

Sectionalism

Each section of the country considered their region to be more important than the rest of the country. By 1820, three issues were dividing the nation. The first issue was the use of tariffs. The north wanted high tariffs. Tariffs made products from Europe (especially Great Britain) cost more and gave revenue to the federal government. Similar products made in the north would be sold easier when the competition was expensive. On the other hand, the south did not like tariffs at all. The south traded much of their cotton to Great Britain. In return, the south would receive British goods. But British goods would cost more with high tariffs added to them. This made the value of their cotton as a trading item worth less than before.

A second issue was the issue of transportation. The people in the west wanted to have better transportation systems so that they could be better connected to the rest of the country. This would provide a better means to sell and receive products. People in the north wanted better transportation systems too because they had the majority of the factories and it would get their products to market quicker. The people of the south didn't want to spend money on new roads or canals. They already had rivers that were suitable for their transportation needs.

A third issue was slavery. The slave trade with Africa ended in 1808. But slaves continued to be bought and sold in America. As the country grew westward, the people in the south wanted slavery to grow westward. The people in the north did not want slavery to grow in new territories.

Nationalism and Sectionalism in the American Antebellum Period

During the antebellum period, the United States was torn between embracing nationalism and supporting sectionalism. Although nationalism was becoming a popular movement during the antebellum period in America, sectionalism continued to divide the country, especially the North and South. Both the ideas of Nationalism and Sectionalism were widely practiced during this period.

Examples of nationalism include the Era of Good Feelings, Clay's American system, and the creation and enforcement of the Monroe Doctrine. Because the Federalist Party had declined and, consequently, there were fewer instances of open party feelings the United States experienced the Era of Good Feelings from 1817 to 1823; Americans wanted to relax after the turbulence of the War of 1812 and ignore party issues for the most part. The Era of Good Feelings was a national trend, found across America. The American System, an economic program designed by Henry Clay, was another example of Nationalism. Clay's Whig party, which was formed out of hatred for President Andrew Jackson, made the American System its chief

platform. The American System called for a protective tariff, a national bank jointly owned by the federal government and private stockholders, and so-called "internal improvements", which were federal subsidies for transportation projects. Rather than being given to homesteaders, public lands in the western frontier were sold in order to raise funds for educational and internal improvements. The American System promoted economic development, reduced dependence on imports, and overall united different parts of the country. President James Monroe's message to Congress on December 2, 1813, which later became known as the Monroe Doctrine was yet another example of nationalism during the antebellum period. Initially, the Monroe Doctrine was originally drafted to call an end to European intervention in the Americas, but was later used to justify U.S. imperialism. The Monroe Doctrine was created due to two problems: a spat with Russia concerning the northwest coast of North America and the fear that the Holy Alliance would try to colonize the Latin America states that had recently gained independence from Spain. The first use of the Monroe Doctrine (which was still unnamed at that point in time) occurred in 1836 when U.S. opposed Britain's alliance with Texas. Americans joined together under the principles of the Monroe Doctrine to prevent European powers from reclaiming the Americas. The Monroe Doctrine became an integral part of American policy and has been enforced many times throughout American history.

Despite the many of instances of nationalism seen during the antebellum period, the North and South were still greatly separated. The North saw the rise of manufacturing; increased economic linkages to the West due to the Transportation Revolution; and a mass wave of German and Irish immigrants. Northern towns opened more and more factories in order to satisfy consumer demands. These factors all contributed to the emergence of a unique Northern identity by the 1830s. Improved agricultural technology, such as Eli Whitney's cotton gin, allowed the South to produce raw materials for Northern factories faster and cheaper. The increase in raw materials called for more factories to be built, as well as the increasing population. The increasing population resulted in more consumers who would rely on Northern factories for finished goods. The South was still predominantly agricultural and looked to the North to manufacture its raw materials. Thanks to the Transportation Revolution, roads were improved, steamboats were developed, and canals and railroads were built. The fruits of the Transformation Revolution made the process of trading with the West easier and more affordable. Unfortunately for the South, a mass revolution in transit did not occur, meaning that the South depended almost entirely on the North for trade with the West. Furthermore, the South did not receive the mass wave of German and Irish immigrants that the North did during the antebellum period. While the South was still primarily inhabited by people of English, Scottish, and African descent, the North was becoming much more heterogeneous. Meanwhile, the South saw the rise of King Cotton; opposed federal spending and tariffs; favored westward expansion and the removal of Native Americans. These factors all

contributed to the emergence of a unique Southern identity by the 1830s. James Hargreaves' invention of the spinning jenny in 1764, Richard Arkwright's modified carding machine in 1775, and Edmund Cartwright's invention of the power loom in 1785 transformed the cotton industry, but none of these inventions can compare to the impact that Eli Whitney's cotton gin (patented in 1793) had upon cotton production in the South during the Antebellum period. The cotton gin quickly separated the cotton fibers used for textiles from unwanted seedpods, a tedious task that had always been done by hand in the past, usually by slaves. The machine uses a combination of a wire screen and small wire hooks to pull the cotton through the screen, while little brushes constantly remove any loose cotton that might jam the gin. By the late 1790s, demand for America's raw cotton for the British textile industry exceeded the supply. Because the gin could remove seeds from the cotton so easily, more slaves than ever before were needed to pick cotton in order to keep up with the rate of the gin. Thanks to Eli Whitney's invention, the quantity of cotton that could be processed in a day increased by fifty-fold, making the crop highly coveted by Southern plantation owners. The cotton gin revolutionized Southern agriculture and made the Old Southwest (Alabama and Mississippi more appealing to prospective settlers. The Old Southwest exhibited the ideal climate for cotton cultivation, with wet springs and summers, and suitably dry autumns. When cotton clothing hit the fashion scene in 1815, the British textile industry turned to the Old Southwest to satisfy its needs. Alabama and Mississippi alone were producing almost half of the nation's cotton by 1815. By 1817, "Alabama fever" ravaged the South; settlers were so eager to prosper from the booming cotton industry that fertile land sold for as much as thirty to fifty dollars an acre---an astounding amount of money for that time. By 1836, cotton accounted for almost two-thirds of all American exports. President Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal Act of 1830 allowed for the further expansion of "king cotton" in western Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and regions of Tennessee. Another factor that characterized the South was its opposition to federal spending. Southerners were against federal spending because much of the federal funding at this time was reserved for building Northern roads, railroads, and canals. In contrast, Northerners supported federal funding because it directly benefited them. The South also opposed tariffs because they hindered individual state economies. Unlike the North, the South had an agricultural economy and depended on the North and Europe to manufacture its raw materials, which made paying tariffs a frequent economic obstacle. Southerners favored western expansion and the removal of American Indians because they were interested in acquiring more farm land. As previously mentioned, cotton was highly desirable during this period, so fertile farm land became especially desirable. Georgia, the largest state at the time, was especially eager to see the Native Americans relocated because of a jurisdictional land dispute with the Cherokees. Southerners were generally more concerned about states' rights, farmers' rights, tariffs, and the regulation of federal spending than North.

Despite growing nationalism, the North and the South developed two distinctly different identities. While the North was rapidly modernizing itself, the South remained almost medieval, with life revolving around the plantation much as life revolved around the manor during the Middle Ages. Northerners were more revolutionary and cosmopolitan, while Southerners clung to tradition. This divide is still evident today. The North is comprised predominantly of "Blue states" (meaning that they are on the left side of the political spectrum); they embrace social change and new technology. The South, however, is comprised predominantly of "Red states" (meaning that they are on the right side of the political spectrum); they embrace traditional and strong moral values. The fact that these differences still exist today is evidence that history repeats itself...or perhaps never changes to begin with.

Sectionalism In the United States	
How did geography influence sectionalism?	
How did the North's economy influence sectionalism?	
How did the South's economy influence sectionalism?	
How did different groups in the North & South view slavery?	

Information About the North	Information About the South
<p>Climate and Geography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm, humid summers and cold snowy winters • <u>Short growing season plus cold made farming difficult.</u> • Clear, fast rivers • Coastline full of bays. • Cities develop near rivers and bays. • <u>Cities develop as trading centers.</u> • People begin to use waterpower to run factories. 	<p>Climate and Geography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm and sunny with long summers, mild winters. Lots of rain. • <u>Climate ideal for agriculture.</u> • Fertile soil ideal for growing crops.
<p>Population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Huge population increase in the North between 1800 and 1860, mostly through immigration.</u> • Irish, German, and other Europeans mostly settle in North. 	<p>Population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population of the South made up of Europeans (mostly from England and Scotland) and enslaved Africans. • <u>1/3 of the population were slaves.</u> • Most southerners lived on small farms. • Only 1/4 of farmers owned slaves. • Large farms called plantations were owned by the wealthy few who owned most of the slaves.
<p>Cities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Cities develop in North as centers of trade.</u> • Factories were set up making textiles (cloth goods) • Increase in factory work brought more people to live in the cities. • Cities were crowded and dirty. • Public education begun in cities for first time. • Cities became important centers of art, culture, and education. Many city newspapers begun. 	<p>Cities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Most southerners lived on farms.</u> • There were very few large cities. • Plantations were self-sufficient and became like small towns. (Self-sufficient means being able to supply all of your needs.)

<p>Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The economy of the North was based on manufacturing.</u> • Many immigrants from Europe began working in factories and producing goods used by people in the North. • Many factories began producing textiles (cloth) with the cotton grown in the South. 	<p>Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The economy of the South was based on agriculture.</u> • Cotton, tobacco, rice, sugar cane, and indigo (a plant that was used for blue dye) were sold as cash crops. • <u>Cotton became the most important crop after Ely Whitney's invention of the cotton gin.</u> • More slaves were now needed to pick the cotton. • <u>Slavery became essential to the South's economy.</u>
<p>Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The culture of the North was determined by life in the cities.</u> • Both religion and education were organized. • There were schools and churches in most towns. • Very few boys, and almost no girls went on to secondary school. • College was reserved for the wealthy. 	<p>Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>The culture of the South was determined by the upper class plantation owners and their families.</u> • Only children of plantation owners received any education. • Small farmers had little or no education. • The culture of the South revolved around plantation life.
<p>Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canals were mostly in the North. • The Erie Canal was a huge success. • Most of the railroads were in the North. • 30,000 miles of track was laid by 1850. • Canals and railroads allowed northern businesses to grow. 	<p>Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The South was still dependent on the steamship. • Railroads existed, but far less than in the North.

Writing:

For the North & South, write a 7-10 sentence paragraph describing each region (One paragraph for the North, one for the South). Then, write a 7-10 sentence paragraph, comparing the two regions covering each of the sections in the chart above.