

Module 2, Discussion 2: Imperialist USA

Main Topic

I believe comparisons made between ancient Rome and the United States of America are fair and necessary. There are striking similarities—some of these were pointed out by Dr. Mike Ibeji in his article—that for some people helps to remind them of recurring events throughout history, and for others presents a completely new and unfamiliar concept: we are not nearly as civilized in the 21st century as we might believe ourselves to be. Many of today's issues in the USA, such as annexing lands under the guise of self defense, perfectly echo the imperialist behaviors of ancient Rome.

That our founding fathers modeled their developing government on the systems of ancient Rome is not convincing to me as being attributable to our current woes. It is interesting, no doubt, but there have been many more empires in history that were not democracies or republics. Perhaps by investigating the specific series of events that lead a country to adopt this form of government over another would yield additional substance to the argument. However, of the many requirements during our country's formation, avoiding a monarchic government was of tremendous importance. Using ancient Rome's systems as templates provided an effective method for accomplishing this.

I happen to think that a republic is a much more effective form of government than most. Though, it is important to acknowledge that it is not inherently or automatically impervious to all of the same complications that permeate other forms of government. Rome may have done right by choosing to form a republic, but as history shows it could not persist. There's no particular reason why the United States, by paralleling decisions and behaviors made in history, will avoid the same fate.

Re: Miserable Mark (by Brandon Cardenaz)

Wait, are you trying to suggest that Davy Crockett was actually an ancient roman?

Re: USA vs the Roman empire (by Jason Davis)

"That's how I viewed 'just cause' in this article. It's not looking for or provoking war, but defending yourself, others, or an ideal. "

Actually, the idea that was being communicated is that an empire often uses "defending our country and our people" as an excuse to seize control of more land and resources (and people).

Re: Seriously? (by John Cruz)

"To say they simply lifted the old Roman government from the ashes of history, and modernized it a touch, dirty's the entire process undergone in the creation of the United States government."

I understand what you're saying, but I think the author's main reason for putting it in such a way was to communicate that our founding fathers were absolutely using systems of government more than 2000 years old as templates for our own country's form of government. To me, that doesn't make their achievements any less significant. It does, however, communicate a very important part of the story of the United States and why particular aspects of our country are great and work quite well.

"His thinking is simplistic, he blows over giant events as if something as large as the abovementioned takeover of California by the United States would be influenced solely by one appeal for aid, and his poor writing reflects upon the lack of thought and care put into the article."

He was only being brief and, in my estimation, introducing unfamiliar ideas to ignorant people. Going into appropriate detail would consume many more webpages (or pieces of paper).

Anyway, your post was very well written, and I agree with your reasoning, but I think you missed the intention of Dr. Ibeji's piece.

Re: Seriously? (by Anne Rigby)

"If we (the U.S.) are considered such a powerful force that we can be compared to one of the greatest civilizations in history, then we obviously made correct choices."

You realize that the Roman Empire isn't around anymore because it was conquered by barbarians, right? And that it was followed by 250-300 years that our textbook refers to as "The Dark Age"?