American Westward Expansion “The Wild West”

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Back ground

Westward expansion within America was inevitable, beginning with Louisiana Purchase; settlers faced much conflict during this time period, finally residing with modernization of society. The acquisition of the Louisiana purchased doubled the size of America and kicked off westward expansion as an entirety. Attaining the territory was a hardship itself for Thomas Jefferson, contradicting his statement of trying to lower the debt of the nation, purchasing it for 15 million dollars. It is hypothesized that , US expansion to the West was one of the most important factors in the formation and development of American capitalism.

The first westward state to come out of the purchase was Louisiana; (1) Louisiana was allowed to enter the United States with its French legal traditions largely in place[[1]](#footnote-1). One of the largest expeditions of the Louisiana purchase was conducted by Louis and Clark and organized by Thomas Jefferson. Along the way they face many challenges due to the overall unknown land. Some of the challenges included abnormal weather, such as various different types of storms, all the way from thunderstorms to dust storms. Dealing with the native Americans within the newly owned lands proved to be mostly in their favor but some were not so hospitable. Eventually being conquered by human modernization, this is some of the America we see today.

In September 1817, minority tribes living in Ohio signed treaties of consent to “displacement”, and by the end of 1818, Wyandots, Delaware, Seneca, Miami, Potauatomi, Ottawa, Kaskaskia, and several other tribes. Indian lands were expropriated throughout Ohio and almost completely in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan[[2]](#footnote-2) . It seems to us that the main reason that persuaded the Indians to leave their lands was not the persuasion of the authorized government, but the lines of newly built forts with strong garrisons deeply wedged into the Indian lands.

In October 1820, General E. Jackson and T. Hinds, known for their reprisals against the shouting rebels, gathered several hundred Choktavs, led by their leaders, to negotiate in Doakes Stand (Mississippi) with government authority. By any means (soldering, bribing the top of the tribes, intimidation, etc.), they sought to force the Choktavs to abandon land in the state of Mississippi in exchange for territory west of the river. As a result, Jackson managed to get the Choktavs to give up their rights to own a huge array of fertile land in the western part of central Mississippi [[3]](#footnote-3) . In 1824, teals and cries were forced to abandon 15 million acres (more than half of their land) in Georgia and Alabama .

As the facts testify, the governments of presidents J. Monroe and J. C. Adams energetically carried out in 1817-1824. course on the "movement" of the Indians over the river. Mississippi. However, the most aggressive circles colonizers showed dissatisfaction "slowness in the purification of the Mississippi Valley from the Indians," the fact that the government gave "priority negotiations" moved "by refraining from the use of force"[[4]](#footnote-4) . The legislatures of Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Missouri, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan demanded a more decisive expulsion of the Indians from Mississippi .

American historians of the bourgeois-apologetic direction are trying to remove the blame for the robbery and extermination of the Indians from the US government. They claim that the government allegedly took a “high moral mediator position”, protecting the tribes from the arbitrariness and cruelty of the planters, land speculators and squatters invading their lands. These historians are trying to reinforce such allegations by the fact that until 1871 the seizure of Indian lands was carried out on the basis of treaties concluded through negotiations between authorized representatives of the federal government and representatives of the tribes . Each new treaty, according to R. Bartlett, was “a reaffirmation of the good intentions of the government,” since they “always guaranteed protection of the ownership of those lands that were still preserved” for the Indians [[5]](#footnote-5).

Government policies stimulated violent action by planters and squatters. They increasingly invaded spontaneously the lands of the tribes and captured them. In Illinois, for example, the colonialists, taking advantage of the Saka men 's hunting trips, attacked their village near the Rock River and seized land. The Saki under the leadership of the Black Falcon started the war but were defeated and lost their lands .The "movement" of the Indians brought rich booty to the merchants. They raised prices for the goods necessary for migration and used the auction system introduced by the government for the delivery of Indians to the place of the new settlement. After receiving a contract, the merchants fed the immigrants with products of the lowest quality and transported them in appalling unsanitary conditions .

By the end of his tenure, E. Jackson as president, west of the river. Mississippi was resettled by about 46 thousand Indians, about 50 thousand pledged to resettle there. Nearly 100 million acres of land were taken from the “displaced” indigenous population[[6]](#footnote-6) . The expulsion of the Indians over the river. Mississippi continued under the successors of Jackson M.Van Buren (1837-1841) and J. Tyler (1841-1845). In 1844, the Minister of War reported to President Tyler that east of the river. Mississippi Indians have no more land that the United States would like to receive from them . Since the formation of the United States, 442.9 million acres of land have been taken from the indigenous population with compensation in the amount of less than 10 with a quarter cents per acre and the provision of 53.8 million acres per river. Mississippi[[7]](#footnote-7) .

The Indians, expelled from forest areas and the wet prairie, found themselves in arid terrain. Often the same territory was assigned to two or more tribes, and conflicts arose between them. In those cases when the lands allotted to the "displaced" were already captured by the whites, the government forced the Indians to go even further to the arid prairie.

The government argued that one of the goals of "displacement" was to create the conditions for the transition of Indians to agriculture. The real consequences of the resettlement turned out to be completely opposite. Tribes of the South, for example, long before the "displacement" successfully engaged in agriculture, as a result of expulsion from the river. Mississippi was thrown back in its development[[8]](#footnote-8). Having not received the equipment promised to them by the government by the time of sowing, they had to return to hunting, in order to provide themselves with food. A French sociologist who traveled around the United States during these years, who usually spoke enthusiastically about American society, wrote about the situation of the “displaced” Indians: “Torn off from the ground of their ancestors, bored like cattle, with a broken social structure, eating poor-quality meat and flour.

Conclusion

Over the course of more than a century, US expansion to the West was one of the most important factors in the formation and development of American capitalism. Expansionism is embedded in the very nature of the United States as a bourgeois state. Aggression against other peoples and the plunder of the lands of the Indians (the “moving frontier”) have become an important source of enrichment for the bourgeoisie and US planters. As a result of the expansion, the vast territory of the continent was annexed to the 13 original states, which occupied a narrow coastal strip of the Atlantic that did not exceed 200-400 km, and the USA turned into a large state, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean[[9]](#footnote-9). Vast tracts of fertile land and rich fuel, ore, and forest resources were put at the service of developing American capitalism.

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1. Westward extension.,1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Billington, Allen, and Hedges. Westward expansion: a history of the American.,141. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Billington, Allen, and Hedges. Westward expansion: a history of the American.,142. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid., 157 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ibid.,254 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Katz. The Black West: A documentary and pictorial history of the African.,77. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid.,143 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Udall, Dykstra, Bellesiles, Marks, and Nobles. "How the West Got Wild: American Media and Frontier Violence.,277 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ibid., 287 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)