CHAPTER 21

THE AGE OF EUROPEAN IMPERIALISM

In one of the odd twists in the long, bloody history of European imperialism, the vast Congo region in Central Africa was colonized by a monarch acting as a private citizen. When he was heir to the Belgian throne, Leopold II (ruled 1865–1909) had given one of his father's ministers a piece of granite with the inscription "Belgium needs colonies." And so when he was king of Belgium, Leopold organized the Congo Company to explore and develop Central Africa.

In 1879, Leopold sent the British-American journalist Henry Stanley (1841–1904) to the Congo. Stanley emerged with treaties signed with local rulers establishing Leopold's personal claim over the Congo. The Belgian king would now have his "piece of that great African cake."

An international conference of representatives of European states held in Berlin in 1884–1885 to discuss claims to African territory declared the Congo to be the "Congo Free State," with Leopold as its head. This "free state," recognized as the private possession of the Belgian king and as part of his business organization, received the status of a "mandate." The Berlin conference established this designation to signify that a European power accepted the "mandate" to govern a territory and to provide, in principle, for the welfare of its "backward people." The European powers agreed on ground rules governing the race for colonies. Henceforth no power could simply declare a region its colony unless it exercised effective control over the territory.

Despite Leopold's pledge that each colonial power would "undertake to watch over the preservation of the native races, and the amelioration of the moral and material conditions of their existence," the horrors perpetrated on the people of the Congo at Leopold's orders in his quest for ivory and rubber may have been unmatched in the annals of European imperialism. For the indigenous population, the colonial experience was hell on earth.

An American missionary reported a macabre way the Belgian soldiers had of trying to reduce the waste of bullets: "Each time the corporal goes
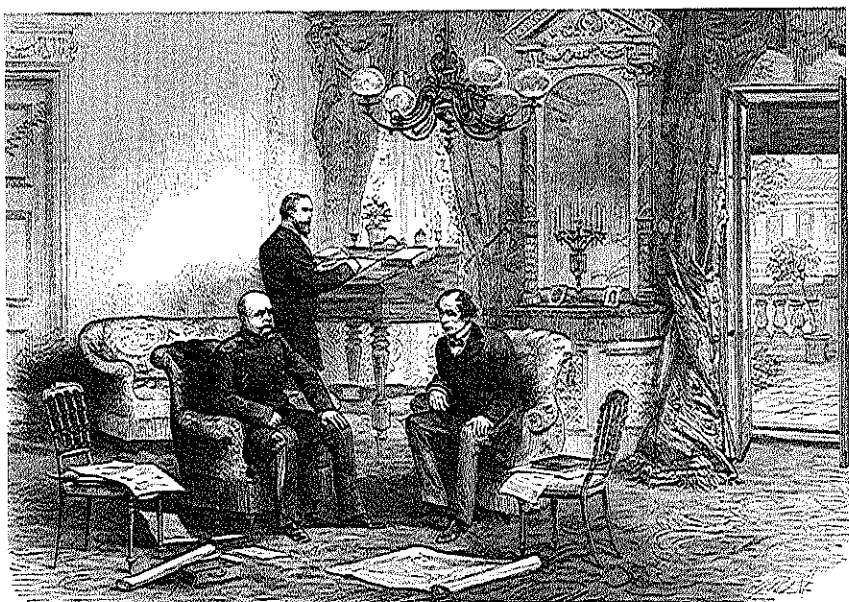
Bismarck and Disraeli meeting during the Congress of Berlin, 1878.

out to get rubber, cartridges are given to him. He must bring back all not used; and for every one used, he must bring back a right hand. . . . In six months, they had used 6,000 cartridges, which means that 6,000 people are killed or mutilated. It means more than 6,000, for the people have told me repeatedly that soldiers killed children with the butt of their guns."

The Belgian Parliament, stung by revelations of brutality uncovered by international investigations, demanded more humane standards. In 1908, it took the Congo away from Leopold and made it a colony of Belgium, a country one-eightieth the size of its colony.

FROM COLONIALISM TO IMPERIALISM

Imperialism is the process by which one state, with superior military strength and more advanced technology, imposes its control over the land, resources, and population of a less developed region. The repeated extension of Chinese control over the Vietnamese people of Indochina would fit most definitions of the term. At the same time, Japan emerged as an imperial power itself during the first decades of the twentieth century, as did the United States. Imperialism has above all characterized the relations of the European powers with Africa and Asia.

From the 1880s to 1914, the European powers expanded their direct control over much of the globe. Imperialism reflected and contributed to

the development of a truly global economy: the manufacturing boom of the Second Industrial Revolution whetted the appetite of merchants seeking new markets and manufacturers seeking new sources of raw materials. The expansion of European empires during the period of the "new imperialism" generally included the exploitation of African and Asian lands with economic and strategic interests in mind.

Europeans had long visited, influenced, learned from, and conquered distant lands. Spain and Portugal began the first sustained European quest for colonies in the fifteenth century with excursions along the West African coast. During the sixteenth century, Spaniards built a vast colonial empire that stretched from what is now the southwestern United States to the southern tip of South America. In the seventeenth century, French traders, missionaries, and soldiers began small settlements in "New France" (present-day Quebec). The drive for colonies heightened the rivalry between Britain and France in the era of the American Revolution. After losing New France to Britain in the 1760s, France's modest empire included Algeria (conquered in 1830) and a few Caribbean islands, until the conquest of Indochina began during the Second Empire (1852–1870). During the early eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, British merchants sought both raw materials and sizable markets for manufactured goods in Africa, India, and as far as Southeast Asia, China, and Japan.

In contrast to imperialism, colonialism from the last decade of the sixteenth century through the middle decades of the nineteenth century entailed economic exploitation and control, informal or formal, over territories. An essential element of colonialism was trade. Again, the British Empire provides the classic case. The British insisted on free trade, an open market that would allow English merchants to sell goods without tariff restrictions and return with luxury products—calicoes and spices from India, coffee, sugar, and rum from the Caribbean, and tobacco from Virginia—for the home market. European traders had established port facilities and made agreements with local rulers allowing them to trade freely (although Japan and China had only a few treaty ports providing trade access). North America, Australia, New Zealand, and parts of India, as well as some of the lands added to Russia's great inland empire in Siberia, Muslim Central Asia, and Northeast Asia, had become settlement colonies. However, relatively few Europeans had settled permanently in Africa or Southeast Asia, both of which had difficult tropical climates, or in China, which remained an independent state despite bullying by European powers. In these places the European presence remained generally peripheral, and staking out large chunks of territory as colonies seemed a daunting, expensive, and dangerous challenge. Despite their relative wealth and power, European imperial states lacked the resources for complete conquest and control.

Moreover, public opinion at home did not yet support massive colonial undertakings. In India, the British since the eighteenth century had drawn on a developed economic structure, credit networks, and, particularly in

Bengal, a full-fledged tax apparatus and local client armies to make possible conquest and absorption. With India as a base, Britain greatly increased its influence in the Persian Gulf, Arabia, and East Africa, after having forced China to open its ports following a quick military victory of 1842.

During the early nineteenth century, many of the original colonies of Spain and Portugal became independent. The Spanish Empire based on conquest, religious conversion, and the extraction of silver in the New World had largely disappeared by 1850. But Spain still held Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. After Brazil, many times the size of Portugal, proclaimed its independence in 1822, Portugal was left with only toeholds in Africa, India, and East Asia.

The Dutch had established bases on the coast of West Africa (abandoned in 1872) and small island colonies scattered in the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, and the Pacific. Dutch traders ended Portuguese control of Java, one of Indonesia's islands, and extended their own influence over the island in 1755. The Dutch gradually extended control over the rest of Indonesia. Britain and France had established bases on the west coast of Africa, despite its lack of natural harbors and estuaries. Both powers began to penetrate the giant continent during the nineteenth century—the British from the tip of South Africa, the French from Algeria and the coast of West Africa.

Yet only Britain, despite being only about the size of the island of Madagascar, still had a large empire by the middle of the nineteenth century. Despite the loss of thirteen of its American colonies, the British Empire still extended into so many corners of the world that it was tediously repeated that "the sun never sets on the British Empire." British imperialism rested in part on free trade, with the empire contributing to economic

A British colonial administrator settling a dispute between two indigenous chiefs on the Gambia River in West Africa.
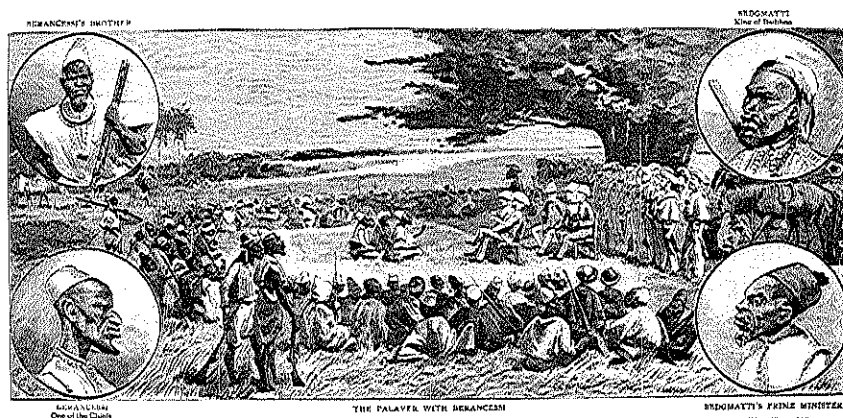
domination. Britain's strength also rested on the pillars of its settlement colonies. In search of a more secure future or simply adventure, more than a million people emigrated from the British Isles in the 1850s alone, most of them to Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, as well as to the United States. Australia had become the world's largest exporter of wool by 1851, when the discovery of gold in New South Wales and Victoria brought another wave of immigrants dreaming of making their fortune, like those pouring into California at the same time. The Australian colonies and New Zealand received the right to maintain their own governments in the 1850s, under the watchful eye of the British Foreign Office, although Western Australia remained a convict colony until "transportation" to Australia ceased to be a punishment in England in 1865. Canada achieved Dominion status (that is, nominally autonomous within the empire) in 1867 with passage of the British North America Act by the British Parliament. The crown would grant Dominion status to Australia and New Zealand in 1907.

THE "NEW IMPERIALISM" AND THE SCRAMBLE FOR AFRICA

In the early 1880s, the hold of the European powers on the rest of the world was still relatively slight, as Map 21.1 demonstrates. Many leaders still could conclude that the cost of maintaining colonies outweighed the benefits. In 1852, British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, later an outspoken advocate of imperialism, had referred to the colonies as "wretched" and "a millstone round our necks." William Gladstone, Disraeli's rival, reflected the prevailing liberal view when he pontificated, "The lust and love of territory have been among the greatest curses of mankind."

Distant, underdeveloped lands still seemed remote from urgent European interests. But this changed rapidly. Before the age of imperialism, Shaka, a renowned leader of the Zulus, who had established one of the two dominant African kingdoms in what is now South Africa, prophesied before his death in 1828 that his people would be conquered by the "swallows," white men who build mud houses. The prophecy came true.

The Second Industrial Revolution whetted the appetite of the powers for new sources of raw materials and markets for manufactured goods. The enormous resources generated by large-scale industrialization and the rapid spread of a contentious nationalism fueled the new imperialism. Despite rivalries between the powers, during this period they were not involved in wars with each other, allowing them to concentrate their energies and resources on imperial expansion, which new technological advances facilitated. Imperial powers Britain, France, Germany, and Italy no longer necessarily looked to preserve the balance of power on the continent, but rather to extend what each considered its national interests.

MAP 21.1 COLONIAL EMPIRES UNTIL 1880 Colonies of Britain, France, Russia, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, and the Ottoman Empire.

A British foreign minister recalled in 1891, "When I left the Foreign Office in 1880, nobody thought about Africa. When I returned to it in 1885, the nations of Europe were almost quarreling with each other as to the various portions of Africa which they should obtain." Another British foreign official would ask incredulously if his country sought to "take possession of every navigable river all over the world, and every avenue of commerce, for fear somebody else should take possession of it?" The colonial race extended even to the North Pole, first reached by the American Robert E. Peary (1856–1920) in 1909.
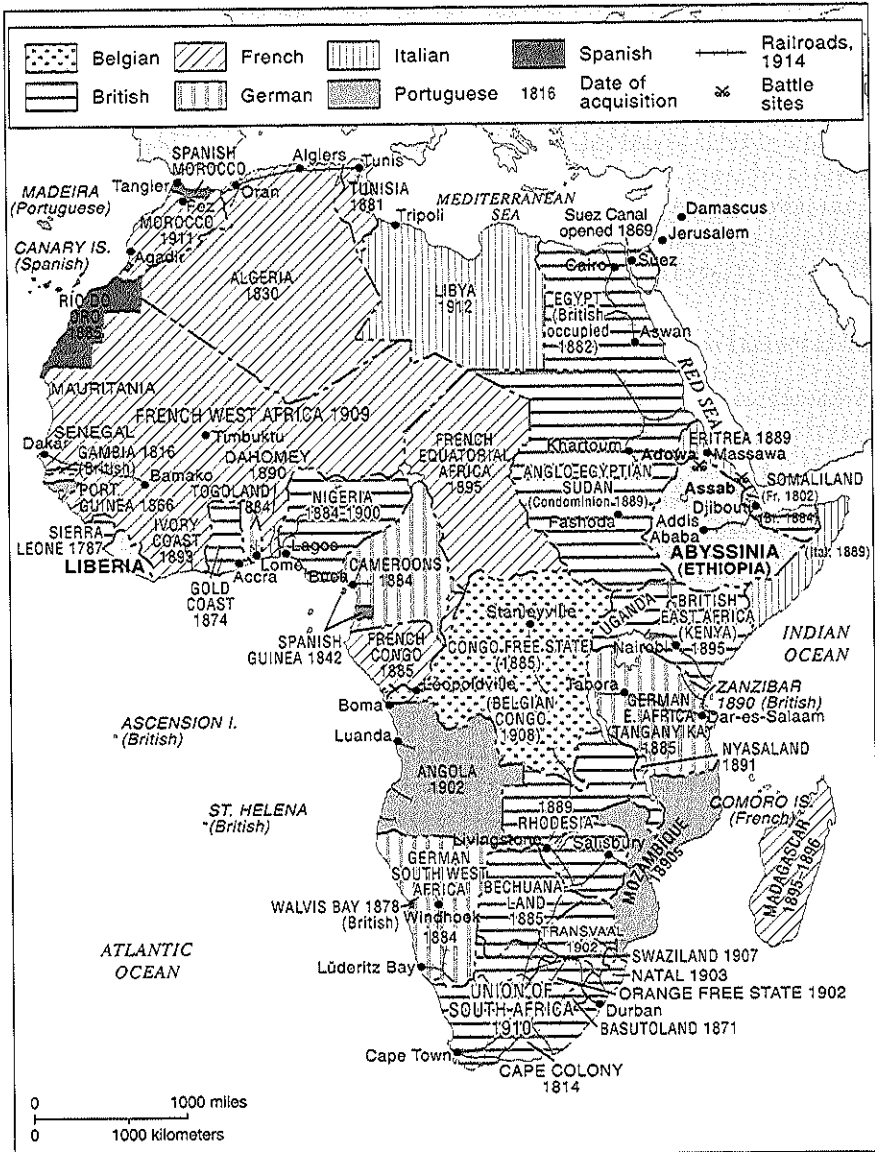
British and French Imperial Rivalry

A French colonial enthusiast assessed the "scramble for Africa"—the term was first used by a London newspaper as early as 1884—that began in the 1880s: "We are witnessing something that has never been seen in history: the veritable partition of an unknown continent by certain European countries. In this partition France is entitled to the largest share." Africa included about a fourth of the world's land area and a fifth of its population. Explorers plunged almost blindly into the uncharted and unmapped African interior. The source of the Nile River, the lifeline of Egypt, had been located in modern-day Uganda in 1862; most Western maps still showed blank spots for much of the continent's interior. Europeans discovered the bewildering complexity of a continent that included about 700 different autonomous societies with distinctive political structures.

France's imperial aspirations reveal some of the motives that fueled the new imperialism. After its humiliating defeat by Prussia during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871, the gnawing loss of Alsace-Lorraine hung over France. German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck subtly encouraged the French government to pursue an interest in distant colonies, hoping it would forget about trying to retake Alsace-Lorraine. Indeed, French colonialism during the "new imperialism" was closely tied to a nationalist spirit that was linked with the idea of revenge against Germany.

At the Congress of Berlin in 1878, France agreed to abandon its claims to the island of Cyprus, while the British gave up claims to Tunisia. The French ambassador to Germany warned his own government in 1881 that if it failed to order bold action in Tunisia, France risked decline as a power, perhaps even "finding itself on a par with Spain." In March 1881, the French government claimed that raiders from Tunisia were harassing their troops in Algeria. French troops invaded Tunisia, which became a French protectorate two months later. Between 1895 and 1896, France also seized the island of Madagascar off the coast of East Africa and made it a colony (see Map 21.2).

French merchants and nationalists dreamed of an empire that would stretch across Africa. Railroads had begun to reach across continental Europe in the 1840s and 1850s. They became a symbol of modernity, but also

| Belgian | French | Italian | Spanish | Railroads, 1914 |
| British | German | Portuguese 1816 | Date of acquisition | Battle sites |

SPANISH MOROCCO
Algiers
Tunis
MADEIRA (Portuguese)
Tangier
Oran
TUNISIA 1881
Tripoli
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Suez Canal opened 1869
Damascus
Jerusalem
Fez
MOROCCO 1911
CANARY IS. (Spanish)
Agadir
Cairo
Suez
ALGERIA 1830
LIBYA 1912
EGYPT (British) occupied 1882
Aswan
RIO DO ORO 1885
MAURITANIA
FRENCH WEST AFRICA 1909
SENEGAL
Dakar
GAMBIA 1816 (British)
Timbuktu
Bamako
FRENCH EQUATORIAL AFRICA 1895
Khartoum
ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN (Condominium 1889)
ERITREA 1889
Adowa
Massawa
SOMALILAND (Fr. 1802)
Assab
PORT. GUINEA 1866
TOGOLAND 1884
DAHOMEY 1890
NIGERIA 1884-1900
Fashoda
Addis Ababa
Djibouti (Br. 1884)
SIERRA LEONE 1787
IVORY COAST 1893
LIBERIA
Lagos
Lomé
Brea
CAMEROONS 1884
ABYSSINIA (ETHIOPIA) (Ital. 1889)
GOLD COAST 1874
Accra
SPANISH GUINEA 1842
FRENCH CONGO 1885
Stanleyville
UGANDA
BRITISH EAST AFRICA (KENYA) 1895
INDIAN OCEAN
CONGO FREE STATE (1885)
Nairobi
ASCENSION I. (British)
Boma
Leopoldville
BELGIAN CONGO 1908
Tabora
ZANZIBAR 1890 (British)
GERMAN E. AFRICA (TANGANYIKA) 1885
Dar-es-Salaam
Luanda
NYASALAND 1891
ANGOLA 1902
ST. HELENA (British)
COMORO IS. (French)
1889
RHODESIA
Livingstone
Salisbury
MOZAMBIQUE 1895
GERMAN SOUTHWEST AFRICA
BECHUANA-LAND 1885
MADAGASCAR 1895-1896
WALVIS BAY 1878 (British)
Windhoek 1884
TRANSVAAL 1902
SWAZILAND 1907
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Lüderitz Bay
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA 1910
NATAL 1903
ORANGE FREE STATE 1902
Durban
BASUTOLAND 1871
Cape Town
CAPE COLONY 1814

0   1000 miles
0   1000 kilometers

MAP 21.2 IMPERIALISM IN AFRICA BEFORE 1914 Belgian, British, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish colonies in Africa and dates of European control.

of conquest, as in the case of the U.S. transcontinental railway. Not surprisingly, the railroad captured the imagination of imperialists. Cecil Rhodes (1853–1902), British entrepreneur and colonialist, reasoned that rails went farther and cost less than bullets. A French railway network was mapped out to connect Algeria and Senegal by crossing the Sahara Desert.

Most of the lines were never built, and, in any case, they could never have generated sufficient revenues to justify their enormous cost. France had little more than a series of forts to show for enormous expense. Yet British merchants on the coast of West Africa feared that French gains would lead to the loss of products such as palm oil and potential markets for their own goods in the African interior. The Franco-British rivalry in Africa heated up. Further French advances in western Sudan followed.

British and French rivalries in Egypt, a gateway to the markets and products of the Middle East, dated to the revolutionary years of the late 1790s. In 1869, a French engineer and entrepreneur, Ferdinand de Lesseps (1805–1894), completed a canal through the Isthmus of Suez, which connects the Red and Mediterranean Seas. The Suez Canal cut the distance of the steamship voyage from London to Bombay (now Mumbai) in half by avoiding the treacherous Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa. The severe financial difficulties of Ismail Pasha, the ruler (*khedive*) of Egypt, which was a part of the Ottoman Empire, brought Britain a stroke of incredibly good fortune. In 1875, Britain bailed out the bankrupt Ismail Pasha by purchasing a considerable portion of shares in the canal. Under British management, the number of ships passing through the canal rose from 486 in 1870 to 3,000 in 1882.

No power had a greater stake in the canal than Britain. The British government traditionally had sought to protect the land and sea routes to India by supporting the Islamic Middle Eastern states—above all, the Ottoman

British forces at rest around the Great Sphinx of Giza after defeating an Egyptian army at the Battle of Tel el-Kebir in 1882.
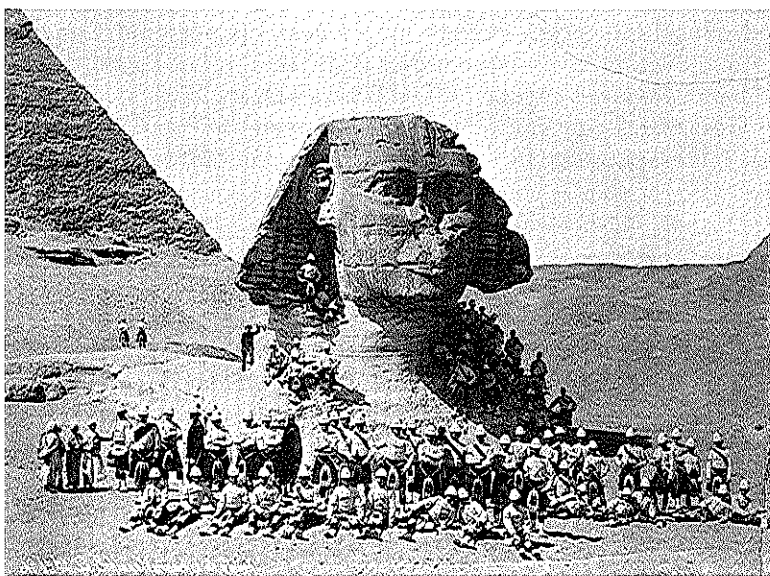
Empire—against Russian designs. With continuing social and political chaos in Egypt threatening the interests of British bondholders, in 1882 a British fleet shelled the Mediterranean port city of Alexandria. The British then established a protectorate over Egypt, still nominally part of the Ottoman Empire. The Egyptian *khedive* henceforth accepted British "advice." Over the next forty years, the British government repeatedly assured the other powers that its protectorate over Egypt would only be temporary. The French, who had loaned the *khedive* as much money as had Britain, were particularly aggrieved at the continued British occupation.

Central Africa became the next major focus of European expansion. In 1869, the *New York Herald* hired Henry Stanley to find the missionary and explorer David Livingstone (1813–1873), from whom there had been no word in almost four years. After a trip of fifteen months, he found the missionary in January 1871 on the shores of Lake Tanganyika and greeted him with that most understated Victorian salutation, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" Henry Stanley's subsequent long journey up the Congo River in 1879 to gain treaties for Belgian King Leopold II opened up interior Africa to great-power rivalry. In 1880, Savorgnan de Brazza (1852–1905), a French naval officer, reached Stanley Pool, a large lake Stanley had "discovered" in 1877. ("Stanley didn't discover us," one "native" put it reasonably, "we were here all the time.") Brazza returned with a piece of paper signed with an "X" by a king, which Brazza claimed granted France a protectorate over the territory beyond the right bank of the Congo River.

Although the French government first showed little interest, French nationalists made ratification of Brazza's "treaty" a major issue. Portugal then declared that it controlled the mouth of the Congo River. The British government demanded trade rights in the region. Leopold of Belgium voiced opposition to any French moves near his personal Congo territory. Amid continued resentment over British control of Egypt, the French Chamber of Deputies eagerly ratified Brazza's treaty. French colonial activity in West Africa continued unabated. Between 1880 and 1914, France's empire increased in size by twelve times, from 350,000 square miles to 4.6 million.

Germany and Italy Join the Race

Germany was the next power to enter the race for colonies. It did so despite the fact that Chancellor Otto von Bismarck at first viewed colonization as an expensive sideshow that distracted attention from the essential questions of power politics in European diplomacy. He once curtly rejected a German colonial explorer's plea for a more aggressive colonial policy: "Your map of Africa is very nice, but my map of Africa is in Europe. Here is Russia, and here is France, and we are in the middle. That is my map of Africa!"

The chancellor had routinely rejected pleas that Germany intervene in Africa on behalf of merchants, missionaries, and nationalistic adventurers.

The Germans in Africa. Cartoons originally appearing in the German journal *Jugend* in 1916 show an officer arriving to find chaos (*left*) and imposing military order (*right*).

The Colonial League, established in 1882, and the Society for German Colonization, a lobby of businessmen and other nationalists formed in 1884, pressured the government to pursue colonies. The German adventurer Karl Peters (1856–1918) sought an outlet for his financial interests and nationalist fervor through his East Africa Company. Peters's chartered company signed commercial agreements, built settlements, and assumed sovereignty over East African territories. These aggressive moves aroused the ire of British nationalists, exactly what Bismarck had hoped to avoid but, given the sudden intensity of nationalist and colonial fever at home, could not.

Bismarck gradually came to share the imperialist view that colonies might provide new markets for German products. But more than this, he realized that the establishment of colonies would solidify his political support within Germany. New markets could create jobs at home or abroad for unemployed German workers. Bismarck concluded that colonies could be administered indirectly at a relatively low cost.

The time also seemed right for the German government to appease its drooling colonial lobby, including merchants. The British Foreign Office was preoccupied with Islamic fundamentalist rebellions in the Sudan. France, with a new protectorate over Tunisia, was embroiled in debate over continued colonization in Indochina. In April 1884, Bismarck wired his consul in Cape Town, South Africa, ordering him to proclaim that the holdings of a German merchant north of the Orange River—the territorial limit of British colonial authority—would henceforth be the protectorate of German Southwest Africa. Britain acquiesced in exchange for Bismarck's acceptance of the British occupation of Egypt. That summer the German chancellor also decided to establish a protectorate over the Cameroons and Togoland in West Africa.

Bismarck, expertly playing off British and French interests against each other, called the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885 in response to a recent

agreement signed between Britain and Portugal recognizing mutual interests. The Berlin Conference divided up the territory of the Congo basin between the Congo Free State (Leopold's private territory) and France (the French Congo), while declaring the Congo River open to all. French merchants penetrated Dahomey and the Ivory Coast, with French troops reaching the ancient trading town of Timbuktu (now in Mali) in 1894.

In 1885, Bismarck agreed to protect Peters's commercial enterprises in Tanganyika, which became German East Africa. Germany also established several coastal trading stations and the colony of Angra Pequena in German Southwest Africa, which merchants had portrayed with unerring inaccuracy as a territory of untapped wealth just waiting to be extracted.

To placate Britain, Germany recognized British interests in Kenya and Uganda and the protectorate status of Zanzibar in 1890. In exchange, Germany received a small but strategically important island naval station in the North Sea. The German colonial lobby was not happy: "We have exchanged three kingdoms for a bathtub!" moaned Peters. Nonetheless, by 1913, German colonies in Africa, including German East and Southwest Africa, Togoland, and the Cameroons, occupied over 1 million square miles, five times the size of Germany.

Italy was the last of the major European nations to enter the colonial fray. Its ravenous hunger for empire led Bismarck to note sarcastically that it proceeded "with a big appetite and bad teeth." In 1882, Italy established Assab, a small settlement on the Red Sea, and three years later it occupied Massawa, which in 1889 became the capital of the new Italian colony of Eritrea. Italian merchants hoped to force the adjacent African state of Abyssinia (now Ethiopia) to trade through Eritrea. In 1889, the Abyssinian emperor signed a treaty with Italy which the Italian government took to mean that Abyssinia was now an Italian protectorate. When the French began building a railroad that would link Abyssinia to French Somaliland and the Abyssinians attempted to cancel the treaty, Italian troops launched a war in 1894. The result was a disaster. In 1896, a general without adequate maps marched four badly organized columns of Italian troops into battle. The Abyssinians, some 70,000 strong, with Russian artillery advisers and French rifles, routed the Italian army in the hills near the coast at Adowa. Six thousand Italian soldiers were killed—many more than in the various wars that had led to Italy's unification—and several thousand were captured. The Italians became the first European army to be defeated in the field by Africans. Under the Treaty of Addis Ababa that same year, Italy was forced to renounce Abyssinia as a protectorate, although it kept the territory of Eritrea on the Red Sea.

Standoff in the Sudan: The Fashoda Affair

In 1898, the Anglo-French rivalry in Africa culminated in the standoff between French and British forces at Fashoda on the Nile River in the

southern Sudan, nearly bringing the two powers to war. The French government resented the fact that Egypt served as a base for British initiatives in the hot, dry Sudan.

A fundamentalist Islamic and nationalist revolt led by a former Sudanese slave trader who declared himself to be the Mahdi (the Guided One) in the early 1880s challenged the nominal authority of the *khedive* of Egypt over Sudan. After the Mahdi and his followers (the Mahdists) began a holy war against Egypt and defeated Egyptian armies led by British officers, the British sent an expedition to the Sudanese capital of Khartoum to evacuate the Egyptian population. It was led by the dashing, eccentric British adventurer General Charles "Chinese" Gordon (1833–1885), so called because he had commanded troops that assisted the Chinese government in putting down the Taiping Rebellion in the 1860s. Besieged for ten months in Khartoum by the Mahdi's forces in 1884, Gordon was killed when the Mahdists stormed the garrison two days before a relief expedition from Britain arrived in January 1885.

Britain lost interest in Sudan until the French colonial lobby, still smarting from Britain's occupation of Egypt, sought a strategic foothold on the Nile River. In January 1895, Britain claimed the Sudan. The French government, in turn, announced that it considered Sudan open to all colonial powers. The British government responded that it would consider any French activity in Sudan "an unfriendly act."

In 1898, a British force commanded by Lord Horatio Kitchener (1850–1916) set out from Egypt for Sudan with the Upper Nile outpost of Fashoda

The charge of the dervishes (followers of the Mahdi) at the Battle of Omdurman in the Sudan, 1898.

as its goal. Kitchener and his army took revenge for Gordon's death, using machine guns to mow down 11,000 Mahdists at the Battle of Omdurman (September 1898) and retaking Khartoum. British troops desecrated the Mahdi's grave, playing soccer with his skull. At Fashoda, they encountered a French expeditionary force, which intended to establish a French colony on the Upper Nile. Kitchener handed his counterpart a mildly worded note of protest against the French presence, and the two commanders clinked drinking glasses, leaving their governments to fight it out diplomatically.

In both Britain and France, some nationalists demanded war. But the Dreyfus Affair (see Chapter 18) preoccupied French society; furthermore, as the French foreign minister lamented, "We have nothing but arguments and they have the troops." The Fashoda Affair ended peacefully when France recognized British and Egyptian claims to the Nile Basin and Britain recognized French holdings in West Africa. There seemed to be enough of Africa to go around. Only Abyssinia and Liberia, which had been settled in the 1820s by freed U.S. slaves, were independent African states.

The British in South Africa and the Boer War

In South Africa, Britain had to overcome resistance to its presence, first from indigenous peoples and then from Dutch settlers. The British had taken the Cape of Good Hope at the tip of South Africa from the Dutch in 1795. British settlers moved in, fighting nine separate wars against the Bantu people in the 1850s and 1860s. In 1872, the Cape Colony emerged from under the wing of the British Foreign Office, forming its own government, but remaining within the British Empire.

Known as the Boers, the Dutch settlers (Afrikaners) in South Africa were a farming people of strict Calvinist belief. The Boers resented the British abolition of slavery and the fact that the British allowed blacks to move about freely and to own property. In the "Great Trek" from the Cape Colony, which began in 1836 and lasted almost a decade, many Boers began to move inland to carve out states that would be independent of British rule (see Map 21.3). Overcoming Zulu resistance, Boers established the Natal Republic, a strip along South Africa's east coast. When the British intervened in support of the Zulus, the Boers left Natal, which became a British colony in 1843. The Boers crossed the Vaal River in search of new land. Slaughtering Zulus as they went, the Boers founded the Republic of Transvaal (later the South African Republic) and the Orange Free State, which the British recognized as independent in 1854.

The discovery of diamonds in the late 1860s, first in the Cape Colony and then west of the Orange Free State, attracted a flow of treasure seekers—at least 10,000 people—raising the stakes for control of South Africa. After annexing the Republic of Transvaal against the wishes of the Boers in 1877, the British gradually extended their colonial frontier northward, convinced that more diamonds and gold would be found beyond the Vaal River.
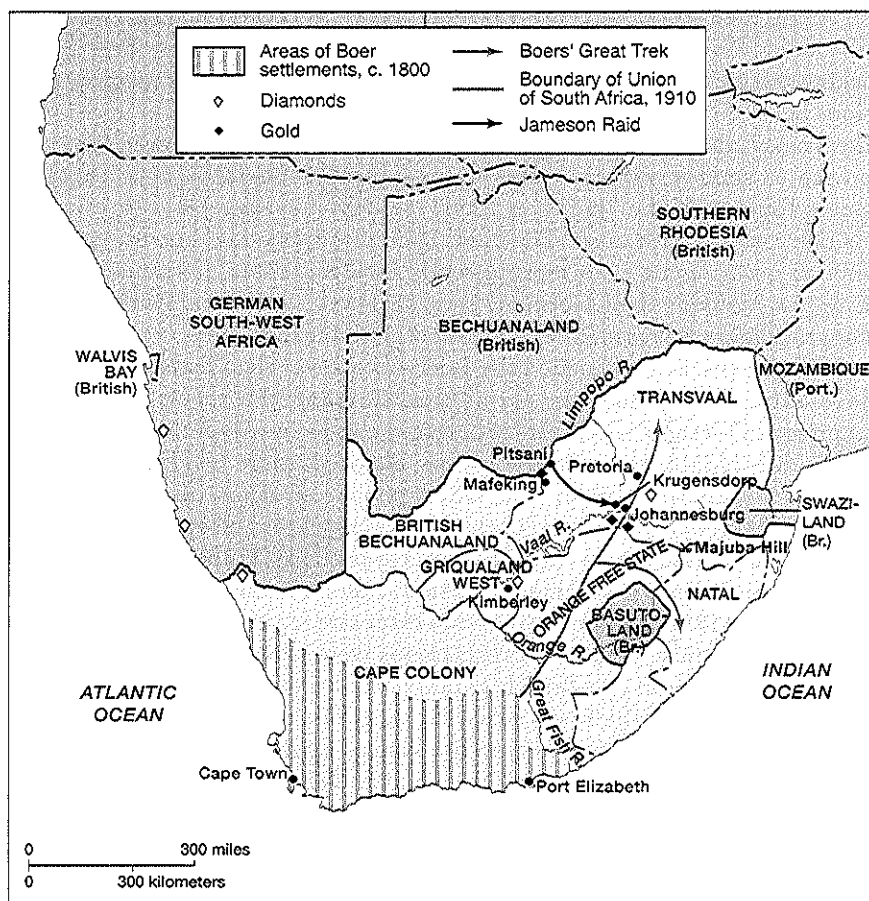
MAP 21.3 SOUTH AFRICA, 1800–1910   The settlement of South Africa by the Boers and English, including the Boers' Great Trek and the 1910 boundaries of the Union of South Africa.

Cecil Rhodes orchestrated British expansion in South Africa, leading to conflict with the Boers, who still bitterly resented annexation into the British Empire. In 1880, the Boers rose up in revolt, their sharpshooters picking off British troops at Majuba Hill a year later. Unwilling to risk further trouble, William Gladstone's Liberal government recognized the political independence of the South African Republic. But, at the same time, the British tried to force the Boers to trade through the port of Cape Town by denying them access to the sea, reflecting the primacy of commerce in the British grand scheme.

The Boers in Transvaal were given a boost by the discovery in the mid-1880s of more gold deposits, which enabled them to buy weapons. Con-

structing their railway to Port Mozambique on the eastern coast, the Boers offered advantageous shipping rates to Natal and the Orange Free State, taking business away from British South Africa, and further souring relations between the Boers and Britain. Rhodes then subsidized an uprising in the Transvaal against the Boers. The British government followed Rhodes's advice to send a military excursion against the Boers in 1895, but the Boers fought off the "Jameson Raid" (lead by Leander Jameson) by 500 British cavalry with ease. The raid discredited Rhodes, but brought the British government even more directly into the crisis, particularly after Emperor William II of Germany sent Transvaal President Paul Kruger a congratulatory telegram after the failed Jameson Raid.

In 1899, the British goaded the Boers into a war that lasted three years. In order to depopulate the farms that supplied the rebels, the British imprisoned farmers' wives and children in camps in which thousands died. Some in Britain criticized these camps, although there had been few such outcries when the British had killed people of color during the wars against the peoples of India, Burma (Myanmar), and elsewhere in Africa. The outnumbered Boers evoked great sympathy in France and Germany, leaving the British government isolated diplomatically. The war shocked many people in Britain not only by the extensive, costly military campaigns it required (almost 400,000 British troops were sent), but also because of the hostile reaction the British conduct of the war engendered in other countries. In 1902, the Boers asked for an armistice. Thereafter, they were forced to take an oath of loyalty to the king of England. In 1906 and 1907, Britain granted the Republic of Transvaal and the Orange Free State self-government. In 1910, the Boers joined the British Union of South Africa

(*Left*) British troops in Pretoria, South Africa. (*Right*) Boer Commandos.
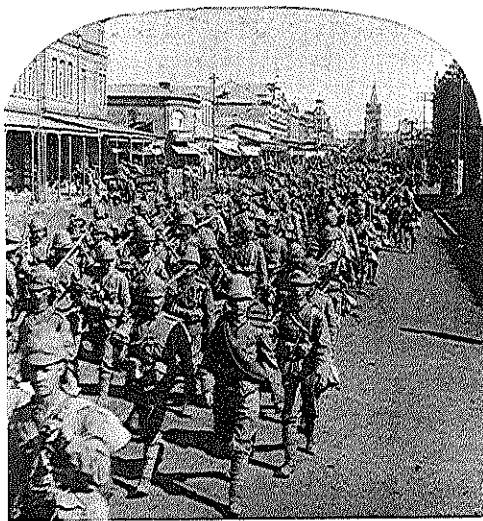
(which now included the Cape Colony, the Orange Free State, Transvaal, and Natal, and which was given Dominion status by the British at that time).

The new Boer government immediately proclaimed that it would "permit no equality between colored people and the white inhabitants either in church or state." Apartheid—the unequal separation of whites and blacks by law—was the result of the Boer policy of racial domination. It proved to be the most extreme consequence of the "scramble for Africa."

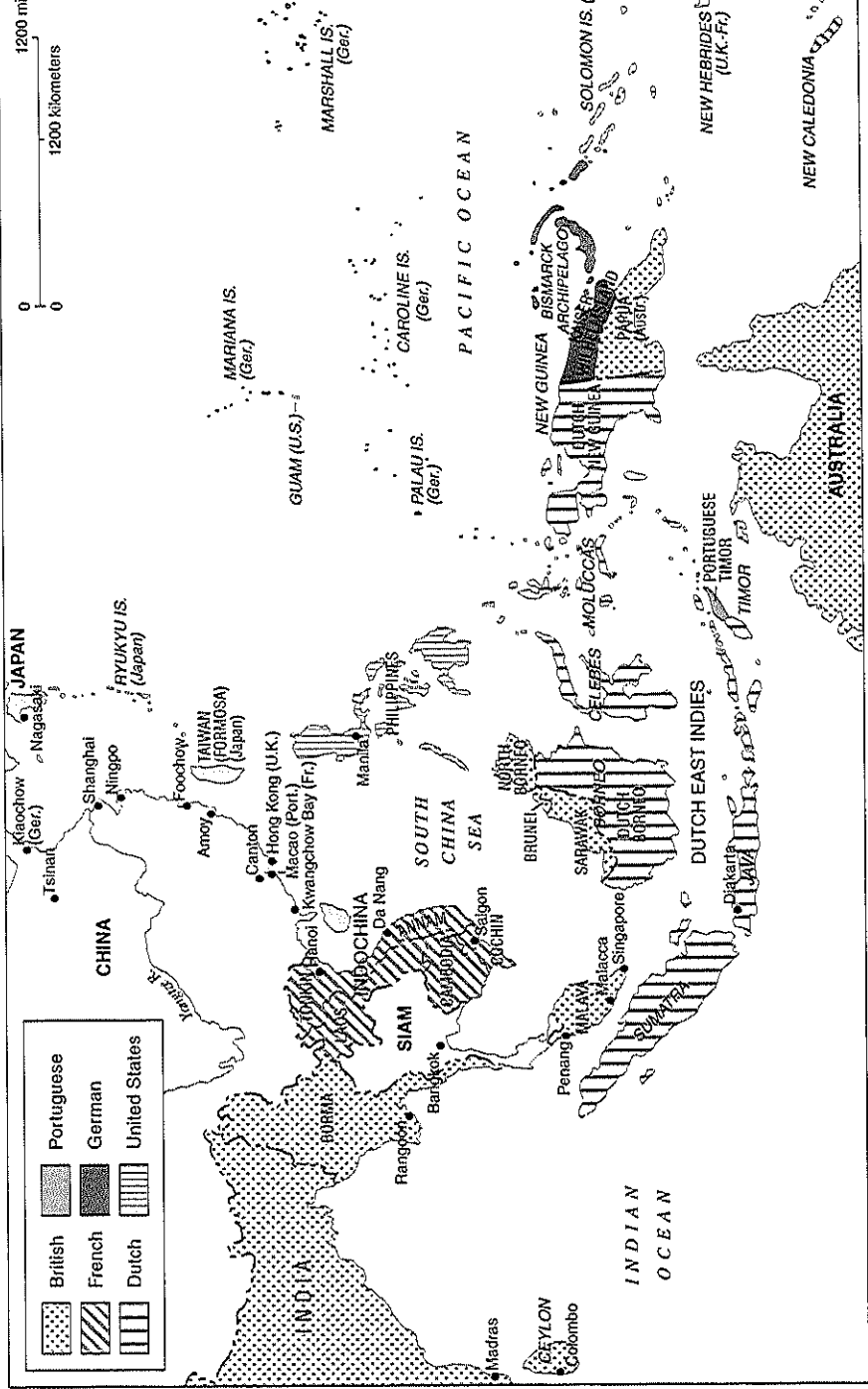## THE EUROPEAN POWERS IN ASIA

The European powers and the United States divided up much of the entire Pacific region in their quest for raw materials, markets, strategic advantage, and prestige. From the populous Indian subcontinent, Britain expanded its interests into and beyond Burma, accentuating a rivalry with Russia for influence in the region. In the meantime, the Dutch extended their authority in Indonesia, while the French turned much of Indochina into their protectorate. The Russian Empire had expanded well into Central Asia and to the Pacific Ocean. By 1900, only Japan, the emerging power in Asia, maintained real independence against European incursion, having accepted western modernization following the Meiji Restoration in 1868. Siam (Thailand) stood as a buffer state between British and French colonial interests, and the Western powers dominated China, forcing trade and territorial concessions on that weakening empire.

India, Southeast Asia, and China

Europe's quest for colonies and domination in Asia had begun even earlier than in Africa. During the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), British troops defeated the French in India. The British East India Company, responsible to the British Parliament, administered India. The Company ruled with the assistance of various Indian princes. The British recognized their local prerogatives in exchange for their obedience and assistance. Britain later expanded east from India into Burma, overcoming Burmese resistance in a war from 1824 to 1826, and then expanded south into Malaya (see Map 21.4).

Using India as a base, British merchants, backed by British naval power, worked to overcome barriers to trade with East Asia. In the 1830s, British traders had begun to pay for silks, teas, and other Chinese luxury goods with opium grown in India. In 1833, the East India Company lost its monopoly on trade with the east, and other English traders appeared in China selling opium. With opium addiction rampant in southern China, in 1839 the emperor tried to limit trade with foreigners, insisting that all such trade pass through Canton (now Guangzhou). The Royal Navy sent gunboats—hence the origin of the term "gunboat diplomacy"—to Canton to force Chinese capitulation in the short, one-sided Opium War (1840–1842). British

MAP 21.4 INDIA AND THE FAR EAST BEFORE 1914   Areas controlled by the British, French, Dutch, Portuguese, Germans, and Americans in Asia.

Legend:
- British
- French
- Dutch
- Portuguese
- German
- United States

1200 miles
1200 kilometers

MARSHALL IS.
(Ger.)

NEW HEBRIDES
(U.K.-Fr.)

NEW CALEDONIA

SOLOMON IS.

PACIFIC OCEAN

BISMARCK
ARCHIPELAGO

MARIANA IS.
(Ger.)

GUAM (U.S.)

CAROLINE IS.
(Ger.)

NEW GUINEA

DUTCH
NEW GUINEA

PAPUA
(Aust.)

PALAU IS.
(Ger.)

AUSTRALIA

JAPAN

Nagasaki

RYUKYU IS.
(Japan)

Kiaochow
(Ger.)

Tsinai

Shanghai
Ningpo

Foochow

TAIWAN
(FORMOSA)
(Japan)

Amoy

Canton

Hong Kong (U.K.)

Macao (Port.)

Kwangchow Bay (Fr.)

CHINA

PHILIPPINES

Manila

SOUTH
CHINA
SEA

NORTH
BORNEO

BRUNEI

SARAWAK

BORNEO

DUTCH
BORNEO

CELEBES

MOLUCCAS

PORTUGUESE
TIMOR

TIMOR

DUTCH EAST INDIES

Da Nang

INDOCHINA

Hanoi

ANNAM

LAOS

CAMBODIA

SIAM

Saigon

COCHIN

Bangkok

BURMA

Rangoon

MALAYA

Penang

Malacca

Singapore

SUMATRA

Djakarta

JAVA

INDIA

Madras

CEYLON

Colombo

INDIAN
OCEAN

forces occupied Shanghai. By the Treaty of Nanking that followed in 1842, the first of the "unequal treaties," China was forced to establish a number of "treaty ports" open to British trade, including Canton and Shanghai, and it was required to grant Britain formal authority "in perpetuity" over Hong Kong (authority that lasted until 1997). British residents and European visitors received the rights of extraterritoriality, which meant that they were not subject to Chinese law. Britain and France together occupied Canton. Following hostilities in 1857 (see

Chinese men smoking opium.

Chapter 18), a combined British and French army forced China to open six more ports to British and French trade, including on the Yangtze River. The British trade route now ran from British ports to Bombay, Columbo in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), Rangoon, and Singapore, dramatically assisted by the Suez Canal beginning in 1869.

In 1857, a revolt shook British rule in India, revealing some of the tensions between the colonialists and the colonized. Long-term causes of the mutiny of the Sepoys—Indian troops in the British army—included anger at the British policy of taking direct control over Indian states whose princes died without heirs. The immediate cause was the continued use of animal fat to grease rifle cartridges, a religious affront to both Hindu and Muslim soldiers. Other causes included low pay and resentment of British officers. Confronted with British intransigence, the Sepoys rebelled over a wide area, beginning near Delhi. In one place insurgents killed 200 British women and children. The rebels promised a return to Mughal power, as the emperor had been a mere figurehead since 1803. They found some support among local elites, particularly those who saw increased British authority to be a threat to Islam in areas of that religion. An extensive military campaign followed, involving almost 200,000 British and Indian soldiers. British authorities hanged rebels and burned a number of villages.

Following the mutiny, administration of India passed in 1858 from the East India Company to the British crown. Queen Victoria became "Empress of India" and British rule became more direct. Indian princes were guaranteed their lands if they signed agreements accepting British rule. The governor-general of India added the honorific title of "viceroy," as the
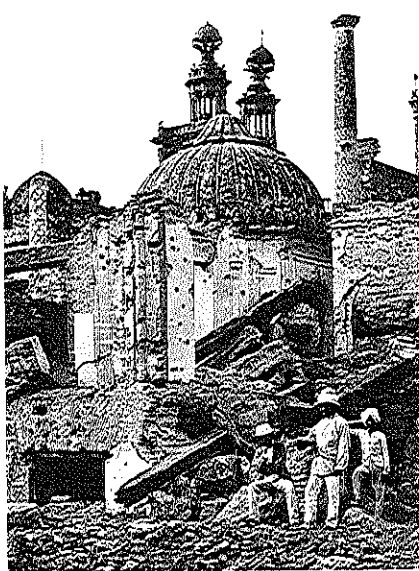
(*Left*) Ruins after the Sepoy Mutiny, 1857. (*Right*) Lord and Lady Curzon in Delhi, 1903.

monarch's personal representative, serving under the secretary of state for India. Lord George Curzon (1859–1925), who could trace his aristocratic family line back to the Norman Conquest of 1066, was one of the most forceful proponents of British imperialism. Viceroy of India before the age of forty, Curzon was determined to solidify British rule in India. He strengthened the northwestern frontier defenses against Russia, reduced the cost of government, and took credit for a modest increase in the Indian standard of living. The British government enacted educational reforms, initiated irrigation projects, reformed the police and judicial systems, and encouraged the cotton industry. Frightened by the Sepoy Mutiny, the British government also expedited railway construction in India in order to be able to move troops rapidly. From less than 300 miles of track in 1857, a network of 25,000 miles was established by 1900. By connecting much of the Indian interior with ports, railway development also encouraged production of Indian cotton, rice, oil, jute, indigo, and tea, which could now reach ports by train and then be exported to Britain. Railroads reduced the ravages of famine in India. So did the planting of new crops, such as potatoes and corn. The greater availability of food contributed to rapid population growth. The Indian subcontinent in the twentieth century would become one of the most populous places on earth.

But while some Indian merchants and manufacturers made money from expanded trading opportunities, others lost out. To assure a lucrative market in India, a country of almost 300 million people in 1900, the British at

first banned some Indian manufactures that would compete with British goods produced at home, thereby destroying Indian village handicrafts such as textile weaving. Raw Indian cotton was shipped to England to be made into cloth there, and then re-exported to India. British tax collectors increased the indebtedness of Indian peasants in a vast nation beset by rising population, small holdings, and the increasing subdivision of land.

France made its first move to colonize Southeast Asia in the late 1850s. French and Spanish forces had bombarded the towns of Da Nang and Saigon (in present-day Vietnam) in joint retaliation for the execution of a Spanish missionary. When the Vietnamese counterattacked, a French admiral annexed three provinces. France attempted unsuccessfully to form a protectorate over northern Annam (the central part of Vietnam). In the early 1880s, the Emperor of Annam sought Chinese assistance against the French, invoking China's ancient claims to the region. An anti-foreign movement known as the "Black Flags," which included Vietnamese and Chinese brigands, harassed foreigners, aided by Chinese soldiers. In 1883, a French expedition captured the city of Hanoi in Tonkin in northern Vietnam. French troops sent from Cochin (the southern part of Vietnam) forced the Vietnamese to accept a protectorate that included all of Annam. In 1887, France created the Union of Indochina, which included Tonkin, Annam, Cochin, and Cambodia, and, in 1893, it unilaterally added Laos to French Indochina.

The colonial race extended to the islands of the South Seas. France claimed Tahiti and New Caledonia. Britain held the Fiji Islands, some of which served as refueling ports, but little else. Germany hoisted its flag over the Marshall Islands and Samoa. Smaller islands were sometimes bartered and traded as trinkets by the European powers in the various agreements signed to settle major disputes over the larger colonies.

Japan and China: Contrasting Experiences

In contrast to other Asian countries, Japan maintained real independence and gradually emerged as a power in Asia. Japan built up its army and navy after being opened to Western contact in the 1850s. The 1868 Meiji Restoration, ending a period of chaos, facilitated a remarkable Westernization of economic life in Japan. The new centralized state structure encouraged the development of international commerce and industry. Military conscription and the implementation of Western technology, assisted by Western technical experts, made it possible for Japan, with a modern army and navy, to emerge as a world power at the dawn of the twentieth century. Japan, too, then began to seek colonies in Asia.

In China, the Ch'ing (Qing) dynasty continued to be beset by internal division, as well as by the demands of the imperialist powers, and the government only slowly began to adopt Western technology. In the late 1860s, a few Chinese reformers had begun to favor building railways as a way of

modernizing the Chinese state. Yet conservative opposition to modernization continued within the imperial court. Some Chinese scholars believed that railways damaged "the dragon's vein" across the landscape, threatening the earth's harmony. Imperial officials feared that in case of war China's enemies would quickly seize the rail lines.

With colonial rivalries reaching a fever pitch in the late 1890s, the European powers sought to impose further trade and territorial concessions on China. The Chinese government attempted to shore up the ability of China to resist demands and incursions by Western powers by making use of European and American science in a program of "self-strengthening." Internal uprisings, notably the Taiping Rebellion in South China in the 1850s and 1860s, further encouraged such reforms. However, military weakness made China an easy target for expansion of European influence. The Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895 led to an independent Korea (which Japan made a protectorate and then annexed in 1910) and China's loss of the island of Formosa (Taiwan) and part of Manchuria to Japan. Needing loans to pay off a war indemnity to Japan, China was forced to make further trading concessions and disadvantageous railroad leases to Germany and Russia.

Following the murder of two German missionaries in 1897, the German government forced China in 1898 to grant a ninety-nine-year lease on the north Chinese port of Tsingtao (Qingdao) on Kwangchow (Jiaozhou) Bay and to grant two concessions to build railways in Shandong Province. Russia was eager to complete its own line to Vladivostok through Chinese territories, permitting it to open up the Chinese province of Manchuria, rich in soybeans and cotton. Russia seized and fortified Port Arthur (Lüshun) on the pretext of protecting China from Germany and compelled the Chinese government to lease Port Arthur and Dalian (Lüda) for twenty-five years. The Chinese gave France a lease on Canton Bay and recognized France's trading "sphere of influence" over several southern provinces.

The U.S. government now claimed to seek what it referred to as "an open door" in China, in accordance with the principle of free trade. The powers agreed not to interfere with any treaty port or with the interests of any other power. China agreed to lease Britain some of the Shandong peninsula and several ports, and to guarantee a British trade monopoly on the Yangtze River, the entry to much of central China. These forced concessions further weakened the ruling Ch'ing dynasty.

In northern China, many Chinese resented the foreigners, whom some blamed for floods and a drought, events that also were taken to mean that the "mandate of Heaven" of the ruling dynasty was at an end. The "Righteous and Harmonious Fists" was a secret anti-foreign society better known as the Boxers, after the training practices of its members. Many of the Boxers believed they were immune to foreign bullets. The targets of their wrath were missionaries who sought to convert the Chinese, railroads that took work away from Chinese transporters, foreign merchants who flooded

841The European Powers in Asia

the Chinese market with cheap textiles, bringing unemployment to the local population, and foreign soldiers, who often mistreated the Chinese.

In 1900, the Boxers attacked Europeans, Americans, and Chinese Christians in Shandong Province, cutting the railway line between Peking (Beijing) and Tientsin (Tianjin). These attacks spread quickly to the imperial capital and other parts of northern China. After the Boxers killed several hundred "foreign devils," British, Russian, German, French, Japanese, and American troops put down the rebellion. Their governments assessed the Chinese government a crushing indemnity of 67.5 million pounds.

The "scramble for concessions" went on. Russia's competition with Japan for Manchuria in northeastern China led to its shocking

A member of the "Righteous and Harmonious Fists" secret society that rose up against foreign influence in the Boxer rebellion in China in 1900.

defeat in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 (see Chapter 18). Following its victory, Japan took over and expanded the Manchurian railways. This humiliation, and the subsequent disadvantageous railway concessions granted to the European powers and Japan, intensified Chinese nationalist sentiment and contributed to the overthrow of the Ch'ing dynasty in 1911. In the meantime, Japan's aggressive imperialism in East Asia was well under way.

The United States in Asia

The United States, too, took colonies, believing that this was its right as an emerging world power. However, the American imperial venture in the Philippine Islands, an archipelago in the Pacific Ocean, was not all smooth sailing. During the Spanish-American War of 1898, fought largely over the Caribbean island of Cuba, the American admiral George Dewey (1837–1917) sailed into Manila Bay and defeated the Spanish fleet, capturing Manila. The United States had been helped by a Filipino nationalist,

Emilio Aguinaldo (1869–1964). But once the peace treaty ending the Spanish-American War was signed, President William McKinley announced that it would be "cowardly and discreditable" to leave the Philippines. In 1899, the Filipinos began a war of independence. U.S. troops defeated Aguinaldo's guerrilla forces after three years of fighting. American soldiers herded Filipinos into prison camps, torturing and executing some of those they captured. Aguinaldo himself was taken prisoner in 1901, and the insurrection, in which perhaps as many as 200,000 Filipinos died, ended the following year. The Philippines became a territory of the United States.

At the same time, the U.S. government did not want to be left out of the scramble for Chinese concessions. In 1899, Secretary of State John Hay announced his country's "Open Door Policy" with regard to China, and tried to convince the other powers to leave China open to all trade. Only the British government publicly expressed its agreement with this principle, but the scramble for advantage in China went on.

Map 21.4 demonstrates the remarkable impact of the scramble for colonies in Asia. Only Japan and Siam (Thailand) succeeded in really keeping their independence. The government of China was virtually helpless in the face of the imperial powers.

DOMINATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The eagerness with which many Europeans embarked on or applauded imperial ventures can be partially explained by their assumptions that non-Western peoples were culturally inferior. These were not new views, nor were they the only ones held. However, in early modern Europe, non-Western peoples—particularly Islamic peoples—had been viewed as enemies by virtue of their religions: Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, among others. The colonial powers assumed the right to exploit conquered "inferior" peoples and decide what was "best" for the colonized. British imperialists spoke of "the white man's burden," a phrase unfortunately immortalized by Rudyard Kipling's 1899 poem of the same name: "Take up the White Man's burden—/ And reap his old reward: / The blame of those ye better, / The hate of those ye guard."

Nineteenth- and twentieth-century Western attempts to understand dominated or conquered peoples also reflected the intellectual and cultural processes of imperialism. What has become known as "Orientalism" began with the assumption that not only were Asian, African, and other colonized peoples different, but they were inferior as well. This was reflected by the Egyptian exhibit at an international exposition in Paris in 1900. There visitors could view what were presented as African and Asian villages, complete with "natives" on exhibit. An Egyptian visitor was outraged by the image that the hosts wanted to present of Cairo, his native city, as horribly

old and run-down, such that "even the paint on the building was made dirty."

The competition for colonies also coincided with the emergence of pseudo-scientific studies that purported to prove the superiority of Western peoples (through, for example, measures of cranium size). Material progress represented by steamboats, railroads, and machine guns was assumed to follow logically from what was considered moral superiority. Thus a French prime minister insisted that "the superior races have rights over the inferior races." Imperial territories became a testing ground or laboratory for European science and technology.

The British image of themselves in Africa, from *The Kipling Reader*, 1908: "A Young man . . . walking slowly at the head of his flocks, while at his knee ran small naked cupids."

Social Darwinism

In the eighteenth century, some of the philosophes of the Enlightenment had come to view cultural differences of non-Western peoples with interest, believing that they could learn from people who seemed in some ways different from themselves. In writing about the "propensity to war, slaughter, and destruction, which has always depopulated the face of the earth," Voltaire had noted that "this rage has taken much less possession of the minds of the people of India and China than of ours." Not all of the philosophes, to be sure, had been so enlightened in this respect: David Hume wrote in 1742, "I am apt to suspect the negroes and in general all the other species of men . . . to be naturally inferior to the whites." Likewise, social Darwinists in the nineteenth century did not believe that they could learn anything from non-Western peoples. Social Darwinists argued that what they regarded as the natural superiority of whites justified the conquest of the "backward" peoples of Africa and Asia. They misapplied theories of biological evolution to the history of states, utilizing the principle of "natural selection" developed by Charles Darwin, in which the stronger prevail over the weak. Another British scientist, Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), popularized these theories, uttering the chilling phrase "survival of the fittest." Nations, according to this view, must struggle, like species, to survive. Success in the international battle for colonies would develop and measure national mettle.

Cultural stereotypes of the peoples of the "mysterious" East or the "dark continent" of Africa held sway. These ranged from "childlike" (and therefore

in need of being led) to "barbaric," "depraved," "sneaky," and "dangerous" (and therefore in need of constant surveillance). Lord Curzon called the Indian princes "a set of unruly and ignorant and rather undisciplined school-boys." British doctors contributed to a prevailing juxtaposition of the "African jungle," seen as a "hotbed of disease" (including stigmatized diseases like leprosy) by virtue of a lack of civilization, with the healthier "civilized" colonizers.

Even well-meaning critics of colonial brutality and other reformers assumed the inferiority of those they were trying to help. Josephine Butler, a feminist reformer, believed that Indian women stood lower on a scale of human development than did her British "sisters." Yet, at the beginning of the twentieth century, some feminist activists did begin to learn about and respect Indian culture and work closely with Indian women.

Imperial officials adopted racist ideology to justify colonialism and the brutalization of indigenous peoples. Colonial businessmen, as well as administrators, paid little attention to the damaging effects of colonialism on indigenous peoples, while simultaneously justifying their presence by claiming to "civilize" the people they dominated.

The experience of the Herero people in what had become German Southwest Africa provides perhaps the most egregious example of frightening Western attitudes toward indigenous peoples who stood in their way. A German official stated the goal of the colonial administration: "Our task is to strip the Herero of his heritage and national characteristics and gradually to submerge him, along with the other natives, into a single colored working class." In 1903, the Herero people, after losing their land to German cattle raisers and angered by the unwillingness of colonial courts to punish cases of murder and manslaughter against them, rose up in rebellion. The Germans killed about 55,000 men, women, and children, two-thirds of the Herero people, chasing survivors into the desert and sealing waterholes. The German official report stated: "Like a wounded beast the enemy was tracked down from one water-hole to the next until finally he became the victim of his own environment. . . . [This] was to complete what the German army had begun: extermination of the Herero nation."

Social Darwinism had other implications for the home countries. At the turn of the century, the U.S. historian Frederick Jackson Turner held that the westward expansion of the American frontier helped reduce discontent by providing land and opportunity to the surplus population of the East Coast. A French military administrator, Marshal Hubert Lyautey (1854–1934), once referred to Algeria and Morocco as the "French Far West." Some prominent Europeans began to believe that the powers could "export" their more economically marginal or politically troublesome population to the colonies. By "social imperialism," colonies would help countries easily dispose of their "least fit," such as unemployed or underemployed workers. Social tensions and conflict would be reduced, the ambitions of the working class for political power thus defused. Cecil Rhodes, as usual, put it most

baldly: "If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists." The British colonial armies alone absorbed thousands of "surplus" Scots and Irish, the latter making up about 40 percent of the non-Indian troops in India. By this view, then, colonies could serve as a social safety valve.

Technological Domination and Indigenous Subversion

Europeans employed technological advances in travel and weaponry in their subjugation of indigenous peoples. Railways aided imperial armies in their conquest and defense of colonial frontiers, although horses, mules, and camels still hauled men and supplies across African deserts and bush country. The steamship, like the train, lessened the time of travel to distant places. By the end of the century, thanks to the completion of the Suez Canal in 1869, linking the Mediterranean and Red Seas, British bureaucrats, soldiers, merchants, and tourists could reach India in about twenty days. The heliograph, which sent messages by means of a movable mirror that reflected sunlight, and then the telegraph speeded up communications and led to better coordination of troop movements. Observation balloons and, later, power searchlights aided European armies.

Advanced military technology invariably overcame open colonial rebellions. Along the South African frontier, Zulu warriors resisted the British advance in the late 1870s, earning several victories with surprise attacks. But by the 1890s, they were no match for cannon. The gunboat was the prototypical instrument of European power and enforcement, as it had proven to be in China during the Opium War in the early 1840s. The Gatling, or machine, gun and the single-barreled Maxim gun, which could fire rapidly without being reloaded, proved devastating. A contemporary quip described relations between colonists and the colonized: "Whatever happens we have got the Maxim gun, and they have not." A single gunner or two could fend off a large-scale attack, and British casualties were reduced to almost none. To soldiers, colonial battles now seemed "more like hunting than fighting."

The colonial powers tested new, lighter artillery that could be moved quickly and new, more powerful shells. The British developed the "dum-dum" bullet, which exploded upon impact, with the shooting of attacking "natives" in mind. (It took its name from the arsenal in Calcutta where it was developed.) For the most part, there was little to stop the European onslaught other than malaria and yellow fever carried by mosquitoes, and sleeping sickness carried by the tsetse fly.

Yet indigenous peoples could express resistance to powerful outsiders in other ways besides risking annihilation in open rebellion. The "weapons of the weak" ranged from riots and individual subversion to foot-dragging and gentle but determined defiance. The latter included pretending not to understand, or sometimes what Chinese called "that secret smile" that suggested not compliance but rather defiance in the guise of deference. Such play-acting in daily life offered only glimpses of the ridicule of Europeans

that could be hinted at in theatrical productions, songs, dances, or other public expressions. Symbols, gestures, double meanings, and images were easily understood by the subordinate population, but sufficiently disguised from Europeans. These were small victories of political dissent, but victories nonetheless.

Imperial Economies

Once they had a foothold, the European powers established command, or "plunder," economies in three ways: they expropriated the land of the indigenous people; they used the soil and subsoil for their own profit; and they exploited the population for labor. The European powers imposed commercial controls over natural resources. Imperial powers routinely blocked long-standing trade routes that led to other colonies, preventing commercial exchanges from which their own merchants did not profit. European merchants, protected at home by high tariffs against foreign imports, maintained a monopoly on the sale of their manufactured goods in the colonies. Colonialists forced or, in the best circumstances, encouraged local populations to produce for the European market, discouraging or even forbidding the extraction of raw materials or production that would compete with that of the mother country. In Indonesia, for example, the Dutch employed the "culture" or "cultivation" system until 1870. They imposed production quotas on the indigenous population, organized forced labor, and ordered people in West Java to grow coffee when its price rose and to cut down spice-bearing

Trading ships in Calcutta at the end of the nineteenth century.

trees and plants when the price of spices fell. Local populations were forced over time to abandon traditional agricultural practices, ending up in a wage economy as poorly paid laborers. They also lost traditional rights to hunt, graze animals, and gather firewood on land they did not own, a process that had also characterized the early stages of capitalist agriculture in Western Europe.

In British Ceylon (Sri Lanka, captured from the Dutch during the Napoleonic Wars), Dutch Java, and German East Africa, indigenous people who could not produce formal, Western-style deeds or titles to their land lost it to the colonial power. In North Africa, the French government promoted the economic interests of French settlers, giving them the finest Algerian land. The government also ordered land owned collectively by Arabs to be sold as individual plots that only the French could afford to purchase. In Morocco and Tunisia, the French claimed "unexploited" land, such as that belonging to nomad peoples. In Algeria, the French government favored the Kabyles because their monogamous, sedentary, and mostly secular society with private property seemed to be more like republican France than did that of the nomadic Arabs. Above all, French colonial administrators sought to maintain order and collect taxes. One visitor found that "the head tax is above all a very effective agent of civilization," so that in one district "when a village could not or would not pay its taxes in full, the custom was to seize a child and place him in a village named 'Liberty' until the tax was paid." In some regions, taxes were collected through forced labor.

Portuguese colonists imposed conditions of virtual slavery in their African colonies in the nineteenth century. They kidnapped people from their colony of Angola, shipped them to the coastal island of São Tomé, and forced them to work on the cacao plantations for a "contract" period of five years, which few workers survived. In Angola, villagers who could not pay their taxes were required to work for the government for 100 days a year. Forced labor on mine and construction sites by colonial merchants and administrators alike was common; in the German Cameroons, about 80,000 Africans hauled goods for Germans on a single road in one year. Forced labor, which might be considered slavery in disguise, was widely practiced throughout most of the French colonies until 1946.

Colonial Administrations

European notions of the organization of states clashed with the way indigenous people lived. Almost all Africans lacked the European obsession with fixing exact boundaries, one that intensified in the age of nation-states and aggressive nationalism. For most Africans living in tribal societies, European notions of "boundaries" and "borders" established by colonial powers left many societies arbitrarily separated and sometimes interfered with the movements of migratory peoples. Colonial powers exploited tensions between peoples and tribes, purchasing the allegiance of temporary allies.

The British mastered the policy of "divide and rule," favoring and choosing officials from dominant ethnic groups to ensure cooperation. In India, the British effectively manipulated age-old tensions between Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs to keep the Indian component of its army under control, ruthlessly repressing dissent.

How the European powers maintained control over colonies varied. Historians have distinguished between "formal" and "informal" imperialism, although the distinction is mainly one of degree, not kind. Britain, above all, took the path of informal imperialism by maintaining control through economic and military domination, without necessarily taking over political functions, as with indirect rule in India. But a "resident," or representative of Britain, retained ultimate authority. In formal imperialism, the European power assumed "protectorate" status over a territory, administering the colony directly.

The nature of a colonial "protectorate" changed during the scramble for Africa. Originally, the establishment of a protectorate meant that a colonial power defended its interests by controlling the foreign relations of a territory, leaving it to each ruler or chieftain to control his people. British colonial administration, headed by the Colonial Office in London with a relatively small staff, remained decentralized, like the home government itself. Colonial governors implemented policies. But gradually the colonial powers extended their authority over the local population through indigenous officials. In 1886, Britain assumed full sovereignty over most of its colonies. Local rulers found earlier agreements broken, and were increasingly treated as little more than intermediaries between the imperialists and their own people. Local systems of justice were left intact wherever possible—this, too, cost less money—but whites were subject only to the courts of the colonial power—a privilege called "extraterritoriality."

The British government wanted colonies to pay for themselves, with chartered commercial companies—which had launched British rule in Nigeria, Uganda, and what became Rhodesia—bearing the bulk of expenses in exchange for the right to extract profit. The British colonial administration directed railways and private capital toward regions where raw materials could be extracted or markets found. Imperial policy forced indigenous populations as well as colonists to produce revenues to pay for railroads, roads, and administrative officials.

The fate of the Ashanti kingdom in West Africa, which dated to the early eighteenth century, illustrates how informal control was transformed into more direct authority. In the early 1860s, British forces skirmished with the Ashanti people on the northern frontier of the Gold Coast, over which Britain had established a protectorate. After defeating the Ashanti in 1873–1874, Britain made the Gold Coast a crown colony, imposing more direct control. In 1891, the British proposed that the Ashanti kingdom itself become a protectorate. The king replied "my kingdom of Ashanti will never commit itself to any such policy; Ashanti must remain independent as of
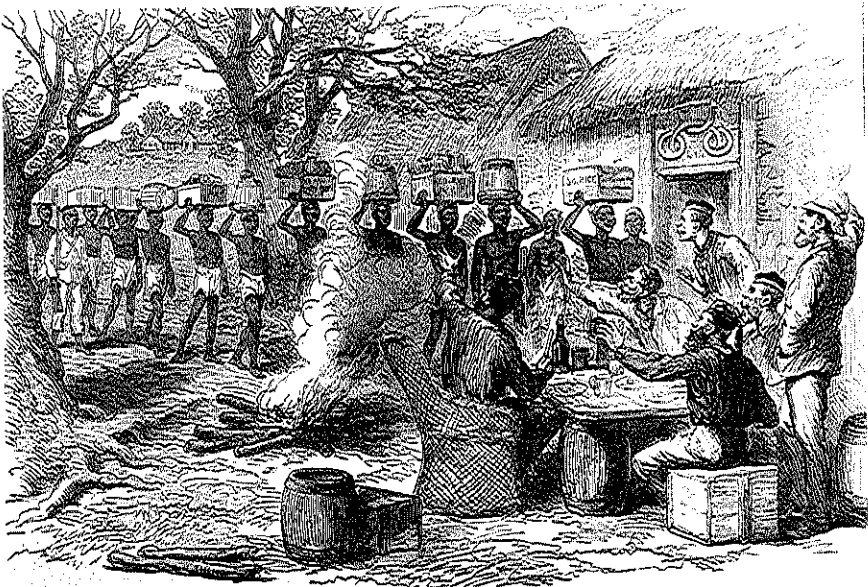
British forces receiving supplies in 1874 during the Ashanti War, which led to the establishment of Ghana as a colony that same year.

old, at the same time to be friendly with all white men." Five years later, British troops occupied the Ashanti capital and deported the king when he could not come up with a huge sum in gold to buy continued independence. In a bloody sequel in 1900–1901, British troops crushed an uprising when the Ashanti refused to surrender the golden stool they treasured as the symbol of their people. In 1901, the Ashanti kingdom became a British colony.

African imperial ventures often began with the directors and principal shareholders of trading companies forging out territories from the underbrush and jungle. Following frenetic lobbying, the Royal Niger Company, with a charter from Parliament conveying administrative powers in 1886, began to develop what became Nigeria. To counter French moves in East Africa, the British government had authorized the Royal Niger Company to launch an expedition through the rain forests to reach Sudan. When German merchants, newcomers to Africa, began to establish trading posts to the east in the future Cameroons, the British government declared a protectorate over the Niger Delta.

The French government and the Royal Niger Company settled their respective claims through conventions. But when the Royal Niger Company went bankrupt in 1899, the British government took over administration of the territories. This scenario was common to the colonial experiences of France, the Netherlands, and Germany: merchant companies that had

been granted state monopolies established trading interests in a new colony and then ran into financial difficulties, if not bankruptcy, necessitating the intervention of the imperial government itself.

Given the size of the British Empire, the number of colonial officials seems surprisingly small. Near the end of the nineteenth century, about 6,000 British civil servants governed India's 300 million inhabitants. The British colonial administration provided a career outlet for the sons of aristocrats, who became high-ranking administrators or officers in the navy and army. Eleven of the fourteen viceroys who served in India from 1858 to 1918 were peers by birth.

British officials recruited subordinates selectively from the colonial population, training, for example, upper-caste Indians to work in the administration of the subcontinent. In Nigeria, favored tribal chiefs assumed administrative functions. In the first decade of the twentieth century, at least partially in response to the first stirrings of Egyptian nationalism, the British government expanded the participation of Egyptians in running their country. In Malaya, the British "resident" was responsible for putting down disturbances that might threaten British control, while the local rulers were placed in paid administrative positions but had authority only in dealing with religious matters.

Many indigenous men who rose to positions of relative responsibility under the British managed to look and sound as much as possible like British gentlemen. But many Victorians disdained the Westernized Indian; they ridiculed the "babu," not because he seemed to be rejecting his own culture, but because they thought he could never be good enough to be British. At the same time, the British government often left intact the hierarchy of indigenous ruling elites, because this seemed more natural and made administrating the colonies easier.

French colonial rule differed from that of the British in ways that revealed contrasts between the British and French states. French colonial administration reflected the state centralization that had characterized France's development over the past century and more. Military control, more than commercial relations, formed the basis of its empire. The French colonial administration employed relatively more French officials and relied less on indigenous peoples than did its British rival.

The French colonial ministry then took a much greater role in economic decision making than its counterpart in the British Empire. The ministries of the navy and of commerce administered French colonies until the establishment of the colonial ministry in 1894. The French colonial civilian administration was staffed by bureaucrats, some trained at the Colonial School created in the 1880s. Africans and Vietnamese worked for the French governors-general as virtual civil servants. Like their British rivals, French colonial administrators also exploited pre-existing ethnic and cultural rivalries, using dominant groups to control their enemies. Thus, the French government used Vietnamese officials in key posts in Cambodia

and Laos, and in Madagascar highland officials dominated the administration of their coastal rivals.

The French government directly ruled Algeria. Algerians could become French citizens, but with only limited rights. The sultan of Morocco and the bey of Tunisia still ruled their subjects, at least in name, although government and the exercise of justice remained in the hands of the French colonial administration. In Southeast Asia, the French government created the Union of Indochina between 1887 and 1893, which included Cochin, Tonkin, Annam, Cambodia, and Laos under a single governor-general, although France left pre-existing monarchies intact. The French government also centralized the administration of West Africa in 1895 by forming the federation of French West Africa, and in 1910 it established the federation of French Equatorial Africa, made up of its Central African colonies. Governors-general, based in Dakar and Brazzaville, served as the highest local administrative authority.

In the colonies, the British lived in isolation from the indigenous population. The upper class tried to replicate the world of the common rooms of Cambridge and Oxford Universities (more than a quarter of all graduates of Oxford's Balliol College at the turn of the century served in the empire) and of London gentlemen's clubs, served by Indian, African, or Asian waiters. British colonial women served only English recipes to their guests. In India, British "hill stations," which had begun as isolated sanitaria where the British could recuperate from tropical heat and illness, also provided commanding heights useful for surveillance. They became part of the imperial system, both as centers of power and closed British communities, "islands of white" that replicated the architecture and lifestyle of an English village. Indeed, in Kenya and Rhodesia, settler communities were organized around the sense of being "white" in unsettling and even dangerous surroundings; newcomers were discouraged from crossing racial lines because of the fear that such contact could undermine settler cohesion. In German African colonies, German women imagined themselves as cultural ambassadors, while colonial officials viewed them as representatives and even guarantors of German culture who would give birth and raise their children in the colonies as Germans.

Colonial urban architecture reflected the attempt to represent Western domination. In what became Vietnam in Indochina, the opera house built in Hanoi copied that in Paris. The French architects who planned the high Gothic vaulting of the cathedral in Saigon did not consider obvious differences in climate between France and Southeast Asia, providing insufficient ventilation. Outsized public buildings and long boulevards extended French authority in the form of architectural modernism into the daily life of French settlers and the local colonial population. In Madagascar, the medical school reflected design more appropriate to Lyon than a tropical island.

Yet one must also nuance the view that imperialists and indigenous peoples lived entirely in two different, necessarily antagonistic worlds. Some

imperialists negotiated new cultural identities across East and West, for example by collecting (or accepting or extorting as gifts from princes or merchants) Hindu sculptures in India or various artifacts in Egypt, which to them represented the East. In doing so, they at least in some ways became part of two worlds. At the same time, Bengali patricians collected items that represented to them the European "other." Cross-cultural interaction revealed more fluid boundaries between imperialists and the colonized, a process of negotiation, learning, and exchange. In acquiring objects that represented the colonized, imperialists helped transform their own identities. Some of what they collected, of course, now fills museums in London and Paris. Objects from the colonies became part of the material culture of imperialism, increasingly common in middle-class homes.

ASSESSING THE GOALS OF EUROPEAN IMPERIALISM

Someone once summed up the reasons for which the European powers expanded their horizons as "God, gold, and glory," or as the geographer, missionary, and explorer David Livingstone put it, "Christianity, Commerce, and Civilization." Which, if any, can be singled out as the dominant impulse behind the "new imperialism"?

The "Civilizing Mission"

Most colonists insisted that God was on their side. Lord Curzon once gushed that the British Empire was "under Providence, the greatest instrument for good that the world has seen." A South African offered a more realistic perspective when he commented, "When you came here we owned the land and you had the Bible; now we have the Bible and you own the land." The "civilizing" impulse still animated some European missionaries during the age of the "new imperialism." Thousands of Catholic and Protestant missionaries went to Africa, India, and Asia in the name of God to win converts. In 1900, about 18,000 Protestant missionaries lived in colonial settlements around the world. French missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant, increasingly saw themselves as bringing the benefits of the French "civilizing mission" to indigenous people. Despite several decades of hostile relations with officials representing the secularized French Republic, French missionaries gradually accommodated themselves to the imperial project their work helped sustain. Some British officials considered Anglican and Methodist missionaries to be nuisances. Most Dutch, Belgian, and Italian clergy made little pretense of bringing indigenous peoples "civilization," tending primarily to the spiritual needs of their troops and settlers.

One aspect of the "civilizing mission" continued to be the attempt of some reformers to limit or end abuses of indigenous peoples. In some places, the clergy helped force Europeans to end or at least temper abuses
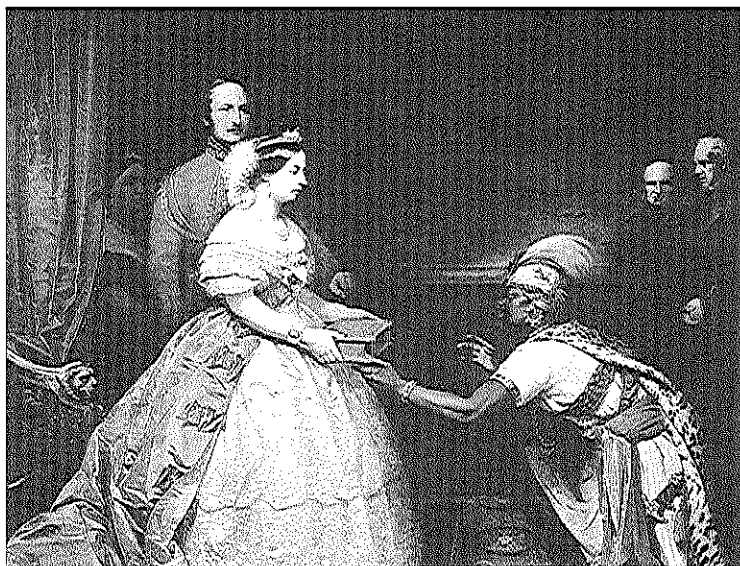
Queen Victoria giving a Bible to a man wearing Central African garb.

carried out against local populations. Missionary societies may have been the "conscience" of European colonization, and a small conscience was better than none at all. For British reformers, the primary goal of the "civilizing mission" in the early part of the century had been to abolish slavery in the British Empire, which was achieved in 1833. In the 1880s, pressure from the British Liberal Party helped end the transport of Chinese laborers to work as indentured workers in South African mines. The British government was embarrassed by the treatment of Indian workers in Natal, a province of South Africa, which was brought to light by, among others, the young and future Indian leader Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi (1869–1948). French religious leaders launched a campaign against the remaining Arab slave trade in Africa. British officials protested the brutal labor practices of Portuguese and Belgian entrepreneurs. Yet the British government declined to press a campaign to reduce or eliminate the sale of arms and liquor to Africans, because both commodities were extremely lucrative to British merchants. Similarly, it had refused to stop the sale of Indian opium by British traders in China.

Lord Frederick Lugard (1858–1945), a British colonial official, came up with the term "Dual Mandate" to describe what he considered the "moral" and "material" imperatives of colonial powers. The European powers, he believed, had an obligation to "civilize" native populations and also to "open the door" to the material improvements brought by Western technology. They were establishing "trusteeships." In exchange, the Europeans

would extract raw materials and other products. While imperialism became associated with conservative nationalism in Western Europe, a few socialists believed that empires could improve conditions of life for colonial peoples. In general, however, European socialists did not view the question of imperialism as one of their central concerns.

Earlier in the century, the French had seen their "civilizing" mission as the assimilation of colonial peoples into French culture: they would, it was commonly thought, become French. By the end of the century, however, the goal of assimilation had given way to a theory of "association," similar to Lugard's British Dual Mandate. This theory of association held that although colonial peoples were not capable of absorbing French culture, French colonialists would help them develop their economic resources, to the benefit of both. Only in urban settlements in Senegal in West Africa did newborn children automatically become French citizens; in 1914, Senegalese voters elected the first black representative to the French Chamber of Deputies.

The Economic Rationale

When missionaries arrived on the shores of Africa or Asia, they usually found that merchants and adventurers were already there looking for gold, ivory, and rubber. Indeed, Cecil Rhodes once stated that in the business of running colonies "philanthropy is good, but philanthropy at five percent is better." The discovery of new markets seemed absolutely necessary in the 1880s, particularly to British manufacturers, as one continental country after another adopted high protectionist tariffs. "If you were not such persistent protectionists, you would not find us so keen to annex territories," the British prime minister told France's ambassador to London in 1897. In the rather far-fetched opinion of Cecil Rhodes' brother, "The Waganda [of Uganda] are clamoring for shoes, stockings and opera glasses and are daily developing fresh wants," which would enrich British manufacturers and merchants peddling the products of the Second Industrial Revolution.

Writing in 1902 and influenced by the Boer War in South Africa, the radical British economist J. A. Hobson (1858–1940) called imperialism "the most powerful factor in the current politics of the Western world." He agreed that the great powers sought colonies because their economies required outlets for domestically produced manufactured goods and for capital investment. In Hobson's view, businessmen, particularly the finance sector based in London, virtually determined British imperial policy. Missionaries and soldiers helped them accomplish their goals. Hobson believed that the quest for colonies simply deferred the resolution of the central economic problem in Britain, because money that went into empire resulted in the underconsumption of industrial goods at home. If governments took action to raise wages and impose progressive taxation on wealth, a more equitable redistribution of wealth would allow ordinary people to purchase

more goods. Imperialism would be unnecessary and China and other countries in Asia and Africa would be free to develop on their own. Hobson's views on imperialism anticipated critiques in our day of the economic and social consequences of globalization.

Hobson was not a Marxist, but his views in some ways echoed those of Karl Marx. In *Capital*, Marx, who never used the word imperialism, postulated that the bourgeoisie required "a constantly expanding market for its products." Subsequent Marxists therefore agreed with Hobson's linking of industrial capitalism and imperialism. Lenin, the Russian revolutionary leader, took Hobson's analysis a step further. He argued that the incessant expansion of capital inevitably brought with it colonial rivalries and war; in this final stage of capitalist development, "international trusts" would divide up the globe.

If Hobson, Rhodes, and Lenin had ever sat at the same dinner table, they would have disagreed about a good many things. But they would have agreed that there was a close connection between the great age of European imperialism and the quest for economic gain. The drive for colonies took on urgency in a period of mounting economic tariffs: there might not be, many thought, enough raw materials and markets to go around.

Merchant traders, like their seventeenth- and eighteenth-century predecessors, counted on finding rich mineral deposits and untapped markets in Africa and Asia. Gold and diamond discoveries in South Africa in the 1860s and again in the 1880s unleashed a stampede of prospectors and inspired colonists' dreams. Coastal traders generated further colonial expansion in West Africa. Trade in palm oil, used in large quantities for making soap and glycerin, replaced the slave trade.

Was the hope of economic gain the most significant factor in the frenetic European rush for colonies during the last decades of the nineteenth century? Did the colonial powers actually realize great wealth through their exploration and conquest?

To be sure, colonies provided some valued products for European markets. Ivory and rubber from Congo, palm oil from Nigeria, Dahomey, and the Ivory Coast, peanuts from French Senegal, diamonds and gold from South Africa, coffee from British Ceylon, and sugar from Malaya proved to be lucrative commodities. The rubber trade of French Indochina, Dutch Indonesia, the Congo, and British Malaya expanded rapidly with the popularity of the bicycle and particularly when automobiles took to the road. The British colonies of Nigeria and the Gold Coast produced 4 percent of the world's cocoa in 1905 and 24 percent ten years later. The consumption of tea, most of it from China and Ceylon, increased by almost four times between 1840 and 1900.

Colonies provided an inviting market for manufactured goods from the mother country. Henry Stanley described the Congo not in terms of square kilometers but as "square yards of cotton to be exported." In the 1890s, about a third of all British exports and about a quarter of all investment went

to its colonies, above all India, which imported cotton cloth and other textiles, iron, hardware, and shoes from Britain. Yet British capital investment abroad was still principally directed toward its lost colony, the United States, as well as toward other independent states such as Ottoman Turkey. British subjects also invested in the settlement colonies— Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, as well as India. The African colonies attracted very little British investment. There was more British trade with Belgium in the 1890s than with all of Africa.

Ivory from Africa became a valuable item on the European markets.

Because colonial investments were risky, only a very small percentage of French and German investment was directed into their respective colonies. French investment abroad was overwhelmingly directed toward other parts of Europe, particularly Russia. Only about 5 percent of French investment reached its colonies in 1900; in 1914, France bought more goods from its colonies than it sold them in return. Less than 1 percent of German trade was with its colonies. By 1907, German investment in all German colonies fell slightly below the value of investments in a single large bank at home.

Imperial governments, which had to foot the bill for troops, supplies, guns, and administrative and other expenses, therefore became increasingly suspicious of the confident assurances of adventurers that incredible riches lay just a little farther up a barely explored African river or beyond the next oasis. In 1899, a French politician whose ardor for imperialism had waned defined the two stages of colonization as "the joy of conquest," followed inevitably, as after a fine restaurant meal, by "the arrival of the bill." The French colonial lobby, including provincial chambers of commerce in manufacturing cities and ports and geographic societies, pictured western Sudan as teeming with lucrative commercial opportunities. It turned out that this vast region of desert offered merchants little more than rubber, a little gold, some peanuts, and an occasional elephant tusk. The French government spent vast sums to administer and police an increasingly unwieldy empire. In the meantime, the exploitation of natural resources by the imperialists contributed to the economic and political underdevelopment of these regions once they became independent nations in the twentieth century.

Overall, however, the economic interpretation of the imperial race for colonies cannot be discounted. Key economic sectors did benefit substantially from raw materials and markets provided by the new colonies, as did individual businessmen. Nonetheless, an economic explanation for colonialism was only one factor—often a minor one—and is difficult to detach from a more dominant motivation.

Imperialism and Nationalism

The new imperialism was, above all, an extension of the search for security and power on the European continent in a period characterized by aggressive nationalism and bitter international rivalries. Even in the case of Great Britain, the imperialist power with the greatest economic investment in colonies, the international rivalry of the European powers was the strongest impulse for imperialism. Britain expanded its domination into new regions, not only in search of new markets, but to keep the French, Germans, or Russians from establishing bases and colonies that might threaten British interests. Britain's definition of its interests in Egypt, the pursuit of which helped launch the landgrab in Africa, had far more to do with fear of competition from its rivals than with economic motives.

Burma, absorbed by Britain after wars in 1824 and 1852 to protect India's eastern frontier against possible colonial rivals, is a case in point. When France declared its economic interest in Burma in the late 1870s, the British expanded their control over Upper Burma, fighting a third war with Burma in 1885. They packed off the reigning king to India, shipped his throne to a museum in Calcutta, turned his palace into a British club, and annexed Burma to the administration of India. Likewise, the establishment of a British protectorate over Afghanistan in 1880 can best be explained by a desire to place a buffer state between India and expanding Russian interests in the region. Britain's immediate goal in what contemporary diplomats called "the great game" between Britain and Russia in the Near East and Asia was to prevent Russian troops from occupying the high range of mountains in and adjacent to Afghanistan. Lord Curzon put the issues at stake for Britain succinctly: "Turkistan, Afghanistan, Transcaspia, Persia—to many these names breathe only a sense of utter remoteness. . . . To me, I confess, they are the pieces on a chessboard upon which is being played out a game for the domination of the world."

The nationalism that surged through all the European powers in the 1880s and 1890s fueled the "new imperialism." In 1876, when Britain opposed Russian moves toward the Turkish capital of Constantinople, a popular British song went: "We don't want to fight, / But, by Jingo, if we do, / We've got the men, / We've got the ships, / We've got the money too." The term "jingoism" came into use in English to mean fervent nationalism. Generations of British schoolchildren gawked at maps of the world that

displayed colony after colony, however varied the structure and effectiveness of British control, colored red, the map color of Great Britain.

In Britain, the colonial experience became an important part of British national consciousness, pervasive in literature and in material culture. The same was true within each of the imperial powers. Newspapers, magazines, popular literature, and the publication of soldiers' diaries and letters carried home news from the colonies and made imperialism seem a romantic adventure. In 1880, the annual Naval and Military Tournament in London began to present reenactments of colonial skirmishes and battles. One play, *Siege of Delhi*, ended with an Irish officer falling in love and dancing a jig as the curtain falls on Indians about to be shot out of a cannon. In 1911, an Italian writer's enthusiasm for the feats of the Italian army in Libya included descriptions of the "lustrous" eyes of the Sicilian horses, which seemed, by their neighing, to be attempting to pronounce the word "Italy." A general's daughter exclaims in a novel about Egypt, "Let the peace-people croak as they please, it is war that brings out the truly heroic virtues."

From the drawing rooms of country estates to the wretched pubs of Liverpool and Birmingham, the British howled for revenge for the death of General Charles "Chinese" Gordon, killed in Sudan by the forces of the Mahdi in 1885. Few Europeans wept at the destruction of entire cultures and the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people at the hands of European armies. "Special artists" and then photographers began to travel with British colonial forces; movie cameras recorded Horatio Kitchener's 1899 campaign against the Boers in South Africa. At a time of rising political opposition in Great Britain to costly colonial commitments, the romanticization of British expeditionary forces helped win support for spending even more, and kept the Conservatives in power in 1900.

Voluntary associations pressured the colonial powers to devote more resources to the building of empire. In Great Britain, Germany, and France, geographic societies, associations that met periodically to listen to talks about exploration in Africa and Asia, sponsored voyages that charted unexplored—at least by Europeans—territories. In Germany and Britain, naval leagues whipped up enthusiasm for imperialism. The Pan-German League (founded in 1891) demanded more expenditures for warships. The champion of colonial lobbying groups, the Primrose League in Britain (founded in 1884), had 1.7 million members by 1906, drawn primarily from business, finance, the military, and government, the groups with the greatest stake in imperialism. The lengthy economic depression that gripped Europe between the mid-1870s and the mid-1890s, bringing low prices for commodities, accentuated such lobbying for aggressive imperialism.

To be sure, strident critics of imperialism could be found. In Britain, anti-imperialists were to be found among Liberal or Labour Party intellectuals, such as members of the "Ethical Union," formed in 1896. Like Hobson, who frequently addressed their meetings, they disparaged jingoism

with passion. But with British victory in the Boer War, anti-imperialist voices grew fainter in Britain.

In France, anti-imperialists focused on the financial burden of expansion. A member of the Chamber of Deputies complained, "We are being drawn along in an irresistible process, like that of Time, by the mere force of a colonial expansionism which has got out of control." In the United States, the American Anti-Imperialist League joined together groups opposing the annexation of the Philippines as a territory. But everywhere the strident imperialist roar drowned out dissident voices. It contributed to the aggressive nationalism that fueled the increasingly bitter rivalries between the European great powers and further destabilized the continent.

CONCLUSION

In 1500, the European powers controlled about 7 percent of the globe's land; by 1800, they controlled 35 percent; in 1914, they controlled 84 percent. Between 1871 and 1900, the British Empire, which came to include one-quarter of the world's land mass and population, expanded to include 66 million people and 4.5 million square miles, the French Empire to 3.5 million square miles, and Germany, Belgium, and Italy to about 1 million square miles each. In Spain, with little left from its once mighty empire, the shock of losing the Philippines and Cuba to the United States in 1898 led to an intense period of introspection by intellectuals known as the "generation of 1898" who wanted to "regenerate" Spain. The Spanish government took new colonies in Morocco and the Western Sahara.

Aggressive nationalism shaped the contours of the new European imperialism from the early 1880s to 1914. Imperialism sharpened the rivalries of the great powers, while solidifying international alliances. Competing colonial interests brought France and Britain to the verge of war after the Fashoda Affair of 1898. Subsequent crises assumed even more dramatic dimensions. Infused with the same sense of struggle that seemed to engulf Europe, these crises would defy peaceful resolution.