

Industrialization and Imperialism: The Making of the European Global Order

The Shift to Land Empires in Asia

- Up to the 19th century, European powers had patronized enterprises in Asia, as opposed to forming empires. Profits were sought through cooperation with Asian countries. Communication with far-flung outposts was slow. The only empires built were those made ad hoc by Europeans abroad.
- Dutch Java is an example of on-the-spot empire building. Initially, the Dutch paid tribute to the sultans of **Mataram**, in control of most of Java. However, the Dutch increasingly involved themselves in internal political struggles. Locally recruited armies made the Dutch important players in local rivalries. At the same time, the Dutch controlled more and more territory, until they controlled all of Java by 1760.
- British rule in India developed along the same lines as Dutch rule in Java. Interference in Indian politics was accompanied by the recruitment of Indian **sepoys** troops. Indian princes used British forces to best their rivals, with the unintended result of increasing British power on the subcontinent. The **British Raj** grew in power as part of British rivalry with the French. The battle of **Plassey** in 1757, gave Britain control over the south. **Robert Clive**, a British military leader, used Indian spies and Hindu financial backing against the Muslim prince Sirāud-daula. The battle was won more by espionage and corruption than by superior military power.
- The involvement of the East India Company in India increased as Mughal power declined. British rule was organized into the three **presidencies** of Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta. Divisions in India between princes and between Muslims and Hindus made British expansion easier. India became the focus of the British empire, because of its position and its size.
- Early Dutch and British rule in Java and India left native systems essentially intact. Colonists also adapted to local customs in architecture, food, and dress. European men often lived with local women, and even marriages became common. However, such attitudes changed later, in the 1800s.
- The laissez-faire attitude of the Dutch and British in their early decades in Java and India was replaced by more direct action. Reform in India came because of corruption among East India Company officials. The term **nabob** was applied by the English to their countrymen who lived the high life in the colony. **Lord**

Charles Cornwallis, of Yorktown fame, led the reform of the British administration in India. Meanwhile, the British attitude towards Indians changed. Some came to consider the Indians degenerate, and focused on social customs such as sati. **Ram Mohun Roy** was one of many Western-educated Indians that supported the suppression of the latter practice. In India as well as elsewhere, Britain began to methodically impose its standards, its values, and its infrastructure.

Industrial Rivalries and the Partition of the World, 1870–1914

- As Belgium, France, Germany, and the United States competed with Britain as industrial nations, they came to view colonies as key to the competition. Repeated economic depressions brought social unrest, but no solutions. Public opinion added its weight to the push for overseas territories.
- Acquiring colonies was made easier for European powers by better communications—via railroads, new canals, and telegraphs. Improvements in firearms made most battles extremely one-sided. Yet colonial expansion met with determined resistance. The Zulu defeat of the British at **Isandhlwana** is an example, though the Zulu losses were much greater than the British.

Patterns of Dominance: Continuity and Change

- European colonies can be divided into the “tropical dependencies” and **settlement colonies**. Among the latter, the **White Dominions** included Canada, and Australia. Other areas, such as Kenya and Algeria combined characteristics of both.
- European rule in the tropical dependencies relied heavily on taking advantage of natural divisions within countries. Privileged minorities were recruited as servants of colonial governments. European rulers and administrators governed through local subordinates, generally from preexisting ruling groups. Higher education was generally unavailable to Africans, polarizing societies there.
- In the 19th centuries, the relationship between foreign rulers and the ruled changed in Africa and Asia. As European immigration increased, isolation from local populations also increased. Miscegenation was condemned. Ideas of **white racial supremacy** played a large role in these changes. In contrast with earlier colonists, Europeans maintained their social order, their dress, and their manner of living.
- Attempts to better extract resources from colonies led to imposition of European practices in Africa and Asia. Forced, unremunerated labor was imposed, as was flogging, even to death, for failure to meet quotas. Export crops replaced food crops in many areas. Most of the raw materials extracted went to European factories and consumers.
- The settler colonies in South Africa and the Pacific differed from India and the Belgian Congo, because the large numbers of indigenous peoples were at least matched by large numbers of settlers. In the Americas, early conquest decimated populations, and large numbers of settlers exported their culture virtually intact. The case of Australia was similar. Colonies settled in the 19th century fared differently, because, in general, native populations were more resilient to disease. Such was the case in the north of Africa, New Zealand, and many of the Pacific islands.

- Colonization in southern Africa began with the Dutch Cape Colony. The Dutch Boers—farmers—moved into areas with low population density, enslaving the Khoikhoi. British took the colony over in the 1790s, as a vital link in their overseas empire. British rule brought a new, distinct group of settlers, including some desirous of ending slavery. The Boer Great Trek of the 1830s moved deep into the region of the Bantu Zulus and Xhosa, with attendant violent conflict. At the same time, the Boers were often in conflict with the British. Two **Boer Republics** were established, but discoveries of diamonds and gold meant new conflict between the two European groups. The **Boer War**, launched by the Boers against the British, resulted in a costly British victory.
- The South Pacific islanders had been isolated for centuries. As a result, they were particularly hard-hit by the arrival of Europeans. The histories of Hawaii and New Zealand have much in common. Both had developed sophisticated cultures and areas of high population density. Both were so adversely affected by the arrival of Europeans that their cultures only survived with difficulty.
- The Maori of New Zealand first suffered when Europeans arrived in the 1790s, bringing smallpox and tuberculosis, and involving the Maori in prostitution and alcoholism. Adjustment occurred, however, and the Maori survived. The arrival of British farmers and ranchers in the 1850s brought a new cycle of suffering. The Maori were pushed to the edge of extinction. Yet they survived, developed immunities to European diseases, and learned to fight with and work with the settlers on their own terms.
- Hawaii was annexed by the United States quite late, in 1898. **Captain James Cook** was the first European to reach the islands, in 1777. King Kamehameha used British support to extend his rule. More cultural borrowing followed, including conversion to Christianity. At the same time, western diseases decimated the population of the islands. Outright seizure came after the power of the Hawaiian kings declined. U.S. rule displayed respect for Hawaiian culture.

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, most colonial acquisitions by European states
 - (A) were confined to South America.
 - (B) tended to be improvised and influenced by local officials and local actions.
 - (C) ceased.
 - (D) fulfilled military needs and imperial security concerns.
 - (E) were limited to ports and forts in Africa to facilitate the slave trade.
2. Britain first acquired its empire in India during the 18th century
 - (A) through purchase from local rulers.
 - (B) by intermarriage with local rulers.
 - (C) following successful wars against France for South Asian possessions.
 - (D) from Portugal.
 - (E) from Spain.
3. Traditionally, British colonial practice in India during the 19th century was to
 - (A) leave defeated princes on the throne and control them through advisors.
 - (B) discourage warfare between local princes.
 - (C) encourage European intermarriage with local Hindu and Muslim ruling elites.
 - (D) support joint European control of trade and commerce.
 - (E) support the ruling princes in exchange for trade privileges.

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4. The most important British colonial possession in the 19th and 20th centuries was
 - (A) Canada.
 - (B) Australia.
 - (C) New Zealand.
 - (D) India.
 - (E) South Africa.
 5. All of these institutions and technologies were exported from the British Isles to India through their colonial rule EXCEPT:
 - (A) telegraph and railroad.
 - (B) an alphabet and an advanced literate culture.
 - (C) western-style education.
 - (D) social reforms including an end to sati.
 - (E) application of science to farming.
 6. The European-educated colonial peoples tended to
 - (A) cling to their European rulers, but became the leaders of future independence movements.
 - (B) side with traditional ruling elites in the colonies against the colonizers.
 - (C) favor the peasants and poor people of their colonies.
 - (D) immigrate to the mother countries.
 - (E) become merchants and businessmen.
 7. Following the first Industrial Revolution, all of these nations challenged British traditional industrial leadership EXCEPT:
 - (A) the United States.
 - (B) Germany.
 - (C) Canada.
 - (D) France.
 - (E) Belgium.
 8. Generally, European leaders saw colonies as
 - (A) wastes of money and resources.
 - (B) sources for raw minerals and potential markets.
 - (C) sources for cheap labor and slaves.
 - (D) places to settle their excess populations.
 - (E) military bases.
 9. The most likely reason for the success of European colonial acquisitions during the 19th century would be
 - (A) superior European military and transportation technologies.
 - (B) the enthusiasm by European Christian clergy to convert “the heathens.”
 - (C) the epidemic among most native populations that preceded European arrival.
 - (D) lack of resistance to the Europeans.
 - (E) the successes in European agricultural technologies.
 10. Economically, European colonial powers encouraged their colonies to
 - (A) modernize.
 - (B) practice balanced agriculture and produce foodstuffs.
 - (C) become industrialized.
 - (D) be self-sufficient.
 - (E) remain dependent on the mother country.

Free-Response Question

What were the main factors in changing European policies concerning their colonies in the 19th century?

ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

Multiple-Choice Questions

- **1. (B) is correct.** Early European acquisition of colonies was piecemeal and opportunistic, not directed by policy.
- **2. (C) is correct.** The British first obtained colonies in India after defeating the French.

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- **3. (A) is correct.** The British initially ruled through Indian princes. This went along with the earlier, tolerant attitude towards Indians, before ideas of white supremacy became common.
 - **4. (D) is correct.** Given the title “jewel in the crown,” India far surpassed other colonies in extraction of raw materials and cotton textiles, and later as a market for British goods.
 - **5. (B) is correct.** India had possessed its own literary tradition for millennia.
 - **6. (A) is correct.** It is paradoxical but true that many natives of British colonies adhered to their western rulers, but then used their knowledge and experience to rebel against colonial rule.
 - **7. (C) is correct.** Unlike its neighbor in North America, Canada was not one of the second-phase industrial powers.
 - **8. (B) is correct.** While all of the answers applied at one time or another, colonies were most important as resources and markets.
 - **9. (A) is correct.** C and D are false. E is only partially true, and not a major factor. The hopes of conversion were a motivation, and not a factor in success.
 - **10. (E) is correct.** Pursuing A, C, or D would have ruined colonies as markets for European goods. B would have impeded the production of export crops.

Free-Response Essay Sample Response

What were the main factors in changing European policies concerning their colonies in the 19th century?

The shift in attitudes came from political, economic, and cultural developments. The move from the balance of power to the alliance system was echoed in the empires by increased hostility. As industrialization progressed, European nations sought raw materials and markets for their goods. Nationalism added to tensions and competition between nations, also played out in the empires. Ideas of white supremacy and other cultural developments led to less tolerant attitudes toward Asians and Africans in particular. Technological developments not only made European control easier and gave them the upper hand in conflicts, but also fed ideas of superiority.

