

The effects of sectionalism



At the time prior to a Civil War, the Americans saw themselves as Southerners or Northerners. What caused the separation of America into two different regions that made each other be viewed as enemies? What led to a Civil War between these two regions in the same country? Sectionalism highlighted the differences of the North and South through their economy as manufacturing versus farming, Abolitionist ideas versus Pro-Slavery ideas, and different religious views about slavery. By examining these complex details, these were the reasons that the Sectionalism set the stage of a Civil War.

The Sectionalism represents the separation of a country into North and South due to the shared cultures, regions, economic, and political identities. In the middle of 19th century, while the United States was experiencing the tremendous growth, there was a fundamental economic difference between the Northern and Southern regions which leads to one of the causes of separation: manufacturing versus farming(History. com). In 1860, the South was still predominantly agricultural which means that they were behind in a world market. The South did experiment with using slave labor in manufacturing, but for the most part it was well satisfied with its agricultural economy. By contrast, the North was well on its way toward a commercial and manufacturing economy, which would have a direct impact on its war making ability. In the North, as other Northern industries, there was well-developed weapons manufacturing, leather goods, iron production, textiles grew, improved as the Civil War progressed.

The disadvantage of the South was their smaller industrial economy that impeded confederate growth and development during war. Nevertheless, the

Southern lag in industrial development did not result from any inherent economic disadvantages. There was great wealth in the South, but it was primarily tied up in the slave economy. In 1860, the economic value of slaves in the United States exceeded the invested value of all of the nation's railroads, factories, and banks combined. During the Civil War, cotton prices were at an all-time high. The Confederate leaders were confident that the importance of cotton on the world market, particularly in England and France, would passively provide the South with the diplomatic and military assistance they needed for victory. As a result, in the North, manufacturing and industry were well established. In the South, agriculture was mostly limited to small farms, while the economy was based on a system of large farming that depended on the use of the labor of slaves to grow certain crops, especially cotton and tobacco.

In closing, one country was divided by its interests, attitudes, and overall lifestyles. As both the North and the South mobilized for war, the relative strengths and weaknesses of the "free market" and the "slave labor" economic systems became increasingly clear which means that particularly in their ability to support and sustain an economy during a war. The Northerners focused on fast-paced business and industry, spending their days manufacturing, shipping, and trading goods. By contrast, the Southern economy relied on slow and steady agricultural growth with the work of slaves even there was few advantageous skills than North. As the war continued, the Northern advantages in factories, railroads, and manpower put the South at a great disadvantage.

At the time of separation of America, there were differences of ideas for slavery between the North and South: the abolitionist ideas versus pro-slavery ideas. By the mid-1850s, the sectionalism in Congress brought another new political party: the Republicans. A party of Anti-Slavery forces, the Republicans put the national focus on the supposed “ Slave Power”. The party was mostly composed of Northerners, who thought Southern forces in Congress had inhibited national approaches with the long-term objective of bringing slavery to the whole nation which later the term was called abolition. The abolitionist development was a social and political push for the prompt liberation for every people being equal and the end of racial discrimination and isolation. immediate emancipation of all slaves and the end of racial discrimination and segregation. By the early 1830s, the individuals who wished to see that institution abolished inside the United States were becoming more influential and powerful. Developing the abolitionist sentiment in the North after 1830s and Northern opposition to slavery’s extension into the new western territories led numerous Southerners to fear that the existence of slavery in America and subsequently their power turned into the foundation of their economy. Although the historian debates the degree of the abolitionists’ influence of the nation’s political life after 1840, their effect on Northern culture and society is undeniable. By 1835, the society had gotten considerable moral and financial support from African-American communities in the North and had established several branches throughout the many hostiles demanding that Congress end all federal support for slavery. The society, which attracted significant participation by women, also criticized the American Colonization Society’s program of voluntary steady liberation and African-

<https://assignbuster.com/the-effects-of-sectionalism/>

American migration. In 1854, the U. S. Congress passed the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which basically opened all new territories to slavery by asserting the rule of popular sovereignty over congressional declaration. Pro-Slavery and Anti-Slavery forces struggled violently in “ Bleeding Kansas,” while opposition to the act in the North led to the development of the Republican Party, a new political object based on the guideline of contradicting slavery extension into the western territories. After the Supreme Court’s decision in the Dred Scott case in 185 confirmed the legality of slavery in the territories, the abolitionist John Brown’s raid convinced more and more Southerners that their Northern neighbors were bent on the destruction of abnormal institution that sustained them. The Compromise of 1850, along with the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the Dred Scott Decision, seemed to support the thesis of the party of the Republicans that they thought Southern forces in Congress had choked national policies with the long-term goal of bringing slavery to the entire country.

Meanwhile, the Southerners reacted to the Republicans with fear by believing the party determined to end the slavery in the South. While some Republicans did indeed have this goal, most just wanted to stop its development into the Western territories. There was a moment that shows that the Republican which was composed of the abolitionists had power on political. On October 16th in 1854, an doubtful lawyer and Congressional hopeful from the state of Illinois named Abraham Lincoln delivers a speech regarding the Kansas-Nebraska Act. In his speech, the future president criticized the act and laid out his views on slavery, which he called “ immoral”. In the Kansas-Nebraska act, two new territories, Kansas and

Nebraska would be allowed into the Union and each territory's citizens would be given the power to determine whether slavery would be allowed within the territory's borders. It was believed that the act would set a point for determining the legality of slavery in other new territories. Controversy over the act influenced political races across the country. The Abolitionists such as Lincoln, hoped to persuade lawmakers in the new territories to reject slavery. Lincoln, who was practicing law at the time, campaigned on behalf of abolitionist Republicans in Illinois and attacked the Kansas-Nebraska Act. He believed that the law went against the founding American rule that "all men are created equal." Lincoln, who was an abolitionist at heart, but he realized that the outlawing of slavery in states where it already existed might lead to civil war. Instead, he advocated outlawing the spread of slavery to new states. He hoped this argument would save the Union and slowly eliminate slavery by limiting it to the South, where, he believed, "it would surely die a slow death." Lincoln and his fellow abolitionists were discouraged when Kansas voted a pro-slavery candidate into Congress. As Lincoln's political career got force throughout the next several years, he continually referred to the Kansas-Nebraska Act and the appearing certainty that Kansas should become a slave state as a violence. Lincoln continued to actively campaign against slavery in Kansas and helped to raise money to support anti-slavery candidates in that state. Meanwhile, he continued his law practice and kept running for the U. S. Senate in 1859.

Although, he lost to Democrat Stephen Douglas, Lincoln became famous in national politics and earned increasing support from the North and abolitionists across the states. It was this voting demographic that helped

him win the presidency in March 1860. In sum, as the Civil War progressed, considerable and far-reaching changes were taking place a long way from the battle lines. When Lincoln became president, he faced a divided nation, but also a Congress dominated by Republicans after many Southern Democratic members left to join the Confederacy. Lincoln and congressional Republicans grabbed this opportunity to authorize several pieces of legislatures that had suffered in Congress for years due to strong Southern obstruction. Many of these bills set the course for the United States to arise by war's end as a nation with enormous economic potential and composed for a huge and rapid westward expansion. When Southerners left Congress, the war actually provided the North with an opportunity to establish and dominate America's industrial and economic future.

Slavery was the big issue between the North and the South in both economically and politically. As the country expanded to the West, the edges defining the North and South sections of the nation became strong. Southern states depended on slavery to continue cheap production of cotton, and they would not give up their "rights" to slaves without a fight. The Northern and Southern areas of the United States developed along different lines. The South remained a predominantly agricultural economy while the North became more and more industrialized. Different social cultures and political beliefs developed. All of this led to disagreements on issues such as taxes, tariffs and internal improvements as well as states rights versus federal rights. The abolitionist movement became increasingly prominent in Northern churches and politics starting in the 1830s, which contributed to the territorial hatred between North and South led to the Civil War. What the

abolitionists asserted is that the slavery was morally wrong as a Christian country. The anti-slavery society also used the bible to back up their arguments. The different religious thoughts affect the ideas of slavery and divided people into the anti-slavery and pro-slavery.

The sectionalism represents the division of a country into two sections based on shared cultures, regions, economic, and political identities. These section puts their interests over another section. The Civil War which the sectionalism led to was one of the most significant sectional wars between North and South battled due to fight over racial, economic, religious, and political differences between these nations. Also, the religion and race were often at the core of sectional struggles, in everything from the failure of negotiation regarding slavery, the discontinuous battles with Native Americans over lands, and religious practice to the appearance of the West and the great immigration or etc. In all these cases, sections developed identities in which race and religion were important and were also significant points of argument. Even today, at the beginning of the 21st century, the sectionalism continues with geographic sections still being against each other for dominance, and cultural sections in what is commonly called the culture wars.

Citation

- History. com Editors. " Civil War." *History. com* , A&E Television Networks, 15 Oct. 2009, [www. history. com/topics/american-civil-war/american-civil-war-history](http://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/american-civil-war-history).

- Wandrei, Kevin. “ How Did Sectionalism Lead to the Civil War?” *Synonym* , Leaf Group Ltd., 28 Sept. 2017, classroom. synonym. com/how-did-sectionalism-lead-to-the-civil-war-12079402. html.
- “ What Was Sectionalism in America before a Civil War?” *What Is Anatomy and Physiology?* , 2016, www. cliffsnotes. com/cliffsnotes/subjects/history/what-was-sectionalism-in-america-before-the-civil-war.
- History. com Editors. “ Abolitionist Movement.” *History. com*, A&E Television Networks, 27 Oct. 2009, www. history. com/topics/black-history/abolitionist-movement.