

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-40922-3 - The United States as a Developing Country: Studies in U.S. History in the Progressive Era and the 1920s

Martin J. Sklar

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

The history of the United States is in crucial respects the history of a developing country, not only in its transition from agricultural and commercial colonies to an industrial nation, but in modern times and the foreseeable future as well. The seven studies are primarily concerned with the United States as a developing country in the early twentieth century, evolving from a competitive stage of capitalism to a corporate stage, and from an industrial to a “postindustrial” society.

The chapters treat the emergence and early phases of corporate capitalism and their implications for domestic affairs and foreign relations, the origins and character of corporate liberalism, the pivotal role of Woodrow Wilson in these areas, and the emergence of postindustrial trends. They also explore some critical linkages among economic, political, and cultural developments, in tracing parallels among Henry Adams in the Progressive Era, the “Young Intellectuals” of the twenties, and the New Left in the sixties.

The studies also address broader interpretive and philosophical questions such as theory and factuality, periodization and historiography, mode of production and social change, as well as the interplay in human affairs of the transhistorical and the historical, the artistic and the political, contingency and determinism, freedom and necessity, and the intermixture of capitalism, socialism, and liberalism in the making of modern U.S. society.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-40922-3 - The United States as a Developing Country: Studies in U.S. History in the Progressive Era and the 1920s

Martin J. Sklar

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

**The United States
as a Developing Country**

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-40922-3 - The United States as a Developing Country: Studies in U.S. History in the Progressive Era and the 1920s

Martin J. Sklar

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Also by Martin J. Sklar

*The Corporate Reconstruction of American Capitalism, 1890–1916:
The Market, the Law, and Politics* (1988)

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-40922-3 - The United States as a Developing Country: Studies in U.S. History in the Progressive Era and the 1920s

Martin J. Sklar

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

**The United States
as a Developing Country**
Studies in U.S. History
in the Progressive Era and the 1920s

MARTIN J. SKLAR



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-40922-3 - The United States as a Developing Country: Studies in U.S. History in the Progressive Era and the 1920s

Martin J. Sklar

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521409223

© Martin J. Sklar 1992

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1992

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Sklar, Martin J., 1935–

The United States as a developing country : studies in U.S. history in the progressive era and the 1920s / Martin J. Sklar.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-521-40060-0. – ISBN 0-521-40922-5 (pbk.)

1. United States – History – 1865–1921. 2. United States – History – 20th century. 3. Capitalism – United States – History. 4. United States – Economic conditions – 1865–1918. I. Title.

E741.S55 1992

973.8–dc20

91–31519

CIP

ISBN 978-0-521-40060-2 hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-40922-3 paperback

Transferred to digital printing 2009

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate. Information regarding prices, travel timetables and other factual information given in this work are correct at the time of first printing but Cambridge University Press does not guarantee the accuracy of such information thereafter.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-40922-3 - The United States as a Developing Country: Studies in U.S. History in the Progressive Era and the 1920s

Martin J. Sklar

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

To the Memory of
SOPHIE LAUB SKLAR and KALMAN SKLAR
Children of Immigrants
Parents of Teachers

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-40922-3 - The United States as a Developing Country: Studies in U.S. History in the Progressive Era and the 1920s

Martin J. Sklar

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	ix
I Periodization and historiography: The United States considered as a developing country	1
II Studying American political development in the Progressive Era, 1890s–1916	37
III Dollar Diplomacy according to Dollar Diplomats: American development and world development	78
IV Woodrow Wilson and the developmental imperatives of modern U.S. liberalism	102
V Some political and cultural consequences of the disaccumulation of capital: Origins of postindustrial development in the 1920s	143
VI Disaffected with development: Henry Adams and the 1960s “New Left”	197
VII The corporate reconstruction of American capitalism: A note on the capitalism–socialism mix in U.S. and world development	209
<i>Index</i>	219

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-40922-3 - The United States as a Developing Country: Studies in U.S. History in the Progressive Era and the 1920s

Martin J. Sklar

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

The seven essays in this book include three previously published, one written long ago but hitherto lying unpublished, and three written in recent years and now published here.

Of the three previously published, the essay on Woodrow Wilson (Chapter IV) I worked on and wrote over a period stretching from 1957 to 1960 and published in 1960 in *Studies on the Left*; subsequently, it was republished in various anthologies and in the Bobbs-Merrill reprint series. The essay on political and cultural consequences of the disaccumulation of capital (Chapter V) I worked on during the 1960s and published in 1969 in *Radical America*. The essay on Henry Adams and the 1960's "New Left" (Chapter VI) I prepared as a presentation to the Socialist Scholars Conference of 1966 in New York City, and published much later, on invitation, in the *Maryland Historian*, in 1982, as something of a document of one aspect of leftist thinking in the 1960s.

The unpublished older essay, on Dollar Diplomacy (Chapter III), I wrote as a chapter of my University of Wisconsin Master's Thesis, completed in 1962, "Woodrow Wilson, the Six-Power Consortium, and Dollar Diplomacy: Essays in the Ideology of Modern United States Liberalism in Its Period of Emergence."

Of the three essays written in recent years, the essay on the United States considered as a developing country (Chapter I) I wrote specifically for this volume; it represents my thought in its latest phase. The essay on U.S. political development in the Progressive Era (Chapter II) is one I had been working on since 1979 or so; parts of it made their way into my book, *The Corporate Reconstruction of American Capitalism, 1890–1916* (1988); I had delivered an earlier version of it before a panel of the Organization of American Historians in 1984; the latest version appears here and, with some differences, in the journal *Studies in American Political Development* (Fall 1991) along with commentary by Steven Hahn and a brief response by me. Finally, the essay on the capitalism–socialism mix (Chapter VII) I first prepared as a presentation for a panel of the Center for Social Theory and Comparative History at the University of California, Los Angeles, in February 1989; the version published here is substantially the same as the original, with some minor editorial revisions.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-40922-3 - The United States as a Developing Country: Studies in U.S. History in the Progressive Era and the 1920s

Martin J. Sklar

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

Preface

When it was first suggested to me that there was interest in having some of my older essays brought together in one volume with some of my more recent work, I was skeptical of the prospect of their making a coherent package. Aside from their dealing with some aspects of a critical period in the history of the United States, the 1890s to 1920s, it turns out that the essays collected here embody a theme that has been a long-term interest of mine, namely, studying the United States as a developing country, an interest that began as early as 1955 when I wrote an undergraduate paper for Merrill Jensen at the University of Wisconsin analyzing Hamilton's *Report on Manufactures* and his funding program as a pro-British, antimanufacturing strategy for early national development as against the Jeffersonian Republican (Madisonian) anti-British, pro-manufacturing strategy for development, a theme picked up two decades later by a student of mine at Northern Illinois University, John R. Nelson, who ably worked it and other study and themes of his own into a prize-winning essay (*Journal of American History*, LXV, 1979) and part of his book *Liberty and Property* (1987). As perhaps adumbrated in this early interest, my subsequent work, including the examples in this volume, led me to a continuing consideration of the interrelation of the nation's internal development and its international affairs. Insofar as an enduring interest of mine has been understanding the United States as a developing country, it may be said that I am a "Turnerian," or perhaps a true student of the "Wisconsin School." As this may suggest to the not altogether uninitiated, on the interrelated international plane, I am a student also of Mills and Marx. I will, however, resist the very strong temptation to turn a preface into a review of my own book, leaving that to reviewers and critics if these essays should prove worthy of their attention, and perhaps to some future retrospective self-commentary in a more appropriate time and place.

Suffice it to say here that the subject matter of these essays ranges over a period of time, roughly the 1890s to the 1920s, or something over three decades in the nations' history, and their writing ranged over a similar period of time in the life of the author. They treat historical change in a past time, while affording a view of a historian's changing thinking in a more recent time.

As to the nature of my changing thinking, I have some perspectives and ideas, but again, I leave that for now to readers and critics, whose responses would surely further inform and modify my own. I would only observe here that the essays in this book, with and without my own conscious intent, display some common thematic threads of the broader cloth of my mind, such as (simply to list without commentary): (1) the transhistorical and the historical in human affairs; (2) the interplay of

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-40922-3 - The United States as a Developing Country: Studies in U.S. History in the Progressive Era and the 1920s

Martin J. Sklar

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

XI

freedom and necessity, contingency and determinism, in shaping human history; (3) mode of production and periodization in historical interpretation; (4) the interrelations of scientific method, quests for self-determination, and human history; (5) the interrelations of consciousness, social movements, and changing social relations; (6) the nature and interrelations of capitalism, socialism, and liberalism; and (7) the meaning of “development.” As to the last, my own most recent understanding is succinctly conveyed in the definition attempted in the last chapter of this book, and explored at greater length in chapter I.

For their valuable critical thought, suggestions, and exchange of views, directly and indirectly, over an extended period, relating to the subject matter of these essays, I wish to acknowledge Loren Baritz, Eugene D. Genovese, the late Herbert G. Gutman, Fred Harvey Harrington, Nao Hauser, Ellis W. Hawley, James Willard Hurst, Stephen Kern, Gerd Korman, the late Olga Brody Oller, Carl P. Parrini, Arlene Sklar Pullara, Trent Schroyer, Richard L. Sklar, the late Warren I. Susman, Hayden V. White, and the late William A. Williams. I am also grateful, for critical exchange of views in more recent times, to Scott Bowman, William Burr, Robert D. Cuff, Steven Hahn, Stanley N. Katz, James Livingston, James P. May, Karen Orren, Richard Schneirov, Stephen Skowronek, and Paul Wolman.

For their painstaking and expert editorial care and work in preparing the manuscript for typesetting, I am grateful to Cynthia Insolio Benn, copy editor, and Louise Calabro Gruendel, production editor, at Cambridge University Press, and for the index, to Glorieux Dougherty.

For their encouragement, specifically, in bringing these essays together here, I wish to thank Nao Hauser and Stanley N. Katz, as well as my principal editor at Cambridge University Press, Frank Smith.

*Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
March, 1991*