowly. They became radicalized. In 1966, the expression "Black Power" was invented and the "Black Panther Party" was founded.

There were big riots in major American cities every summer (Harlem (New York) in 1964, Detroit in 1967, and in every city after the assassination of Martin Luther King in 1968).

C. The White Backlash 1969-1983

Radical Black demands and violence in the cities frightened many Whites, leading to a backlash, a strong reaction against Black demands.

Americans put a high value on self-reliance, and White people were opposed to affirmative action. They accused it of being reverse racism.

In addition, in 1973, the oil crisis caused an economic recession and made it more difficult for government to finance affirmative action programs.

In 1971, President Nixon ordered a stop to active measures to integrate schools.

- In 1974, the Supreme Court confirmed him.
- In 1976, the Supreme Court stated that the quota system was unconstitutional.
- In 1982, Reagan decided that private schools that discriminated against Black people should not be punished.

In the past decade, states of Washington and California have abolished affirmative action.

D. A divided Population (1984-2004)

There have been no big changes in the African American population in the past 20 years, except that they are now divided by class lines.

1. The Black Middle Class

Between one third and a half of the African American population is middle-classed. One third of them now live in suburbs (66% for whites).

Since the 1970s, the black middle class has expanded into different professions. In the 1970s, they used to be mostly teachers, social workers and nurses. Nowadays, they are also lawyers, doctors, university professors and engineers.

However, the black middle class is still fragile. Only one half of black professionals are self-employed, against three fourth of white professionals.

Moreover, whites continue to earn more than blacks. Most of white families (80%) are double earner families, whereas a majority of black families are single earner. In the past 20 years, the difference between the income the top 60% of the African American population and the top 60% of the white population has decreased. However, the average white family has 10 times as much money as the average African American family. Black families have not had the time to build up a large amount of money.

Many Americans do not realize that the black middle class exist. At a poll asking "is it true that three fourth of African Americans live in a ghetto?", 20% of white Americans answered "yes", and 50% of African Americans thought it was true. In reality, only 20% of blacks live in a ghetto.

2. Blacks and the Cycle of Poverty

The proportion of African American who lives in property has decreased from one third in 1993 to one fifth in 2000.

African Americans are knowing a persistent poverty. Three explanations:

- Continuing racism. University of Wisconsin did a study in which they sent two volunteers, one white, one black, to apply for a job as a dishwasher. Bosses preferred to hire the white person even though he didn't had a diploma, said that he was a drug addict, had just been in jail, etc.
- The American economy has slowed down: there are not as many jobs created now.

- Since 1997, most of the jobs created need a university degree.

Consequently, poorest African American are becoming poorer than the poorest white Americans. They are trapped in a cycle that feeds on itself.

a. Crime

There has been nothing worse for relationships between blacks and whites than the increase of violent crime by black people since the 1960's. African Americans only make up 12.6% of the American population, but in the year 2002, they made up for 54% of robbers, 50% of murderers and 34% of rapists. It must be noted, however, that most of these crimes take place within the African American community.

In 1990, almost one quarter of African Americans in their twenties were either in prison or on parole. Compare to this, only 6% of white people in their twenties are in prison or on parole.

b. Broken Families

In year 2000, half of African American families were single-parent families (usually, the mother), against 18% for the white population.

Only one third of African American children live with their two parents, unlike three quarters of white children.

c. Poverty

When a single mother has to raise her children, she usually cannot work. Therefore, she is dependant on welfare. One third of the people on welfare are black people.

A study has shown that one fifth of the black children whose family was on welfare had been sent to jail at least once.

The high rate of unemployment is linked to the level of crime. Half of the African American men are employed half time, on temporary jobs or unemployed; against one third of white men.

In 2000, 22% of black people lived in poverty; whereas only 7.5% of white people lived in poverty.

Consequently, African Americans suffer from poor health: the black infant mortality rate is twice as high as the white infant mortality rate. African American also have heart attacks twice as often as white Americans. The rate of AIDS is three times as high as the white rate.

d. Poor Education

A 1994 test show that half of the African Americans in fourth grade could not read or write adequately, compared to one fifth of the white children.

African Americans are not very well prepared for University. Therefore, the drop out rate is disastrous. Only 16.5% of blacks, against 28% of white have got a University diploma.

3. The African American Population Today

There were 34 million African Americans in 1997 (12.8%). This population is growing fast: since 1990, it has increased by 11% (whereas the white population grew by 3%). The median age of the African American population is 30 years old. (38 years old for the whites).

55% of African Americans live in cities, and 53% live in the South, where they represent 19% of

the population. The cities with the largest African American population are New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and Philadelphia.

VII. Hispanic Americans

A. Demographic Information

Hispanic population in America is the second growing minority group in the USA (after Asians). Between 1990 and 2000, it grew by 35%.

It is a young population. Its median age is 26 years old. There are two reasons to this:

- one half of the growth is due to immigration from Latin American countries.
- high birth rate

Hispanic Americans can be of any racial group. 91% say they are white, 5% say that they are black, 2.5% Asian and the rest, Indian.

B. Three Main Nationalities

1. Mexicans

96.7 million Americans are of Mexican descent; that is, 60% of Hispanics.

Mexican Americans has been a very small population for a long time. In 1940, there were less than 2 million Mexicans in the USA. Most came during the Bracero Program (1942-1964). Mexicans came to the USA to work but were supposed to go back to Mexico. However, often, they did not.

By 1950, there were more than 2.5 million Mexican Americans in the USA.

One thing that explains immigration is that wages were much higher in the USA. In the 1950s, the average wage for a farm worker was 50 cents per day in Mexico, and 50 cents per hour in the USA.

Mexican continued to immigrate. In 1980, there were about 9 million Mexican Americans in the USA; in 2000, 20 million.

Mexican Americans are especially concentrated in South California, Texas and New Mexico and in cities such as Los Angeles, Corpus Christi (Texas), El Paso or Houston.

2. Puerto Ricans

They represent the second largest Hispanic population with 4 million people, that is, 12% of the Hispanic population. Note that there are only 3.5 million inhabitants in Puerto Rico...

In 1898, USA won a war against the Spanish Empire and Spain was forced to give up Puerto Rico. Americans invested a lot in Puerto Rico to develop the sugar industry and to improve the health care in the island (eradicated yellow fever).

Consequently, there were a lot of jobs and a low death rate. This led to a population explosion.

By 1925, the expansion of the island's economy ended. A lot of unemployed people came to the USA, especially to New York.

In 1970, Puerto Ricans were given American citizenship.

3. Cubans

They represent the third largest Hispanic population with 1.6 million people, that is, 5% of the Hispanic population.

Cuban immigration began after the establishment of a communist regime in Cuba in 1959.

In 1979, a second large group of immigrants came when America allowed the prisoners on Mariel Island to come to the USA. They expected political prisoners, but a lot of criminals also came. It was the beginning of the Cuban mafia.

Cuban Americans are concentrated in Miami, Florida.

C. Hispanics and Americans Unity

Up until 1965, the concept of American unity was based only on the idea of the “melting pot” which supposed new immigrants abandoned their culture to embrace the American culture. In the 1960s, a new model appeared called the “salad bowl”. Instead of people abandoning their culture and language, they keep being proud of their national origins.

Some people say that this concept is a danger for American unity, and especially with Hispanics Americans. They believe that Hispanics are a greater threat to American unity than previous waves of immigration because they are united by several factors:

- The same religion: Catholicism
- The same language: Spanish.
 - This is reinforced by the number of Hispanics: 12% of the American population represent a big group speaking the same language.
 - Bilingual education: since 1968, the official policy in schools is bilingual education, so that people learn part of the day in their language and part of the day in English; the part of English gradually increasing. But some people say that this encourages people to keep speaking Spanish.
 - Spanish language medias: In the past there used to be newspapers in foreign languages, but nowadays, emedias are amplifying the phenomenon. In 1990, there were 170 Spanish radio channels. In Los Angeles, Miami and New York, half of the outdoor advertising is in Spanish.
- Modern means of transports: in the late 19th and 20th century, immigrants did not really had the choice to visit their family at home. Today, thanks to cars and planes, it is much easier. Therefore, Hispanics can keep in touch with their family.

Hispanic Americans have an effect on American culture. They are changing it; American food is Latinising, and so is language, through the use of Spanish expressions.

One reaction of this perceived threat is to make English the official language. National government has not adopted an official language, though 16 states have (among which Florida and California).

However, Hispanic Americans are not a single monolithic group. They are divided in many ways:

- Many have converted to Protestantism
- There are national differences that reflect in the way they vote (most Cubans are conservative, Puerto Ricans are more liberal, and Mexicans are evenly divided).

VIII. Asian Americans

A. Up to 1968

1. Small size of the Asian American community – 3 main national groups

a. Chinese

1890: 107,000

1940: 77,504

The Chinese population has decreased between 1890 and 1940. This is because before 1882, most were men (who came for the construction of the continental railway) and after 1882, none were allowed to come and it was made illegal for Chinese men to marry women from other races.

b. Japanese

1930: 139,000

1940: 280,000

The Japanese population has grown slowly.

c. Filipinos

1940: 98,373

In 1898, USA acquired the Philippine Islands after the war against Spain.

After 1907, when immigration from Japan came to an end, Filipinos came to USA to work as farm workers.

During the Great Depression, America did no longer want immigrants, and so Filipino immigration was stopped in 1934.

2. Anti Asian Discrimination

Chinese Americans mostly lived in the Chinatowns of the big cities, most were crowded. For instance, the San Francisco Chinatown counted 15,000 people in 20 square blocks (more or less 4 miles²), three buildings out of four did not have any heat, and the tuberculosis rate was three times higher than for white people.

Japanese were not allowed to become American citizens (but their children who were born in the USA could), nor were they allowed to own land (they could work on lands, but they could not buy it). When Japan attacked Pearl Harbour, almost 120,000 Japanese Americans were interned in camps in Arizona, Nevada and Wyoming.

Filipinos too were not allowed to marry people from other races or to own land.

3. Attempts to assimilate

Asian Americans attempted to assimilate as much as possible, though there were some labour activism in Hawaii and California.

In the late 1940s, the laws forbidding land owning to Asian Americans and preventing them from acquiring citizenship were declared unconstitutional.

B. 1968-1970s

1. Population

1970: 1.5 million (0.7%)

After the 1965 reform of the immigration laws, immigration increased. This had several effects:

- The Asian American community became more diverse with south Koreans, Chinese from Taiwan, Indians from India and, after 1975, Vietnamese and Cambodians.
- Many different new religions were brought in America (Japanese are Buddhist, Indians are Hindu, Filipinos are Catholics, etc.).
- The Asian American community became very polarised between well-off people and poor people.

2. Asian American Activism (late 1960s to early 1970s)

The Vietnam war was a traumatic experience for Asian Americans because of the racist attitude of many soldiers toward Vietnamese. Moreover, many youngsters were inspired by the Civil Right Movement.

For instance, in 1968, Asian Americans participated in a student strike at San Francisco State University and forced the University to open a School of Ethnic Studies. From 1968 to the end of the 1970s, they concentrated on campaigns to improve housing, on efforts to defend education rights and to improve employment opportunities.

In this period, the first Asian American feminist organisation was created. Unlike the other movements, this one continued through the 70s. It was mainly organised by 2nd generation Asian American and by young first generation immigrants.

On the other hand, the older generation was opposed to all this. They emphasized the values of law and order and also felt that Asian Americans should avoid confrontation with Whites. Moreover, they felt that the anti-communist aspect of the Vietnam War was more important than its racist aspect.

C. 1980s to Present

1. Population

1980: 3.7 million (1.6%)

1990: 7.9 million (3.2%)

2000: 10.2 million (3.7%)

2. Collapse of the Radical Activist Groups

From the late 1970s to the early 1980s, Asian American activism slowly faded.

3. Asian American Activism since the mid 1980s

a. Filipino Identity

It was very difficult for Filipino activists to unite the Filipino community, since Filipinos tend to be very divided and to identify more to their island than to a national identity. However, the

Filipino community eventually united to support the movement in Philippine Islands that overthrew the dictator Marcos in 1986.

b. Reparation for the Japanese Internment

Activists successfully organised the Japanese community to obtain reparations for their internment during World War II.

D. The Social Polarization of the Asian American

In the USA, generally speaking, the political climate has become more conservative. And so did a large part of the Asian American community. This is due to 2 reasons :

- Asians who were immigrants in the 80s were highly educated, unlike the earlier generation.
- Their own country became more powerful and important.

1. The Rich, the Yuppies, The Neo-conservatives

“Yuppie” (Y.U.P.) means “Young Urban Professionals”.

They are well educated, they have good jobs and they are conservatives. Yuppies represent a large part of the Asian American community.

The values of the neo-conservatives or yuppies are:

- They are proud of their Asian heritage but believe that the social movements of the 60s and 70s were destructive
- They are opposed to anti-Asian racism (their predecessors thought they should avoid confrontation with the Whites) but are also opposed to affirmative action
- In 1992, 70% of Asian Americans supported either Bush or the conservative independent candidate Ross Perot

2. The Poor

They are almost invisible, or at least ignored.

In 1990, 1 Asian American in 5 in California was poor, although they worked full time.

They are almost no middle class. The Asian American community is a sharply divided community.

E. Areas of Friction with Whites

1. Religion

Some Asian religious practices are condemned by white Americans, such as the ritual sacrifice of chickens for Cambodian people.

2. Language

In areas where a large Asian population live, local communities must provide bilingual education to children but are abandoning it because it is difficult and expensive to find competent teachers in these languages.

For instance, in 1989 in Massachusetts, people voted 3 to 1 not to teach Asian children in their language any longer.

3. Anti-Japanese Sentiment (Japan Bashing)

In the late 80s and early 90s, the Japanese economy was strong and the US economy was very weak. Americans believed that low cost Japanese imports were causing unemployment in America.

In 1992, 2 thirds of Americans said in a poll that they were opposed to Japan economic practices.

Today, of course, the situation has changed: Japan's economy is no longer as thriving as it used to.

In 1992, a Chinese American was aggressed and killed by a group of automobile workers who thought he was a Japanese.

4. Racial Prejudice

An opinion poll in 2001 showed that one quarter of Americans have a very strong negative attitude toward Asian Americans

One third of Americans believed that Chinese American are not good citizens because they think they are more attached to China than to the United States.

One quarter would not want a member of their family to marry an Asian.

One quarter would refuse to vote for an Asian president.

F. The 1992 Los Angeles Riots

In 1992, a black automobile driver was attacked and beaten by white policemen. These two policemen were found not guilty by a jury. This enraged the black community in Los Angeles and it rioted. But since there were no white people near the black quarters, they attacked the Korean community.

2,300 Korean owned businesses were destroyed. It cost 400 million dollars.

This was a traumatic experience for Asian Americans.

G. Demographic Information

1. Poverty rate

In 1998:

- Asian American: 13%
- White American: 8%

2. Education

Percentage of people who have a bachelor degree (1998):

- Asian Americans: 42%
- White Americans: 27.7%

3. Annual Income

Asian Americans have the highest average annual income in USA: the average Asian household earn \$6,000 more than the average White household.

IX. Native Americans (American Indians)

A. 1789-1871: Treaty Making

Originally, the American policy toward Indians was to make treaties with them the same way treaties were made with European Nations.

For instance, treaties provided land for Indians, or the Indians had to capture escaped slaves and return same to the white people.

But, at the same time, the USA pursued a policy of military conquest and pushing Indians to the west.

B. 1830-1890 Military Conquest and Indian Removal

1830: "Cherokee Nation versus Georgia".

At that time, Native American lived in Georgia and had a treaty about land with this state. But in the late 1820s, gold was discovered on their territory. The State of Georgia dispossessed Indians from their land. The Indians protested, and the Supreme Court ordered the Federal Government to force the state of Georgia to respect the right of the Indians. But instead, the President sent the US Army to deport the Indians on the other side of the Mississippi river.

This is a typical pattern. It happened:

- In California in 1849
- In Colorado in 1859
- In Montana in 1961

This process of war and pushing the Indians farther and farther continued until 1890. The constant pressure on Native Americans made it impossible for them to become accustomed to the white way of life.

The reaction of the white population is that they thought Indians were incapable to adapt. As general Philip Sheridan said: "The only good Indians I ever saw were dead".

In 1890 occurred the Wounded Knee Massacre. There, the last group of Indians that had not been confined to a reservation agreed to surrender. But instead of capturing them, the white soldiers slaughtered them.

C. 1880-1934 Assimilation

After this, there was practically no more resistance. The government now had to decide what they would do with the Indians. Those who lived closest to them, in the West, wanted to exterminate them, but in Congress, cooler heads prevailed. So, an assimilation attitude was adopted to try to turn Indians into white people.

In 1887, the Allotment Act said: "The Indian tribes should no longer hold their reservation land in common. Instead, land should be divided in allotments." Indians opposed it. So the Congress said : "any land that is not divided up will be taken and sold to white people."

The idea was to turn the Indians community mind into the individual mind of property owning farmers.

It did not work: Indians were unable to torn their land into farms, and their lands was so poor that little could be done with it. Within 50 years, individual Indians had sold almost half of their lands to

white people. From 56 million hectares in 1887, only 21 million remained in 1933.

This economic catastrophe had an effect on the social organisation and the culture of American Indians. Moreover, this was made more serious by the policy of the American government, which was to send Indian children to schools far away from their parents. Children were separated from their families for 4 to 8 years. This destroyed Indian family life.

At schools, Indian children were punished if they spoke Indian languages. Meanwhile, on the reservation, Indian religious ceremonies, music, poetry and traditions were discouraged. There was a high rate of alcoholism, of infant mortality, and of syphilis and tuberculosis.

By 1923, only 220,000 Indians remained (one fourth).

Indians, in the 1920s, began to protest against government policy. In 1924, they were made American citizens. In 1925, a government report said that the government policies were very bad for Indians.

D. 1934-1945, the New Deal

The government stopped its practice of dividing Indian land.

In the meantime, Indian arts and crafts were encouraged.

E. 1945-1970, Termination

In the 1940s, Indian reservations became overcrowded, and an increasing number of Indians left the reservations and went to live in cities. The western States pointed to that fact and concluded that Indians had been assimilated and therefore, reservations could be closed.

In 1953, the new government policy (called "termination") was to encourage tribes to disband and sell their land. From 1953 to 1970, another 600,000 hectares was sold (most of the time, to white people).

In the 1960s, Indians began protesting against this policy and, in 1970, this termination policy was repudiated.

F. 1970-Present, Self-Determination

This policy allowed Indians to organize and manage their land the way they wanted to.

However, Indian protesters became more radical. In 1973, 200 protesters occupied the town of Wounded Knee. There was a shoot-out with the police that lasted 11 days. In the end, the rioters agreed to surrender.

The period from 1973 to 1976, in the area around Wounded Knee, is known as the "Reign of Terror". During these years, conservative Indians killed 60 of the 200 radical Indians.

In 1980, the first Indian casino opened. Because Indian reservations are Indian land, they are not subject to local laws against gambling. This was a big success. In 1996, there were 180 Indian casinos. One third of the reservations had casinos and another third were planning to build one.

This made some tribes relatively wealthy. More and more people who have Indian ancestors are no longer ashamed, but proud to be part Indian and register at the tribe.

In 1990, there were almost 2 million Indians.

In 2000, there were almost 2.5 million Indians.

There is still a high level of crime, which is mainly due to alcohol (people getting involved in drunken fights).

G. Situation in 1991

People living below the poverty line:

- Whites: 7.7%
- Blacks: 23.6%
- All Indians: 26%
- Reservation Indians: 33%
- Pine Ridge Reservation: 52%

Average annual income:

- Whites: \$44,386
- Blacks: \$27,910
- Indians: \$30,784

Crime victim rate:

- Whites: 49‰
- Blacks: 61‰
- Indians: 124‰

Incarceration rate (proportion of the population that is in prison):

- Asians: 1/232
- Whites: 1/60
- Indians: 1/25
- Blacks: 1/12

X. Religion in America

A. Atheists in America

There are 5 to 14% atheists in the USA (figures are not reliable).

According to studies, atheists feel marginalized, excluded from the American life.

A poll in 2001 showed that less than 5% of Americans feel unfavourable to Christian and less than 5% feel unfavourable to Hebraism, whereas almost 1 American on 3 do not like atheists.

5% of Americans would not vote for a black president, whereas 50% would not vote for an atheist.

B. The Pervasiveness of Religion

90% of Americans believe in god, 70% belong to a church and 50% say they pray every day.

This is mainly due to the puritan heritage. Puritans believed they were god's chosen people who would find a new promised land in the new world.

Religion is present in most Americans private life, but also in public life: for instance, the President swears its oath on the bible, and Congress begins each session with a prayer.

Moreover, televangelism is quite important. Several TVs broadcast religious programs which have a great success.

Moreover, the policy of the Bush administration has been to transfer government money from government welfare programs to "faith-based" charities.

A recent issue of the magazine "Nation" showed a report on how poor people cope with crises. And the answer is that they go to churches.

C. Nature of Religion

1. Pluralism

Religion in America is pluralistic.

Americans are very tolerant. 60% of them are protestant, and the protestant religion is divided in many churches (about 1500 branches).

2. Individualism

Religion in America is individualistic in many ways.

There are several explanations :

- Protestantism : the protestant church was a revolt against the catholic church. It criticized the catholic church because it had many intermediaries between god and the individual. The protestants said that man required only the Bible and its own intelligence to find god.
- America has a free market economy based on the idea that everyone is free to choose the best product on the market. Americans think this applies also to religion.
- There is a social hierarchy of religion. Some churches are associated with the upper class, some with the middle class and others with the lower class. Sociologists discovered that when Americans change their social condition, they also change religion. Examples:
 - Poor: Baptist / Pentecost's church
 - Middle: Methodist / Catholic church
 - Upper: Episcopalian / Congregationalist church
- Some churches are racially segregated
- Geographic divisions in religion. Since the civil war, there has been a traditional division between North and South. The Catholic church, for instance, is concentrated in the North East.

3. Patriotism

Americans believe that it is patriotic to be religious.

This is an heritage from the "founding fathers" and the first puritan colonists: the first colonies were theocracies. One had to be a member of the church to vote.

After the revolution, this was ended and Church and State were separated. Yet, American politicians continued to believe that church membership was necessary for moral training of

good citizens and that Church supports good citizens.

Moreover, during the cold war, America fought against atheistic communism. This reinforced the link between the fact of being patriotic and being a member of a Church.

D. Dominance of a Minority

While religion is present everywhere, it is not practiced seriously by most Americans. A poll showed that:

- 20% goes to church every Sunday
- 22% go occasionally to church
- 29% go to church once a year either for a funeral, a wedding or to have their children baptised
- 30% Never put their feet in a church for any reason

Yet, religion has an important role in public life. There are 2 main reasons:

- Activism of religious minorities. They tend to be more active.
- Rise of the conservative protestant churches from 1970 to 1990. During these years, liberal or moderate churches lost members to conservative churches.

It reflects a general change in the American society (especially during Reagan years) who tends to be more conservative. This conservatism increased the impact of religion.

E. Issues in the Culture Wars

1. Abortion

In 1972, the American Supreme Court decided that women had a constitutional right to abortion. It started a violent conflict with some extremist churches: abortion practicing clinics were bombed and several abortion practicing doctors were assassinated.

Many states, which cannot refuse the right of women to abortion, have however passed laws to make it more difficult for women to abort.

2. School Prayer

In 1962, the Supreme Court decided that schools could not make children pray. Since then, there have been attempts to re-enter it, and even to make a constitutional amendment to make it possible.

Churches also want the 10 commandments to be taught in schools.

3. Creationism

Creationism is the theory opposed to Darwinism. Creationists say that the world was created literally the way the Bible tells it.

Conservative churches made it obligatory to teach creationism in schools in the same way as Darwinism is being taught.

4. Sex Education

Members of conservative churches estimate that sexual education actually encourages youngsters to have sexual relations outside of marriage. They have attempted to reduce or

eliminate sexual education.

5. Homosexuality

Conservative churches are opposed to civil rights for homosexuals. In the last presidential elections, homosexual marriage has become an important issue.

6. Racism

Some extremists have been attacked as being racist because of a theory that says that Jews were never really the “chosen people”, but ancestors of white Christians were.

XI. Media in the USA

A. Introduction

America is the country of the “mass media”. It has been called the “media state”. It counts more than 1,600 daily papers, 8,000 weekly papers, 1,500 TV channels and 10,000 radio channels.

Medias inform people, but they also form public opinion.

The most important media in the USA is TV.

B. Printed Press

Printed press is divided and fragmented. There is no real national newspaper (unlike UK), but there are hundreds of local newspapers. Only a few papers circulate across the whole country, like the New York Times, the Washington Post or the Los Angeles Times; and even these can only be found in big cities.

There is a concentration of membership. A few big companies owns many newspapers. Some people feel that this may be a danger for democracy.

Newspapers in America concentrate on local news (local sports, entertainments, etc.) . Little can be found about foreign or national news.

C. Broadcast Media

Broadcast medias have some of the same characteristics of the printed press. There is no national channel, but lots of independent companies that produce programs for local communities.

However, most of the small TV and radio stations sign contracts with major networks. These networks provide them with national programs and news.