Looking East

William Howard Taft
and the 1905 Mission to Asia

The Photographs of
Harry Fowler Woods

TEACHING GUIDE
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Discovering the 1905 Harry Fowler Woods Photographs

During my recent college years, when I spent a summer as a trail intern for the Adirondack League Club (ALC) near Old Forge, New York, I stayed at our extended family’s rustic camp within the ALC preserve. During that time, I was fortunate to come upon the 1905 Taft expedition photographs that had been taken and catalogued by my great-great grandfather, Harry Fowler Woods. These hundred-year-old photos had rested on a shelf in the Bee Hive, the main building in the Woods Camp, for as long as the family could remember. The photographs number 1,100 and are carefully arranged with captions in five leather-bound volumes. After viewing the incredibly large, historically rich volume of images, I realized that they needed to be preserved for generations to come.

As a history student with a specialization in American and British colonial history, I recognized the importance of preserving this valuable photographic collection, which can further the understanding of United States history and foreign policy in the early 1900s. Additionally, these images capture the culture and history from the same time period of numerous foreign places—China, Philippines, Japan, Hawaii, Egypt, India, Burma, Korea, Vietnam, and Greece. Furthermore, it became apparent that the Adirondacks, with its extreme temperature and humidity variations, was one of the worst environments for the storage of the photographs. I was aware that in a few decades or less, if these photos were not digitally copied and preserved, they would be totally and forever lost to future generations.

Although some family members argued to keep the photographs on the shelf where they had always been, we were fortunate that a consensus developed to prevent what would have been a tragic mishandling of such a valuable historical resource. Through digital restoration, we were able to create five facsimile volumes to place in the Adirondacks for family members to continue to enjoy.

After further studying the images, we realized that the Harry Fowler Woods 1905 photographs are unique because they offer visual insight into a critical moment in East-West relations during America’s transformation into a world power as well as shedding light on its first and last period of administrative colonial rule in the Philippines. Some of the photos of major political figures on the international scene open a window on important years of William Howard Taft’s political career that have not yet received the same attention as those during his tenure as United States president or chief justice of the Supreme Court. They record images from places such as San Francisco, Nagasaki, and Tokyo that were substantially altered or destroyed by earthquakes or other man-made disasters, as well as Shanghai in its “European” grandeur. Because the hand-held camera had recently come on the market, the Harry Fowler Woods photographs also present an early use of snapshot photography as a documentary form.

In collaboration with the Friends of the William Howard Taft Birthplace, we are organizing a traveling exhibition of the images in various locations around the United States, and, possibly, in the Philippines, China, and Japan.

For exhibit dates and locations, visit the website: www.ohiohistory.org/tafttrip.

JAMES STEVER

James Stever is a relative of William Howard Taft and the great-great-grandson of photographer Harry Fowler Woods. He is currently a graduate student in the History Department at Brown University.
This guide is based on Looking East: William Howard Taft and the 1905 Mission to Asia, The Photographs of Harry Fowler Woods, an exhibition of historic photographs documenting a diplomatic mission at the beginning of what came to be known as “the American century.”

While the visual media of video and film are frequently used as teaching tools, photographs capture a series of moments in time and offer students an unusual glimpse into the past. The photos in the Looking East exhibition were taken at a time when the United States was a fledgling world power and just beginning to deal with issues of immigration and global economic control—issues that are still with us today.

The activities in this guide are written for upper middle school and high school students in Modern American History and Modern World History classes. Although the activities are designed as supplements to textbooks and other curriculum materials, they can also be modified to serve as “stand alone” activities. As such, the activities can help students appreciate the significance of the 1905 journey to Asia and how this particular collection of photographs provides a unique window into American understanding of Asia at that time. Moreover, the lessons encourage students to analyze primary source documents against secondary source history, and offer extensions for practice that engage students in discovering their own communities’ histories.

Additional photographs from the Harry Fowler Woods collection, as well as other historical information, are at www.ohiohistory.org/tafttrip.

The lessons in this guide meet the following standards for grades 7-12:

National History Standards  http://nchs.ucla.edu/standards/era2-5-12.html

Era 6 – The Development of the Industrial United States (1870–1900)
Standard 4B  The student understands the roots and development of American expansionism and the causes of the Spanish-American War. Therefore the student is able to:
—Trace the acquisition of new territories. [Reconstruct patterns of historical succession and duration]
—Describe how geopolitics, economic interests, racial ideology, missionary zeal, nationalism, and domestic tensions combined to create an expansionist foreign policy. [Analyze cause-and-effect relationships]
—Evaluate the causes, objectives, character, and outcome of the Spanish-American War. [Interrogate historical data]
—Explain the causes and consequences of the Filipino insurrection.

Era 7 – The Emergence of Modern America (1890–1930)
Standard 1B  The student understands Progressivism at the national level. Therefore the student is able to:
—Evaluate the presidential leadership of Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson in terms of their effectiveness in obtaining passage of reform measures. [Assess the importance of the individual]
—Explain why the election of 1912 was a pivotal campaign for the Progressive movement. [Interrogate historical data]

Standard 2A  The student understands how the American role in the world changed in the early 20th century. Therefore the student is able to:
—Analyze the reasons for the Open Door Policy. [Formulate a position or course of action on an issue]
—Evaluate the Roosevelt administration’s foreign policies. [Evaluate the implementation of a decision]
—Explain relations with Japan and the significance of the “Gentleman’s Agreement.”
—Compare Taft’s dollar diplomacy with Roosevelt’s big stick diplomacy and evaluate the results. [Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas]

National Geography Standards  http://www.ncge.net/geography/standards
Standard 1—Understands how to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information.
Standard 6—Understands how culture and experience influence people’s perception of places and regions.
Standard 13—Understands how forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of earth’s surface.
Standard 17—Understands how to apply geography to interpret the past.
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The 1905 Diplomatic Mission to the Far East in Historical Perspective

BY MARGO STEVER & JAMES TAFT STEVER

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IN THE SUMMER OF 1905, William Howard Taft, secretary of war under President Theodore Roosevelt, led a major delegation on a three-month goodwill tour of the Far East. The entourage of thirty-five U.S. congressmen, seven U.S. senators, and a group of civilians included the media darling of the era, Alice Roosevelt, daughter of President Theodore Roosevelt. In the traveling party were a number of representatives and businessmen from Taft’s own state of Ohio, among them Congressman Charles Grosvenor, banker and philanthropist J.G. Schmidlapp, and Nicholas Longworth, a freshman member who later became Speaker of the House.

The decade preceding this trip—the decade of the 1890s—had seen the rise of American expansionism. American industry was producing more than could be sold here at home and was seeking markets for its goods beyond U.S. borders. At the same time, geopolitical concerns over the encroachment of European powers into areas that could be exploited for both resources and trade propelled the United States into becoming a player on the world stage. Also fueling American expansionism was the widely-held attitude of Anglo-Saxon superiority and the belief that it was the duty of people so blessed to spread that culture to “lesser” peoples.

By 1898 the United States had increased its territorial holdings to include Hawaii, annexed five years after sugar planters overthrew Queen Liliuokalani, and the islands of Guam, Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines, which were acquired as a result of the Spanish-American War. The domination of the Philippines by the United States after that war represented America’s new sense of empire, its first and last period of administrative colonial rule, and its new image as a world power. This foray into administrative colonialism only fed the struggle between imperialists and anti-imperialists over America’s role in the world and the nature of U.S. foreign policy—a conflict that began in the 1890s and continued into the twentieth century.

As historian Ronald Takaki discusses in his book Iron Cages, Theodore Roosevelt, in developing his expansionist foreign policy, drew on the thinking of Alfred Thayer Mahan. He was a career naval officer and historian whose seminal book, The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, called attention to the importance of the navy for international power. If in the past America’s energy was directed internally, Mahan argued the nation would in the future have to look beyond her
borders. With an adequate navy, Mahan believed the United States could “control” Far Eastern territories and achieve social good in places such as the Philippines, because of a perceived lack of resistance and the degrading conditions that existed in those regions. Mahan believed that the Asian lands were “rich in possibilities, but unfruitful through the incapacity of negligence,” and that they lay idle because they were inhabited by “incompetent” races. Mahan argued that there was no “natural right” to land. Land cannot be claimed if left “idle,” and can only be possessed through “political fitness” and the ability to make the land productive. This, Mahan argued, could only be achieved through practicing the qualities of Anglo-Saxons, who had an “aptitude for self-government” and a “tenacious adherence to recognized law.”

Influential pro-expansionists, including Mahan, Roosevelt, scholars such as George Beard, and public speakers such as Josiah Strong, had a deep-seated belief in social Darwinist theories that invoked highly degrading and racist undertones. Drawing on Mahan’s ideas, Roosevelt fashioned a uniquely American expansionist foreign policy that would cast the United States as “benevolent, progressive policemen” and equate expansion of American influence overseas as the gateway to individual liberty, creating a seemingly benign version of empire.

Many anti-imperialists supported social Darwinist theories and Anglo-Saxon superiority, and similarly utilized racially charged arguments to dissuade the American public from supporting U.S. expansionism. Instead of arguing that Anglo-Saxon superiority was a reasonable excuse to dominate distant cultures and territories, many anti-imperialists believed that U.S. expansionism overseas would eventually result in incorporating weaker, inferior races into the superior gene pool of the United States. These Americans were hesitant to introduce democracy and civil rights to large groups of foreigners who many in the United States deemed inferior. During this period the United States was having difficulty integrating racial minorities residing within its existing borders. In the debate over whether to grant the Philippines statehood or not, Americans would have to consider giving a “colored” group of people the same rights as white citizens who lived within the continental United States. The idea of equal rights for both white Americans and a “colored” race was difficult enough to accept, but there was also the challenge of convincing African Americans, Indians, and other ethnic minorities whose rights were being denied at home that people in the far-off Philippines should be granted the privileges of citizenship.

The Taft party on board the S.S. Manchuria was steaming into a scenario in which U.S. power was on the rise, but was by no means universally accepted. The Chinese were angry about the restriction of Chinese immigration to the United States and its territories, and pockets of resistance to U.S. rule still existed in the Philippines. The Philippine situation was a hot political issue at home and would continue to be for some years, as resistance to the United States resulted in bloody confrontations such as the Battle of the Clouds between Jolo Muslims and American soldiers, launched only seven months after the Taft party’s visit there.

The 1905 mission to the Far East was a historic event, not only because of its official diplomatic objectives, but also because of the manner in which it was recorded. All of this diplomacy would be represented mainly by letters, public correspondence, cablegrams, memos, and written memoirs but for the appearance of a new technology—the hand-held camera.

One traveler in the group, Harry Fowler Woods, proved to be a prolific photographer. He documented the 1905 mission with over 700 photographs depicting scenes in San Francisco, Honolulu, Japan, the Philippines, and China. Viewed from a historical perspective, some of Woods’s photographs define this unique moment of history that marked a convergence of the U.S. rise to world-leader status and groundbreaking developments in the technology for recording momentous events.
A Brief Chronology of the 1905 Diplomatic Trip to the Far East

(Based on stories from the New York Times, from H.F. Woods captions, and W.H. Taft Papers)

**June 15**  Taft gives the commencement address at Miami University of Ohio, speaking of Roosevelt’s personality and impartiality as factors in bringing about peace between Russia and Japan. He also states that the Chinese Exclusion Law is based on prejudice and injures commerce.

**June 30**  Taft and party board the train to San Francisco in Washington, D.C., the first leg of the voyage to the Far East.

**July 2**  Taft meets with the chief engineer of the Panama Canal during a stop in Chicago.

**July 4**  Taft party arrives in San Francisco.

**July 8**  The party boards the *S.S. Manchuria* and departs for the crossing to Japan.

**July 14**  Taft and party arrive in Honolulu, Hawaii, at daybreak and are given an official day-long sightseeing tour.

**July 18**  The *S.S. Manchuria* crosses the 180 meridian.

**IN JAPAN**

**July 25**  Taft party lands in Tokyo and proceeds to Yokohama, where they are greeted with salvos of “OHIO,” the Japanese salutation.

**July 26**  The official members of the party are entertained by the emperor and empress of Japan at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo. They are the first Westerners ever to visit palace gardens.

**July 27**  Taft meets with Count Katsura, Japan’s prime minister, to discuss terms of a peace treaty to end the Russo-Japanese War.

**July 29**  While traveling to Kyoto, the party is cheered at all stops along the way. During receptions, Japanese officials make speeches thanking the United States for support during the war with Russia.
IN THE PHILIPPINES

August 5  Taft party arrives in the Philippines where they spend the rest of the month.

August 7  Taft shakes 3,000 hands at a reception at the Malacanan Palace in Manila. According to the New York Times, “Spanish residents say that the reception surpassed any in the previous history of Manila.”

August 12  The citizens of Manila hold a ball in honor of Alice Roosevelt at the Government House. According to the New York Times, “It was the most brilliant and elaborate affair in the history of the city.” Miss Roosevelt is presented with a “viceregal native gown” that took several Filipino women three months to make.

August 16  In Bacolad, the Taft party is brought to land on a raft and welcomed by an orchestra. The weight of the party sank the lower deck below the surface of the water.

August 17  In Zamboanga, Secretary Taft and Governor Wright meet with Moro Datus.

August 18  In Jolo, the sultan of Sulu presents a pearl ring to Alice Roosevelt, leading to false reports that he proposed marriage to her. Festivities include cock fighting, bull fighting, native warriors with spears, and caribaos.

August 22 – 26  The party visits the towns of Cebu, Tacloban, Lagaspi, and Sorsogon.

IN CHINA

September 2  Taft party arrives in Hong Kong.

September 3  Party decides to go ahead to Canton in spite of anti-American sentiments there.

September 4  Back in Hong Kong, the party spends the day at lunches and other functions. The next day, Taft party splits in two groups, with Taft’s group of about sixty people going to Shanghai, and Miss Roosevelt’s group of about twenty-eight people going to Peking.
September 5  
*Treaty of Portsmouth signed in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, ending the Russo-Japanese War.*  
Anti-treaty riots erupt throughout Japan.

September 12  
Alice Roosevelt and group arrive at Peking where they visit the Forbidden City.

September 17  
*Taft departs for the United States. He is given a farewell reception by the merchants of Yokohama before sailing for San Francisco.*

**IN KOREA**

September 19  
Alice Roosevelt arrives in Korea and is transported to Seoul by way of the “imperial yellow palanquin” and the imperial train car.

September 20  
In Seoul, Alice Roosevelt and the American Minister Morgan are entertained by the emperor. It is the first time the emperor has ever lunched with foreigners.

September 22  
Alice Roosevelt and the other American women attend a woman’s luncheon at the palace hosted by the emperor’s consort. It is the first time in the history of the country that women of the court have entertained foreigners.

September 24  
In Seoul (under Japanese domination at the time), Miss Roosevelt and party attend athletic events of Japanese school boys and are received by the Japanese Educational Committee.

**THE RETURN TRIP**

October 1  
Alice Roosevelt and party return to Japan. They spend the next ten days sightseeing and attending receptions.

October 2  
Taft arrives in Washington, D.C., at 3:27 p.m. The *New York Times* reports that his time between Chicago and Washington breaks records. That evening Taft dines with the Roosevelts.

October 13  
Alice Roosevelt and her party depart Yokohama for San Francisco on the *S.S. Siberia*.

October 1  
Following the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth, the mood of the Japanese dramatically changed. The Japanese people had expected much larger territorial concessions from the Russians and blamed President Roosevelt for this failure. Miss Roosevelt and her group are advised to pretend they were from England to avoid the ire of the populace.

October 17  
Reports abound that Alice Roosevelt may have to pay up to $5,000 custom duties on the gifts that she was given by dignitaries during her trip. This leads to much discussion, since she would not have been able to refuse any of the gifts presented to her.

October 25  
The media reports that the train carrying Alice Roosevelt made the trip between San Francisco and Chicago in fifty hours. Until then, the best time for the trip was sixty-eight hours. According to her autobiography, *Crowded Hours*, Miss Roosevelt and her group reached New York in a record speed—from Yokohama to New York in thirteen days. Alice Roosevelt returns to Washington, D.C., on October 27.

December 23  
People are calling William H. Taft “Cupid” because two engagements came about as a result of the trip—that of Alice Roosevelt and Nicholas Longworth, and Rep. Swager Sherley of Kentucky and Miss Mignon Critten.
Glossary

**Boxer Rebellion** — an uprising in China by the Righteous and Harmonious Society, a group that came to be known as ‘Boxers’ because of the peculiar way that they fought. From 1899 to 1901, the group mounted a series of attacks against foreign influence in areas such as trade, politics, religion, and technology. By August 1901, over 230 foreigners, tens of thousands of Chinese Christians, an unknown number of rebels, their sympathizers, and other innocent bystanders had been killed in the ensuing chaos. The uprising crumbled on August 14, 1900, when 20,000 foreign troops entered the Chinese capital, Peking (Beijing).

**Chinese Exclusion Act** — a law passed in 1892 barring Chinese from immigrating to the United States. This was the nation’s first law to ban immigration by race or nationality. All Chinese people—except travelers, merchants, teachers, students, and those born in the United States—were barred from entering the country. Federal law prohibited Chinese residents, no matter how long they had legally worked in the United States, from becoming naturalized citizens. The ban on Chinese immigration lasted until 1943.

**Open Door Policy** — U.S. economic policy promulgated in the latter part of the nineteenth century whereby China would provide the U.S. and European powers equal access to Chinese markets.

**Dollar diplomacy** — the policy followed by William H. Taft, who believed that the goal of diplomacy was to create stability and order abroad that would best promote American commercial interests. In contrast to Theodore Roosevelt’s use of force to achieve American goals in other countries, Taft encouraged the deployment of private capital to build up trade and protect American interests, especially in Latin America.

**Imperialism** — the control of one country by another, usually through the conquest of territory and setting up of colonies.

**Expansionism** — the extending of a country’s presence and influence into foreign countries for the purpose of finding new markets for that country’s goods; this also includes the annexation of territories for the purpose of extending a country’s boundaries.

**Colonialism** — the active settlement in a country by people of another country whose government has taken over rulership of the colonized country.

**Russo-Japanese War** — conflict between Russia and Japan from 1904 to 1905 over territorial demands in Manchuria’s Liaodong Peninsula and along the Yalu River, which lies between China and Korea. Japan defeated Russia, and the Treaty of Portsmouth, brokered by Theodore Roosevelt, gave the Liaodong Peninsula to Japan along with the southern half of Sakhalin Island. In addition, Russia agreed to leave Manchuria and recognize Japan’s interests in Korea.

**Gentleman’s Agreement** — a series of six diplomatic notes exchanged between Japan and the United States from late 1907 to early 1908. The immediate impetus for the agreement was anti-Japanese sentiment in California, which had become increasingly strong after the Japanese victory over Russia in the Russo-Japanese War. In the agreement, Japan agreed not to issue passports for Japanese citizens wishing to work in the continental United States, thus effectively eliminating new Japanese immigration to America. In exchange, the United States agreed to accept the presence of Japanese immigrants already residing in America, and to permit the immigration of wives, children, and parents, and to avoid legal discrimination against Japanese children in California schools. President Theodore Roosevelt, who had a positive opinion of Japan, accepted the agreement as proposed by Japan as an alternative to more formal, restrictive immigration legislation. The Gentleman’s Agreement was later unilaterally abrogated by the United States with the U.S. Immigration Act of 1924.

**Manifest Destiny** — the belief that the United States was divinely destined to spread American values and institutions across the face of the earth. It was used to rationalize territorial expansion by any means throughout the nineteenth century, but a more humane aspect regarded the spreading of American values and institutions as the sharing of God’s blessings with less fortunate peoples.

**Monroe Doctrine** — the rule announced by President James Monroe in 1823 that other nations must not seek new colonies in the Western hemisphere. The (Theodore) Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine said that the United States alone had police power in Central America and the Caribbean.

**Jingoism** — chauvinistic patriotism, usually with a hawkish political stance. A popular term in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it is usually associated with segments of the general public who advocate bullying other countries or using whatever means necessary to safeguard a country’s national interests.

**Yellow journalism** — a pejorative reference to journalism that features scandal-mongering, sensationalism, jingoism, or other unethical or unprofessional practices by news media organizations or individual journalists. The term originated during the circulation battles between Joseph Pulitzer’s *New York World* and William Randolph Hearst’s *New York Journal* from 1895 to about 1898. Both papers were accused by critics of sensationalizing the news in order to drive up circulation, although the newspapers did serious reporting as well. The New York press coined the term “yellow journalism” in early 1897 to describe the papers of Pulitzer and Hearst, although the specific reason for choosing that term is unknown.
Commodore Matthew C. Perry visits Japan to seek free trade between the United States and Japan, good treatment for shipwrecked American sailors, and permission to use Japanese ports to re-supply American ships.

The United States purchases Alaska from Russia for $7 million.

Congress passes the Chinese Exclusion Act, calling for a ten-year moratorium on Chinese labor immigration. The law was extended in 1892 for ten more years, and made ‘permanent’ in 1902.

Japanese temporary laborers begin migrating to Hawaii.

Evangelist Dwight L. Moody founds the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions (SVM), swelling the number of young Americans entering the foreign mission field.

Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, a leading advocate of a brash American foreign policy, publishes his seminal book, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History*.
OF AMERICAN EXPANSIONISM

1893
A bloodless coup against Queen Liliuokalani of Hawaii is staged by American sugar planters.

1896
William McKinley is elected president of the United States.
Alaska gold rush occurs in the Klondike.

1898
Congress declares war on Spain.
Hawaii is annexed by the United States.

1899
Under orders of President McKinley, American troops occupy the Philippines to put down the anti-American insurrection.

1900
The Boxer Rebellion against foreign presence in China takes place in Peking (Beijing).

1901
President McKinley is assassinated (Sept. 13); Theodore Roosevelt assumes the presidency.

1904
Theodore Roosevelt is elected president.

1904-05
President Roosevelt brokers the Treaty of Portsmouth, ending the Russo-Japanese War. Riots occur in Tokyo, sparked by Japanese disappointment over the conditions of the treaty.

1905
Riots occur in Tokyo, sparked by Japanese disappointment over the conditions of the treaty.

1906
President Roosevelt issues an Executive Order prohibiting labor migration from Hawaii to the West Coast.

1908
Secretary of War William Howard Taft leads a diplomatic mission to Japan, the Philippines and China.
William Howard Taft is elected president of the United States.
Capsule Histories

JAPAN

On March 3, 1854, Commodore Matthew Perry and the “Black Ships” of the United States Navy forced the opening of Japan to the West with the Convention of Kanagawa. Before Perry’s arrival, Japan had not always been a closed country. During the 1500s, traders and missionaries from Portugal reached Japan for the first time, initiating a period of active commercial and cultural exchange between Japan and the West. In 1639, the shogunate began the isolationist policy that spanned the two and a half centuries known as the Edo period.

The shogunate resigned after the Boshin War of 1867–68, and the Meiji Restoration established a government centered on the emperor. Japan adopted numerous Western institutions, including a modern government, legal system, and military. Japan also introduced a parliamentary system modeled after the British Parliament, with Ito Hirobumi as first prime minister in 1882. The Meiji Era reforms helped transform the Empire of Japan into a world power. The country embarked on a number of military conflicts to increase access to natural resources, with victories in the First Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 and the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. The latter was the first time that an Asian country defeated a European imperial power. By 1910, Japan controlled Korea and the southern half of Sakhalin Island.

The early twentieth century saw a brief period of democracy overshadowed by the rise of Japanese expansionism and militarism. World War I enabled Japan, which fought on the side of the victorious Allies, to expand its influence in Asia and its territorial holdings in the Pacific. In 1920 Japan joined the League of Nations and became a member of its security council. Japan continued its expansionist policy by occupying Manchuria in 1931. The ensuing criticism from the league prompted Japan’s withdrawal in 1933. In 1936, Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact with Germany, later joining the Axis Powers alliance in 1941.

The Second Sino-Japanese War of 1937-45 started when Japan again attacked China, at the same time invading many countries and islands in southeast Asia and the Pacific. As a result of Japan’s actions, an oil embargo and other sanctions were put in place by the Western nations, including the United States, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor and declared war on those countries.

In a steady campaign during World War II, Japan’s forces in the occupied lands under its control were destroyed or neutralized. American forces advanced toward Japan, ultimately carrying out the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These attacks killed several hundred thousand Japanese, and brought about an early end to the war. After the atomic bombings, Japan agreed to an unconditional surrender.

The occupation of Japan by the Allied Powers started in August 1945 and ended in April 1952. With General Douglas MacArthur as its first Supreme Commander, the occupation and re-building of Japan was carried out mainly by the United States. As a result of World War II, Japan lost all the territory it had acquired after 1894. In addition, the Kurile Islands were occupied by the Soviet Union, and the Ryukyu Islands, including Okinawa, were controlled by the United States. Okinawa was returned to Japan in 1972; however, a territorial dispute with Russia concerning the Kurile Islands has not yet been resolved.

THE PHILIPPINES

Spanish colonial rule began in 1565 and lasted for about three centuries until the Philippine Revolution of 1896. In the intervening 331 years, the Spanish military fought off various local indigenous revolts and colonial challenges. Such challenges came from the British, Chinese, Dutch, French, Japanese, and Portuguese. Under the Spanish, the Philippines opened itself to world trade in September, 1834.

The United States gained possession of the Philippines after the Spanish-American War in 1898 and ruled the country for about five decades. The Spanish-American War began in Cuba in 1895 and reached the Philippines in 1898 when Commodore George Dewey defeated the Spanish squadron at Manila Bay. Filipinos initially saw their relationship with the United States as that of two nations joined in a common struggle against Spain. As allies, Filipinos had provided the American forces with valuable intelligence and military support. However, the United States later distanced itself from the interests of the Filipino insurgents. Emilio Aguinaldo, who led the fight for Philippine independence, was unhappy that the United States would not commit to paper a statement of support for Philippine independence. Relations deteriorated and tensions heightened as it became clear that the Americans were in the islands to stay.

Aguinaldo declared the independence of the Philippines on June 12, 1898, and was proclaimed head of state. As a result of its defeat in the war, Spain ceded the Philippines, together with Cuba, Guam, and Puerto Rico to the United States. In 1899 hostilities again broke out after two American privates on patrol killed three Filipino soldiers in San Juan, a Manila suburb. This incident sparked the Philippine-American War, which cost far more money and took far more lives than the Spanish-American War. Some 126,000 American soldiers were committed to the conflict; 4,234 Americans died, as did 16,000 Filipino soldiers who were part of a nationwide guerrilla movement of indeterminate numbers. Estimates on civilian deaths during the war range between 250,000 and 1,00,000, largely because of famine and disease. Atrocities were committed by both sides. The United States proclaimed an end to the war when Aguinaldo was captured by American troops on March 23, 1901, but the struggle continued until 1913.
The United States defined its colonial mission as one of tutelage, preparing the Philippines for eventual independence. Civil government was established by the United States in 1901, with William Howard Taft as the first American civil governor of the Philippines, replacing the military governor, Arthur MacArthur, Jr. United States policies towards the Philippines shifted with changing administrations. During the early years of colonial rule, the Americans were reluctant to delegate authority to the Filipinos. However, when Woodrow Wilson became U.S. President in 1913, a new policy was adopted to put into motion a process that would gradually lead to Philippine independence.

The country’s status as a colony was turned into that of a commonwealth in 1935, which provided for more self-governance. Plans for independence in the next decade were underway, although this was briefly interrupted by the Pacific War when Japan occupied the country. The Philippines achieved independence from America on July 4, 1946.

**KOREA**

During its early history, Korea existed as three separate kingdoms, which melded together through war and annexation. From the thirteenth through the sixteenth centuries, Korea was invaded by the Mongolian Empire, the Qing Dynasty of China, and by Japan.

During the nineteenth century, Korea was known as the “hermit kingdom” because of its isolationist policy toward the rest of the world. The only country allied with Korea during this time was China. However, this was a difficult position since Western powers and Japan were trying to acquire countries for their colonial conquests.

The Sino-Japanese War occurred in 1894 when China and Japan clashed over control of the Korean peninsula. After the murder of Empress Myeongseong at the hands of the Japanese, the Koreans looked towards Russia for help. This prompted the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, pitting Japan against Russia for control of Korea. Russia was defeated, and by 1910 Japan had successfully gained absolute control of Korea, and the country was annexed to Japan.

The period that followed, from 1910 to 1945, marked a bitter campaign of economic exploitation and social repression by the Japanese against the Koreans. Thousands were murdered or forced to fight as Japanese soldiers while the agricultural and natural resources were exported to Japan. In 1945, when the Japanese surrendered to the Allies, Korea was divided in half, with the United States controlling the South and the Soviets the North.

**CHINA**

Chinese written history dates back about 5,000 years, but it is not known whether the records of the Xian dynasty (2100-1500 B.C.) are fact or mythology. The Shang dynasty, which followed, was the first of a long succession of ruling powers that repeated a cycle of cultural, economic, and political growth, followed by corruption, rebellion, and the establishment of a new dynasty. Both Confucianism and Taoism—the two strongest and most enduring of Chinese philosophies—emerged during the Zhou dynasty (1100-771 B.C.). In the third century B.C., the Qin dynasty united the Chinese people into one empire for the first time, leaving a legacy of strong central control that is still found in modern China. A period of great turmoil followed that lasted through the next two dynasties. After almost 400 years, the Tang dynasty restored order, setting up new governing structures and establishing control of trade routes. As a result, China’s foreign contacts expanded, extending from Persia and India through Indonesia to Japan, and many foreigners began settling in Chinese towns.

In the thirteenth century, Mongol tribes, led by Ghengis Khan, managed to breach the Great Wall (first completed in 214 B.C.) and conquer northern China. His grandson, Kublai Khan, brought southern China under his control and established the Yuan dynasty. In spite of the harshness of Yuan rule, commerce thrived and economic growth continued. During this period, Tibet became a part of China. In the fifteenth century, under the Ming dynasty, China became a maritime power, secured trade links, and established colonies abroad. In 1516 the first Christian missionaries arrived in Canton aboard Portuguese trading ships and set up a mission in Macau. By the mid-1700s, the British, Dutch and Spanish began to compete in the Chinese marketplace, but this trade was strictly controlled by China. Britain retaliated by flooding the market with opium. The attempts by the Chinese imperial government to stop the illegal drug trade led to the Opium Wars, which were a disaster for China.

As the Western powers advanced into China in the late 1800s and carved it up into “spheres of influence,” China lost much of the territory it had acquired during the previous two centuries, including Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Burma, and Korea. These humiliating losses led to a series of rebellions against the Qing dynasty and it ultimately collapsed. The Chinese Republic was established in 1911 under the leadership of Sun Yatsen and the Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist Party). Ten years later the Communist Party of China was founded and spent the 1930s and 1940s fighting the Nationalist Party. On October 1, 1949, Mao Zedong announced the formation of the People’s Republic of China, setting up the Communist government that still rules China today.
The “Great American Traveler”

WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio. Following the footsteps of his father, Alphonso Taft, and his two older half-brothers, Charles and Peter, William attended Yale College and chose a career in law. Just as his father was secretary of war in President Grant’s cabinet, William also served in the same cabinet post under Theodore Roosevelt.

In his early career Taft held numerous appointed legal and civil posts in Hamilton County and for the state of Ohio. His first federal position was that of solicitor general under President Benjamin Harrison. In 1900, President McKinley appointed Taft head of the commission to govern the Philippines. The following year Taft became the islands’ first civilian governor, a post he filled admirably, setting up judicial and local government systems, starting social services, and dealing with native leaders and Roman Catholic church officials over land disposition. His work drew favorable attention from the U.S. press and made him a popular national figure.

In 1904, Theodore Roosevelt chose Taft to be his secretary of war (a cabinet department whose name changed to “defense” in the years following World War II), and in that position he gained a reputation as the “great American traveler.” As secretary of war, Taft continued to supervise the Philippines, directed construction of the Panama Canal and started government in the Canal Zone, and contributed to the modernization of the army. Taft also helped to conduct the negotiations that ended the Russo-Japanese War in 1905.

From July to September 1905, he visited Japan, the Philippines, and China on a tour of inspection with a party of congressmen, military personnel, and business leaders. In September 1906, on the downfall of the Cuban Republic and the intervention of America, he took temporary charge of affairs in that island. The next spring he inspected the Panama Canal and also visited Cuba and Puerto Rico. He again visited the Philippines to open the first legislative assembly in October 1907, went to Japan to settle a conflict over Japanese immigration, and returned to the United States by way of the Trans-Siberian railway.

Taft was a large man, six feet tall and weighing more than 300 pounds. Affable and friendly, he was well-liked, but his nature was not suited to politics. Friends noted that his temperament was more judicial than executive. Although his ambition was to be a Supreme Court justice, Taft twice declined Roosevelt’s offers of a seat on the Court. Receiving Roosevelt’s nod for the 1908 Republican nomination, Taft capitalized on the incumbent’s winning popularity and the party’s strength, easily defeating the Democratic nominee, William Jennings Bryan. The presidency was the first—and only—elective office Taft ever held, and his lack of political experience soon led to problems. He was troubled by the large numbers of people seeking patronage offices and was not in league with many Roosevelt supporters who expected him to continue to carry out his predecessor’s policies.

Taft’s more conservative leanings and his open, forthright support of tariff bills that were extremely unpopular with the Progressives helped lead to the split in the Republican party in the election of 1912. Taft spent the next eight years as professor of law at Yale and finally received his long-coveted appointment when President Harding named him chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. He held that post until a month before his death in 1932.
Presenting American Policy Abroad

The following article reports remarks made by Secretary Taft at a banquet in Manila during the Far East trip.

Read the article and answer the questions below.

New York Times, August 12, 1905

Taft Talks to Filipinos

President Roosevelt believes that it is the duty of the United States to prepare the Filipinos for self-government. This will require a generation and probably longer, and the form of self-government will be left to the individuals who will control the two nations at that time.

It follows that the President ... feels charged with the duty of proceeding on this policy and maintaining the sovereignty of the United States here as an instrument of the gradual education and elevation of the whole of the Filipino people to a self-governing community.

Secretary Taft said that the Filipinos who wished to rule this country must first learn the principles of democracy by sending their children to the common schools before they could invite the United States to transfer the trust, which had been thrown upon it, to the shoulders of the Filipinos. To make a self-governing and popular democracy, primary education, habits of greater industry, and thrift must always be kept, he said, before the young, patriotic Filipino...

...The Administration’s policy, he said, was the Philippines for the Filipinos. If the American officers were not in sympathy with this policy and with the natives, they would be recalled...

New York Times (1857-Current file); Aug 12, 1905; ProQuest Historical Newspapers, The New York Times (1851-2002) pg. 4

1. Do you think the United States would proclaim a policy such as this today? Explain.

2. Compare the statements made by Taft to recent policy statements about Iraq or about another country the United States is trying to influence. How are the statements similar? How are they different?

3. In your opinion, are the goals of the 1905 policies toward the Philippines and today’s policies toward the country discussed in question 2, above, the same or different? Defend your opinion.
The Presidential Election and Events in the Philippines

During his tenure as the first civil governor of the Philippines, Taft wrote a series of letters to his long-time friend in Cincinnati, Judge Howard C. ("Hol") Hollister of the Hamilton County Court of Pleas. In two of those letters, Taft talked about the relationship between the presidential contest at home and the insurrection in the Philippines.

Read the letters and answer the questions following each one.

To Judge Hollister, October 15, 1900

My dear Old Man:
… a little over three weeks hence will be the American presidential election. The result… is so important to these Islands that it is difficult to think of anything else as we draw near to it. If the people of the United States could know the facts, as anyone must know them who has been here even so short a time as I have, there could be but one judgment, I think, as to the proper course to pursue….

The Insurrection in its present state is hardly worthy the name. With a view to the direct influence upon the election, those in arms have been murdering their own people in order to enforce collections and in order to enforce recruits, and they have gotten together more men than they have had for some time. Everything they do is spectacular with a view to its effect in America. Should [William Jennings] Bryan be elected, those in arms think, and a good many of the cowed people have been led to believe, that the next day they would be permitted to form a government entirely free from American control. Just what Bryan's election would bring about, I am not quite sure, though I fear that it would almost immediately lead to a destructive commotion. If the leaders are wise enough, as I do not think they are, to restrain their followers until Bryan should actually come in, there would then follow an orgy of bloodshed and chaos that one hate to talk of and four years hence we should be where we are now….

1. What echoes of Taft’s sentiments do we hear today?
2. What current opinions are being expressed by government leaders and other public officials regarding the effects of the U.S. presence or departure in a conflict area of the world?

To Hollister, December 1, 1900

My Dear Hol:

The shrieks....of the Anti-imperialists in this last campaign, in the light of the result, are likely to become part of the humor of American politics. Had they been content to attack the policy as a bad one of going outside of the country to attempt to civilize other peoples, they would have stood on logical ground, but when they attempted to construct a theory that we had done an injustice to the people of these Islands, they stood upon slippery ground, and, ultimately, the people learned the truth.

The fact is, there is nothing in the insurrection upon which to base an election speech or a political plank. Everything is sordid and mean and bloody and villainous, and the idea of likening Aguinaldo to Washington is one that could only occur to a per-fervid brain of a man utterly lacking in a sense of proportion…

Even if you were unaware of the details of the 1900 presidential campaign, in which incumbent William McKinley ran against William Jennings Bryan, what can you surmise about the following from Taft’s letter:

1) Who won the election?
2) Which candidate represented the Anti-imperialist view?
3) Does Taft feel that attempting to civilize the people of another country is wrong?
4) Does Taft feel that America’s policies in the Philippines have done harm to that country?
5) According to Taft, what was the Anti-imperialist view of rebel leader Emilio Aguinaldo?
6) What is Taft’s opinion of William Jennings Bryan and his supporters?
US-China Relations, 1905

One of the objectives of Taft’s 1905 trip to the Far East was to firm up the Open Door Policy in China. However, anti-American feeling in China was running high at the time, because of the exclusionary policies of the United States toward that country.

Read the article and answer the questions below.

New York Times, June 28, 1905

Chinese Very Bitter Against this Country

The question of Chinese exclusion from the United States continues chiefly to occupy the attention of the Chinese. The extent and depth of the feeling manifested astonish foreigners, and are regarded as an evidence of the growth of a national sentiment and public spirit which five years ago would have been inconceivable.

... it is said that a Chinese comprador has refused a lucrative appointment with an American company. Advertisements of American goods continue to be refused by the native newspapers.

The chief obstacle to a settlement is the question of exclusion of coolies* from Hawaii and the Philippines. It is urged that there is no reasonable objection to the landing of coolies in Hawaii, where they do not compete with American labor, while Chinese immigration has long been established in the Philippines.

These points the Chinese regard as essential, but it is thought unlikely that they will be conceded by the American Government... With a view to facilitating a settlement, China yesterday proposed a special mission to Washington, but American Minister Rockhill declined to entertain the idea. The Chinese deplore the risk of losing American good-will, but claim to have genuine, legitimate grievances.

Meantime the boycott of goods from the United States continues, and the anti-American campaign is increasing in vigor....

* a pejorative term used for Chinese laborers in the U.S. in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries


1. Why were Chinese being excluded from Hawaii and the Philippines? Did the provisions of the Chinese Exclusion Act extend beyond the borders of the continental United States?

2. Is it surprising that foreigners would be “astonished” at how strong Chinese feeling was on this subject? What does the “foreign” reaction tell you about how they regarded the Chinese?

3. What problems, if any, do you see with the United States having an exclusionary policy toward Chinese immigration while at the same time promoting the Open Door Policy regarding trade with China? Do you consider it acceptable to hold such apparently conflicting policies?
A Closer Alliance with Japan

Although it was not publicly announced, one of Taft’s official tasks during the Far East trip was to negotiate, on behalf of President Roosevelt, terms for the peace treaty ending the Russo-Japanese War. Taft met with Japanese Prime Minister Count Taro Katsura on July 27, 1905, to hold discussions. The settlement terms proposed by the United States gave Japan both the entire Korean peninsula and the Liaodong Peninsula of China. Several days later, the report of an interview with Count Katsura appeared in the New York Times.

Read the article and answer the questions below.

New York Times, July 30, 1905

Japan’s Policy Abroad

Among other things Count Katsura said:

…. I wish to thank the American press and public for the uniform and unfailing fairmindedness displayed by them throughout this deplorable war. The friendship of America is inestimably appreciated by Japan, and it would be difficult to measure the benefits we have derived from it.

…. Japan has no ambition save to preserve her national independence and integrity. We do not seek territorial aggrandizement nor dictatorial supremacy....

…. Political and otherwise our policy in the Far East will be in exact accord with that of England and the United States. We will try no original experiments which do not meet with the approval of those countries. We intend for our own good and the good of the world to heartily cooperate with all nations in forcing upon Korea and China the same benefits of modern development that have been in the past forced upon us.

We intend to begin a campaign of education in those countries such as we ourselves have experienced to our everlasting betterment, and the result we hope to attain will be the absolute abandonment in the Far East of all the old ideas of national exclusiveness and the development of Asiatic commercial interests that will benefit us all...

The introduction of all the blessings of modern civilization into the East Asiatic countries—that is our Far Eastern policy, and behind it there is no more selfish motive than a simple desire for our own commercial and educational betterment. China and Korea are both atrociously misgoverned. They are in the hands of a lot of corrupt officials whose ignorance and narrow-mindedness are a constant menace to political tranquility in the Far East. These conditions we will endeavor to correct at the earliest possible date—by persuasion and education, if possible; by force, if necessary, and in this, as in all things, we expect to act in exact concurrence with the ideas and desires of England and the United States.

…. We, as a nation, are ready now and will continue to be ready to take up arms against any other nation on the earth that attempts to trespass within what we consider the boundaries of our national safety.


1. What do you think of Count Katsura’s remarks, knowing what the terms of the upcoming Peace Treaty were going to be?
2. Do any of Katsura’s statements—or the tone of his statements—seem contradictory? Explain.
3. Compare Katsura’s final statement (last sentence of the article) to the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. How could “boundaries of our national safety” be defined?
**Map Activities**

**PROCEDURE**

Have students work on this activity in pairs or small groups.

1. On modern maps find the places the Taft party visited during their Far East tour.
2. Using a world map or an atlas and the Chronology of the 1905 Trip, trace the route the Taft party took from San Francisco to the various ports and other places they visited.

   *Note: To make the activity more challenging, use outline maps of the countries visited and ask students to identify and label the countries and mark the locations of the various cities and towns where the Taft party stopped. Maps can be downloaded at [www.eduplace.com/ss/maps](http://www.eduplace.com/ss/maps).*

3. Calculate how long the same trip would take today, using available airline schedules, and allowing an average of two days in each location. Include the cross-country flight between Washington, D.C., and San Francisco. What changes would travelers today encounter in the various countries?

4. Would “un-official” travelers be likely to go to the same places today? What precautions might they have to take? Check the State Department web site ([http://travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov)) for advisories about each of the countries.

**Create a Travelogue**

On the 1905 diplomatic trip, Harry Fowler Woods took photos using a hand-held (probably Kodak) camera, a relatively new technology at the time. The hand-held camera for the first time allowed for taking snapshots—candid photos that did not have to be staged or posed. Because the camera used a roll-in film rather than the heavy silver-coated plates required by still cameras prior to that time, Woods was able to take hundreds of photos of a wide range of subjects.

Today’s cameras have capabilities going far beyond the photographic technology of even a generation ago. Have students do the following activity using whatever cameras they have at their disposal—digital, cell-phone, 35 mm film camera, or any other. If students do not own cameras, you might borrow them or ask a local photo supply store to donate several and have students work in groups.

Tell students that their assignment is to create a record of one of the following:

—“travelogue” of a trip through the local community
—an event at school or in the community
—a personal trip or event

The students’ photos should tell a story, so remind them to look carefully at the surroundings and the people involved in their trip or event and capture as much detail and variety as possible.

Let the students create albums of their work and/or mount a display of their photos, with captions.
Analyze a Photo

PROCEDURE
A photograph captures a moment in time and space, and even as a still image, it is full of information—in some cases enough information to tell a story. Help the students “read” the photos below and to the right by asking the following questions:

1) Who are the people? How do they look? What are they wearing? What does the photo tell you about cultural differences?

2) Compare the people in the photo. Can you tell how they might be feeling? How do their faces look? What is their body language like? Where are they standing or sitting in relation to each other?

3) What things in the photo tell you something about the culture? About the time or the place?

4) What feeling is evoked by this photograph?

2  Entering Forbidden City. Miss Roosevelt in Chair.
3  Moro Women and Children.
4  Miss Alice Roosevelt on Platform of Car on Road to Peking.
5  Kyoto, School Children Cheering Taft Party.
Research

Congressional Travelers

PROCEDURE

Hand out copies of the passenger list on the S.S. Manchuria.
Divide the passenger list into sections and have students work in groups to do the first part of this activity. The second part should be done individually.

1) Look up the senators and representatives who were in the party traveling to the Far East with Secretary Taft. List their party affiliations (Republican, Democrat or other) and their committee memberships in the U.S. Congress, along with the state they represented or where their district was located. Information on members of Congress, past and current can be found at these two web sites:
http://bioguide.congress.gov/biosearch/biosearch.asp
http://politicalgraveyard.com

2) Choose one of the members of Congress on the passenger list. Based on information found in the first part of this activity, what might have been his reason for being on the trip? Look up his voting record during the Taft administration (1909–1913). How supportive of Taft’s policies was the member of Congress?
Taft as President

William Howard Taft’s chief ambition was to be a justice of the Supreme Court, and he did not initially seek the presidency. But with President Roosevelt’s strong support—and that of his family—he ran against William Jennings Bryan in 1908 and won the election.

PROCEDURE

Ask the students to do research and write an assessment of the Taft presidency. Include major accomplishments, failures, conflicts, style, policies, and reasons he was not re-elected. You may choose to divide the class into groups to report on the various aspects of Taft’s administration, or create a chart listing their findings within the different categories listed above.

America’s Role in the World

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a national debate took place between imperialists and anti-imperialists about America’s role in the world and the growing move toward expansionism.

PROCEDURE

A. Ask the students to read two of the following for background:


B. Have a class discussion identifying the major figures on each side of this debate and the arguments put forward by each side.

C. Discuss these questions:

1) What is today’s debate about America’s role in the world?
2) How are the arguments similar to those at the turn of the twentieth century? How are they different?
3) What effect has globalization had on America’s position in the world?

D. Form teams to debate the following:

America is justified in spreading democracy to other countries by any means.
**Resources**

**BOOKS & ARTICLES**


**WEB SITES**

[www.ohiohistory.org/tafttrip](http://www.ohiohistory.org/tafttrip)

Official website of the Looking East project, containing photographs from the Harry Fowler Woods collection, historical information, and downloadable teaching guide.


Biographical information on members of Congress, past and current.

[http://politicalgraveyard.com](http://politicalgraveyard.com)

Information on past members of Congress and other historical figures.


National Park Service – Teaching with Historic Places; lessons on William Howard Taft.

[www.thirdworldtraveler.com](http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com)

Perspectives on countries throughout the world.

[http://faculty.tamu-commerce.edu/sarantakes/stuff.html](http://faculty.tamu-commerce.edu/sarantakes/stuff.html)

U.S. diplomatic history resources index.

[www.arlingtoncemetary.net/whtaft.htm](http://www.arlingtoncemetary.net/whtaft.htm)

Biographical information on Wm. Howard Taft.

[www.digitalhistory.uh.edu](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu)

University of Houston, Dept. of History & College of Education web site; contains maps, timelines, multimedia resources and lesson plans.

[www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/timeline.html](http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/history/timeline.html)

State Department site containing a timeline of U.S. diplomatic history.

[www.eduplace.com/ss/maps](http://www.eduplace.com/ss/maps)

Contains a variety of teaching resources, including both political and outline maps of all sections of the globe.

[http://dmoz.org/Reference/Maps](http://dmoz.org/Reference/Maps)

A comprehensive directory of all types of maps.

**CURRICULUM GUIDE**

Arch and Procession in Honor of Secretary Taft. Cebu. (Phillipines, 1905)