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**History 1301**  
**U.S. to 1877**

Chapter 9

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Jacksonian America

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# Jacksonian America:

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- Era of the Common Man:
  - Belief that affluence and property was in reach for all (White) men
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  - Growth spawned social, political and economic chaos
    - Egalitarianism was a push against the Eastern Elites
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- American Character: From contemporaries
  - “M Factor” or “Movement, Migration, Mobility”
  - Frontier Experience (Frederick Jackson Turner)
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  - Alexis de Tocqueville *Democracy in America* (1835)
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  - Contemporary generalizations:
    - Personality: Self-confident / practical / Shrewd, Complainers about “them” and the damages done to “Us” / Loved Scandal and loved to believe the worst
    - conformists to fashion / Drinking and eating to excess
    - Values: Generosity and Do-gooders / Socially cruel especially toward blacks / Violence / Joiners / Hypocrites especially about Blacks and Indians / Prudish in public / Worlds most Materialistic people

## Jacksonian American (Continued)

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- Social Complexity
  - America was (seen both by themselves and Europe) as “Different” and “Republican” (Egalitarian)
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  - Affluent by European standards – only paupers were in cities
  - - Wealth and Culture lines established, sub-divided and delineated
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    - Western cities grew rapidly (Tree stumps in basements)
    - Aristocracy of wealth
  - Egalitarian Farmers
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- Mass Politics:
  - Belief in the Middle Class
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    - Working or earning valued
    - Eastern elites on top / Blacks & Indians on bottom
  - Politics were a “Morality Play”
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    - Heroes and villains
  - Local salaries were small so rich held office

# Jacksonian Politics:

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- Expanded electorate:
  - Starting in Midwest it became all white males
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  - Presidential electors chosen through popular election versus state legislatures by 1828
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  - Increasingly Democratic - political office holders began to be paid & secret ballot
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    - Spoils system gave common man access to power
    - Conventions vs. congressional caucuses
- 1828 Election:
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  - The election of 1828– “Era of the Common Man”
- Jackson as president:
  - Equal protection, equal benefits – actually an attack on the rich “*People’s Tribune*”
  - Spoils system – enforced turnover of office-holders
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  - Restrict Washington’s power
  - Supremacy of Union over States - Nullification

# Nullification Crisis:

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- The Crisis:
  - Tariff of 1828 – Tariff of Abominations
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  - Peggy Eaton – the “Eaton Affair” (1828 – 1830)
- John C Calhoun
  - South Carolina Aristocrat & professional politician.
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  - Theory of Nullification:
    - Jefferson & Madison – Virginia & Kentucky Resolves
    - Federal Gov’t a creation of the states – final arbitrators of constitutionality
    - Sectional protection - South was in a “permanent and hopeless minority” - economic and slavery issues
- Martin Van Buren:
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- Tariff of 1832
  - SC summoned state Nullification convention
  - nullified Tariff of 1828, 1832 and forbid the collection of duties
  - Jackson got “Force Bill” through congress and sent troops / Navy
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  - SC Nullification conv met to repeal nullifications

# Indian Removal:

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- American attitudes:
  - “Noble Savages” became just savages
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  - In the way for expansion – limited the common man
    - Lower land price & squatters’ rights escalated conflict
  - Gov’t created “super tribes” for ease of negotiation
- Removal Treaties 1817 – 1830
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  - Removal Act 1830 Better for them, better for Whites
- Black-hawk war 1831-2 in “Northwest” – Illinois and Michigan
- Southern need for cotton land drove Europeans against “Five Civilized Tribes”
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  - Cherokee attempt to use Supreme Court 1832 but Jackson didn’t support court
  - Various treaty / non treaty Cherokee factions vie for power 1830 – 1835 / Gov’t recognized treaty only
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  - Seminole War of 1835 – some stayed in Everglades
- Opened entire country east of Mississippi for white settlement and development

## Jackson and the Bank:

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- - Sound currency based on deposits of the United States – dominated regional and local banking
  - 80% privately owned / 29 Branches
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- Soft money –
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- Hard money
  - Coin – specie – only real money with value –
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- Bank Crisis
  - Jackson saw BUS / Biddle as Eastern Elite control of entire US
  - Webster and Clay supported bank and Congress passed renewal of charter in 1832 for Jackson to Veto – became the key issue of 1832 Election
    - Clay and National Republicans lost to Jackson / Van Buren
  - - Two Sec of Treasury resigned before Taney did it
    - BUS calls in loans to cover and starts recession
- - Sided with entrepreneurs over established companies – well-being of the community
  - Expansion of economic democracy – destroying old monopolies

## Two Party System in 1830s:

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- “King Andrew I”
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  - Nullification and Bank were seen as personal vendettas
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  - Machine party politics organizing to electoral victory
- Democrats:
  - Gov’t should be limited except when it worked to increased social aspirations and economic power
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  - Against monopoly and privilege
- Whigs:
  - Expanding the power of the Fed Gov’t to encourage industrial and commercial development
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- Both more interested in winning elections than philosophy
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  - Southern Planters tended to Democrats against Industrial and Commercial northerners
  - Whigs had Clay, Webster and Calhoun – not effective National leaders
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# Post-Jackson

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- Van Buren
  - Panic of 1837 – followed banking crisis
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    - State banks had to call in loans to cover Fed govt payouts to state ... easy credit loans were shaky and fell
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- William Henry Harrison 1840
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  - died within a month of taking office
- - Squatter “preemption” – gave squatters the right to buy 160 acres at lowest price before land could be sold to others
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  - Vetoed internal improvement bills
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