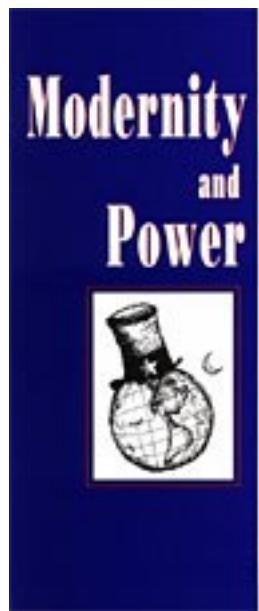


Modernity and Power



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This text provides an overview of 20th-century United States foreign policy, from the Roosevelt and Taft administrations through the presidencies of Kennedy and Johnson. Beginning with Woodrow Wilson, American leaders gradually abandoned the idea of international relations as a game of geopolitical interplays, basing their diplomacy instead on a symbolic opposition between "world public opinion" and the forces of destruction and chaos. The author links this policy shift to the rise of a distinctly modernist view of history. To emphasize the central role of symbolism and ideological assumptions in 20th-century American statesmanship, Ninkovich focuses on the domino theory - a theory that departed from classic principles of political realism by sanctioning intervention in world regions with few financial or geographic claims on the national interest. He traces the development of this global strategy from its first appearance early in the century through to the Vietnam war. Throughout the text, the

text draws on primary sources to recover the worldview of the policy makers. It assesses the coherence of their views rather than judge their actions against "objective" realities.

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