

State Expansion

You must singularly insist on their total submission and obedience, avoid developing the spirits in the schools, teach students to read and not to reason.

—King Leopold II (1835–1909), Letter to Christian Missionaries, 1883

Essential Question: By what processes did state power shift in various parts of the world between 1750 and 1900?

King Leopold II of Belgium wanted the Belgian government to conquer colonies in a large swath of central Africa—the Congo Basin. The government was ambivalent, so Leopold established a private colony himself. However, the Belgian Parliament found the king’s rule so abusive that in 1908 it took control of the region away from him. Similarly, the Dutch government revoked the charter of the Dutch East India Company for abusing its power to make treaties, build forts, and maintain armed forces in Southeast Asia. While these unusual shifts of power were taking place, other European governments, as well as the United States, Russia, and Japan, continued territorial expansion through conquest and settlement.

Imperialism in Africa

Europe had a long-standing relationship with Africa because of the slave trade. Although most European countries had declared the importation of slaves from Africa illegal by the early 1800s, Europeans continued to export guns, alcohol, and other manufactured goods to Africa and import African natural resources, such as palm oil, gold, and ivory. England desired palm oil in particular because it kept the machinery in its textile factories from becoming rusty. In the last part of the 19th century, European tastes for African diamonds and ivory kept European empires thriving throughout the African continent. (Connect: Write a paragraph connecting late 19th century imperialism with the African slave trade. See Topic 4.4.)

Expanding Beyond Trading Posts For most of the 1800s, European presence in Africa was restricted to trading posts, with a few exceptions. The French seized Algeria in 1830, declaring they wanted to prevent pirate attacks. Dutch immigrants had lived in South Africa since the 1600s and British colonists became more numerous starting in the early 1800s. In the second

half of the 1800s, European nations expanded their presence in Africa with the help of better military technology. For example, the discovery of **quinine**, a medicine that treats the tropical disease malaria, reduced the danger of living in warm, humid regions. The steamship assisted the early trips of individual explorers and business owners.

British Control of Egypt Europeans had long dreamed of dramatically shortening the water route to Asia by building a canal connecting the Red Sea with the Mediterranean Sea. A 100-mile-long canal could save a trip around the entire continent of Africa. This feat was finally accomplished in 1869 when the **Suez Canal** was completed. A French company managed the project, but most of the labor was performed by as many as 1.5 million Egyptians. Many of them were **corvée laborers**, unpaid workers who were forced to work on the project as a form of taxation. Thousands died in the course of ten years. When unrest in the region threatened British commercial interests and the operation of the canal in 1882, Britain seized control of Egypt away from the Ottoman Empire.

British West Africa Great Britain established several colonies in West Africa before the mid-19th century. In these colonies, Britain spread Western education, the English language, and Christianity:

- **Sierra Leone** was established in 1787. It was a home for freed people from throughout the British Empire who had been enslaved.
- Gambia was established in 1816. It, and Sierra Leone, were used as bases to try to stop the export of enslaved people from the region.
- Lagos became a crown colony in 1861 and served as a base for the annexation of much of the rest of what is now Nigeria.
- Britain acquired parts of what is now Ghana in stages. For example, the **Gold Coast** became a crown colony in 1874, but the Asante Empire to the north did not come under British control until 1901.

Britain used both diplomacy and warfare to expand its empire. For example, in 1873, Britain signed a treaty with King Jaja of Opobo in present-day Nigeria—an area rich in palm oil—recognizing him as ruler and agreeing to trade terms favorable to both sides. Other African rulers agreed to similar diplomatic treaties with foreign powers, believing they were protecting their sovereignty and trade rights. However, as European competition increased for control of African lands, the treaties came to be meaningless and warfare was the inevitable result as Africans resisted takeover but met with overpowering military strength.

The French in Africa France drove the Ottomans out of Algeria in 1830. By 1870 Algeria had become a **settler colony**, attracting Spanish, Italian, and Maltese as well as French immigrants. In the 1870s the French also established trading posts in Guinea, the Ivory Coast, and Niger to compete with British West African colonies.

The European Scramble for Africa

Tensions mounted among industrialized European nations as they competed for natural resources in Africa. Leaders feared that the “**Scramble for Africa**,” the competing efforts of Europeans to colonize Africa, would lead to war.

Berlin Conference Otto von Bismarck of Germany had little interest in colonies, but he did want to keep the peace in Europe. In 1884–1885, he hosted the **Berlin Conference**, a meeting of European powers to provide for the orderly colonization of Africa. No Africans were invited to the conference. European powers peaceably agreed to colonial boundaries and to the free movement of goods on Africa’s major rivers such as the Niger River and the Congo River.

In most of the continent, Europeans established colonial borders that were merely artificial lines that meant little to the people who lived within them. These borders divided long-unified societies into different colonies and united longtime rival groups into the same colonies. When these colonies became independent states in the later 20th century, these borders became the cause of extensive warfare by making national unity very difficult.

South Africa and the Boer Wars During the Napoleonic Wars (1799–1815), the British replaced the Dutch in the **Cape Colony** in the southern tip of Africa. The British introduced the use of English but allowed people to use the Dutch language as well. Many of the Dutch-speaking **Afrikaners**, the descendants of 17th-century Dutch settlers, moved east of the Cape Colony, where they came into conflict with indigenous groups, including the Zulus, with whom they fought several wars.

Throughout the 19th century, the British and Afrikaners continued to fight over land. This conflict came to a boil in the **Boer Wars** (1880–1881, 1899–1902). These conflicts were bloody and brutal. In the end, the British army drove the Afrikaners and the Africans from their lands, forcing many into refugee camps. These settlements, which were segregated by race, came to be known as **concentration camps**. Medical care and sanitation were very poor, and food rations were so meager that many of the interned died of starvation. Once news arrived in Britain about the wretched conditions of the camps, activists tried to improve the lives of displaced refugees. However, while white camps received some attention, conditions in black camps remained terrible. Of the 100,000 blacks interned in concentration camps, nearly 15,000 perished.

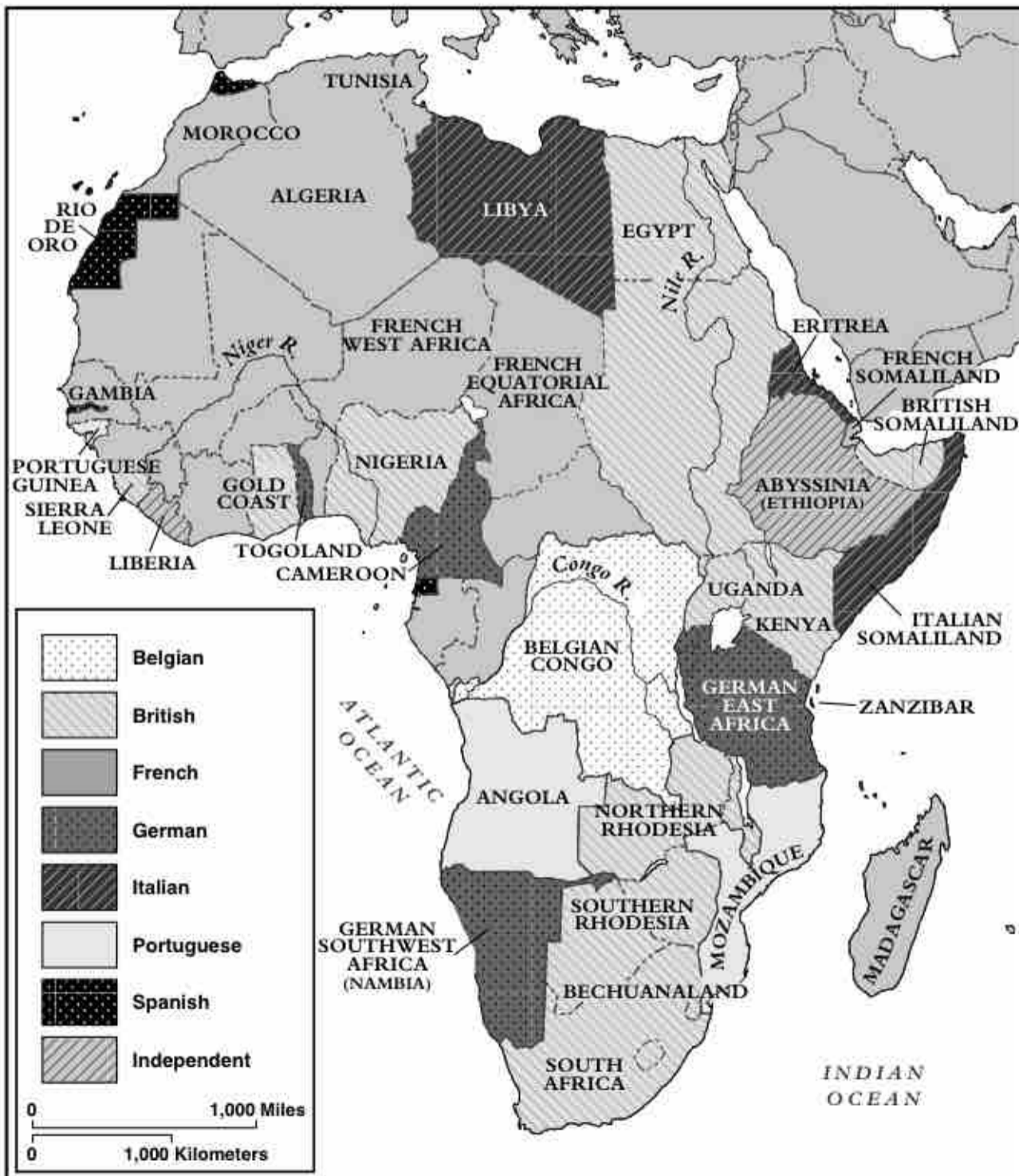
By the end of the Boer Wars, the British had absorbed the settler colonies of British and Afrikaner peoples and the black Africans in the southern tip of Africa into its empire. Millions of Afrikaner and black African farmers had been displaced onto poor land, making it hard for them to earn a decent living.

Congo By 1875, Western European nations were poised to penetrate Africa’s interior. **King Leopold II** of Belgium (ruled 1865–1909) oversaw the invasion and pacification of the Congo in central Africa in order to persuade the Belgian government to support colonial expansion. Unlike other European

rulers, King Leopold owned the colony personally, using colonial officials against indigenous Congolese and a ruthless system of economic exploitation that allowed him to keep the profits made by the **Congo Free State**, which totaled some 220 million francs (\$1.1 billion in today's dollars).

Visitors to the colony reported on the brutal conditions for the laborers who were forced to harvest ivory and rubber. For example, Leopold's agents severed the hands of Congolese workers in order to terrorize others into submission. Workers who could not meet their quotas were beaten or killed, while others were worked to death. Although the term *slavery* was not commonly used when describing imperial activities, laborers in the Congo often received no payment for their backbreaking work, and their spouses were held captive so that the workers would not run away. As many as 8 million people perished under King Leopold's reign of terror in the Congo. In 1908, Belgium took over control of the Congo as a regular colony, and conditions improved. (Connect: Create an outline comparing conditions in the Congo with conditions in European colonies in South America. See Topic 4.5.)

Africa in 1914



Independent Countries By 1900, the only African countries unclaimed by Europeans were **Abyssinia** (modern-day Ethiopia) and **Liberia**, a country founded by formerly enslaved people from the United States. Because Liberia had a dependent relationship with the United States, it was not fully independent. Italy attempted to conquer Abyssinia in 1895, but the native forces were too strong for the Italians.

Imperialism in South Asia

Portugal, France, and England competed for control of India's spices, gems, and trade with regions to the east. Portugal established a coastal trading port on the southwestern coast, in Goa, in the early 16th century. However, it never extended its control inland. France established trading ports in the 17th century. However, its loss to Britain in the global conflict known as the **Seven Years' War** (1756–1763) drove the French out of India.

England's **East India Company** (EIC), steadily encroached on the land of the weak Mughal Empire. Eventually, Britain controlled the entire Indian subcontinent, from Pakistan in the west to Kashmir in the north to Bengal in the east to the island of **Ceylon** (Sri Lanka) in the south. At first, the EIC's small forces of British soldiers protected the firm's employees. As the British crept into India's interior, they began recruiting native Indian soldiers, called **sepoys**, to join the British colonial army. However, as explained in the next topic, the **sepoys** ignited an unsuccessful rebellion against the British in 1857.

Imperialism in East Asia

China did not experience imperialism in the same way that South Asia or Africa did. It maintained its own government throughout a period of European economic domination. As a result of superior military strength, European nations carved out **spheres of influence** within China over which they had exclusive trading rights and access to natural resources. (See Topic 6.5.) Internal problems within the Qing government, such as the **Taiping Rebellion**, made it easier for foreign countries to dominate the economic affairs of China. During the Taiping Rebellion, which began in 1850, failed civil servant applicant Hong Xiuquan and starving peasants, workers, and miners attempted to overthrow the Qing Dynasty. With the help of some warlords along with French and British intervention, the Qings prevailed in 1864.

In the midst of the war, adding to China's internal problems, the Yellow River (Huang He) changed course, flooding farmland in some areas and leaving others open to drought. With agricultural lands devastated, famine followed during which many Chinese starved to death. Adding to the troubles, the bubonic plague broke out at this time. By the end of the fighting, the rebellion was probably responsible for the deaths of more than 20 million people, more than half of whom were civilians.

Between 1899 and 1901, an anti-imperialist group called the **Boxers**—named because many of their members practiced martial arts, which were

known as Chinese boxing—was attacking Chinese Christians and Western missionaries. The Empress Dowager **Cixi** (see Topic 5.8) encouraged the Boxers and in 1900 ordered that all foreigners be killed. However, most of the estimated 100,000 people who were killed were Chinese Christians. Only about 200–250 foreigners died during the **Boxer Rebellion**. The empress and the Qing court suffered a humiliating defeat that undermined their legitimacy. Western powers and influence continued to erode Chinese sovereignty in subsequent years.

Japan Industrialized countries outside of Europe also desired colonies. Japan had sharply limited its contact with other countries since the early 1600s. In 1853, United States Commodore Matthew Perry came to Japan in large warships to secure a treaty that opened Japanese ports to trade. In the following decade, Japan overthrew its traditional government in an uprising called the Meiji Restoration and began to rapidly industrialize, hoping it could become strong enough to protect its distinctive culture. As part of this change, Japan began to look outward for territorial gains. An island nation with few natural resources and little arable land, it sought lands and natural resources to fuel its own growth.

Partly to relieve population pressures in rural areas and partly to gain knowledge of foreign places, Japan's government began to encourage agricultural workers to take seasonal contract work on Hawaii, Guam, and other locations. Through a **Colonization Society** established in 1893, leaders began plans to establish colonies in Mexico and Latin America. Japan set up an empire in East Asia that included parts of China, Korea, Southeast Asia, and Pacific islands that lasted from the 1890s until the end of World War II.

Imperialism in Southeast Asia

Portugal and Spain originally controlled European trade with Southeast Asia. After 1600, the power shifted and the English and Dutch supplanted them.

The Dutch in Southeast Asia Dutch imperialism in Southeast Asia began with a private company, just as English imperialism in South Asia had. In 1641 the Dutch seized control of the Spice Islands (now part of Indonesia), so called because they produced spices such as cloves and nutmeg that were in great demand in Europe. The **Dutch East India Company (VOC)** took over the spice trade from the Portuguese, setting up several trading posts on the archipelago. Although the trade was very profitable for the VOC, corruption caused the company to go bankrupt by 1800. Once the VOC folded, the Dutch government itself took control of the **Dutch East Indies**. By the mid-19th century, the islands were producing cash crops to support the Dutch economy.

Plantations produced tea, rubber, and sugar for export purposes, a situation that limited rice cultivation and eventually created enormous hardships for Indonesian farmers who relied on rice to survive. Although criticism of this agricultural policy forced the Dutch government to implement humanitarian reforms, the reforms failed to meet the needs of the Indonesian people.

The French in Southeast Asia The French government also wanted an imperial presence in Asia. After it defeated China in the Sino-French War of 1883–1885, France gained control of northern Vietnam. France later pressured Siam to cede control of the territory of modern-day Laos to the French. By the 1890s, France controlled Cambodia, Laos, and all of modern-day Vietnam. Together, these nations became known as French **Indochina**. French motives for imperialism were like those of the Dutch—a desire for cash crops. Soon rubber plantations dotted the landscape of Cambodia and Vietnam.

The British in Southeast Asia British influence in Southeast Asia began when the East India Company acquired the island of Penang off the northwest coast of the Malay Peninsula in 1786. In 1824, the British founded the port of Singapore. Chinese immigrants soon made it the most important seaport in Southeast Asia. Eventually, Britain controlled all of the Malay Peninsula, Burma (Myanmar), and northern Borneo. British investors were originally attracted by the region’s mineral wealth, especially tin and gold. In addition, Britain promoted the planting of cash crops such as pepper, tobacco, palm oil, and rubber. By the end of the 19th century, **Malaya** was the world’s greatest producer of natural rubber.

Siam Only one Southeast Asian nation, **Siam**—modern-day Thailand—managed to escape the clutches of 19th-century European imperialism. Siam’s monarchs deftly handled diplomatic relations with the British and French, whose colonies bordered Siam. The Siamese government also instituted a series of modernizing reforms, similar to Japan’s Meiji reforms. The government began to industrialize by building railroads, and it set up Western-style schools in order to create an educated populace who could fill the ranks of an efficient government bureaucracy.

Australia and New Zealand

After the loss of its American colonies, Britain began to consider the possibility of establishing various kinds of settlements in **Australia**, finally deciding to locate a **penal colony** there. In 1788 the first convicts, along with some free settlers, arrived in Australia, and the east coast became known as New South Wales. In the 1820s,



Source: His Highness Prince Pravij Jumsai, from Wikimedia Commons

On the royal coat of arms for Siam, the kingdom was represented by a three-headed elephant.

Britain took possession of the entire continent. For decades, the chief economic activity of the colony was to house convicts. The discovery that Australia was well-suited to producing fine wool provided a new industry, and in the 1830s larger numbers of free settlers began to arrive. The discovery of copper in 1842 and gold in 1851 helped spur growth.

When Britain annexed the settler colony of **New Zealand** in 1839, it was made a part of New South Wales. Two years later, after the **Treaty of Waitangi** guaranteeing that the rights of the original **Maori** inhabitants would be protected by the British crown, it became a separate colony. Nevertheless, open war broke out as European settlers encroached on Maori lands. The Australian gold rushes provided a market for foodstuffs raised by New Zealand farmers, both European and Maori. For many years, sheep grazing and dairy farming provided the base for the colony's economy.

U.S. Imperialism in Latin America and the Pacific

During the 19th century, the United States continued taking land from indigenous peoples, as Europeans had done since Columbus arrived. One notorious episode was the forced relocation of Eastern Woodlands peoples from the Southeast to a new **Indian Territory** in what is now Oklahoma. So many Native Americans died from exposure, malnutrition, disease, and exhaustion that this forced migration became known as the **Trail of Tears**.

In 1823, President James Monroe issued the **Monroe Doctrine**, which stated that European nations should not intervene in the affairs of the countries in the Western Hemisphere. Implied in the doctrine was a desire to be an imperial power in the Americas. This desire played out in the U.S. war with Mexico (1845–1848), through which the United States gained vast territories in the Southwest from Mexico.

Expansion on Land White Americans believed that they had a **Manifest Destiny**—a natural and inevitable right to expand to the Pacific Ocean. The United States bought Alaska from Russia in 1867. Two years later, in 1869, the completion of a transcontinental railway spurred development of the American West. As white settlers moved westward to take advantage of offers of free land, Native Americans were forced onto reservations. By 1893, the U.S. Bureau of the Census declared that the western frontier was now closed.

Expansion Overseas The United States turned its focus to lands overseas. The United States was not a global power for most of the 19th century. The Second Industrial Revolution brought newfound prosperity to the young republic. Economic considerations, as well as feelings of nationalism and cultural superiority, drove Americans' desire for territorial conquest. A group of American planters overthrew Hawaii's constitutional monarchy in 1895, but the islands did not become a U.S. territory until 1900. In the meantime, the U.S. victory in the **Spanish-American War** in 1898 brought Guam, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines under U.S. control. President Theodore Roosevelt, a proponent of Social Darwinism, was especially eager to expand U.S. influence

throughout the Western Hemisphere. The 1904 **Roosevelt Corollary** to the Monroe Doctrine stated that if countries in Latin America demonstrated “instability,” the United States would intervene. It did several times. For example, in 1904 Roosevelt sent U.S. troops to occupy a Caribbean island nation, the Dominican Republic, until it repaid its foreign debts.

Comparing Three Types of Imperialism		
Type and Examples	Features	Outcomes
State-Run Colony • British West Africa • Belgian Congo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western institutions slowly replace the local culture • Often defended by claims of helping the indigenous population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploitation of indigenous labor • Loss of indigenous culture • Creation of non-native elite and mixed native and non-native middle class • Imperialist countries rule by corporations or states guided by Western policy
Settler Colony • British South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand • French Algeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on control and use of land • Settlers remove or dominate the indigenous population • Most common in sparsely populated lands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of indigenous culture • Genocide • Spread of disease • Forced conversion to Western business, political, and religious ideas • Exploitation of indigenous labor • Indigenous populations forced into extreme poverty and addiction
Economic Domination • British in China • French in China • United States in Latin America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonly based on exploiting raw materials and hiring low-wage labor • Local government remains in control but becomes weak 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social destabilization based on economic exploitation • Monoculture and lack of agricultural diversity • Soil depletion and environmental damage

Russian Expansion

Empress Catherine II (“the Great”) set out to expand the Russian Empire in all directions during her reign (1762–1796), annexing about half of Poland as well as territory won from the Ottoman Empire. Her grandson, Alexander I, annexed Finland, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and part of Armenia during his reign (1815–1825).

Beginning in the 1740s, Russian merchants sponsored voyages to Alaska. In 1808 the Russian-American Company, which was similar to the British and Dutch East India companies, established permanent headquarters in Novo-Arkhangelsk (modern-day Sitka). From there they explored the west coast of

North America. In 1811, they selected the site for a settlement at Fort Ross in California. They abandoned Fort Ross in 1839 and in 1867 sold Alaska to the United States, ending Russian plans to make the North Pacific a Russian sea.

Russia continued to push into Central Asia during the 19th century, leading to an intense rivalry between the Russian and British empires as they competed unsuccessfully for dominance in Afghanistan—a rivalry that came to be known as the **Great Game**. Russia also succeeded in annexing lands from China, most notably a large portion of Manchuria.



“SAVE ME FROM MY FRIENDS!”

Source: Wikimedia Commons

“The Great Game: The Afghan Emir Sher Ali Khan with his ‘friends’ Russia and Great Britain” (1878) reveals the confrontation between the British Empire and the Russian Empire over Afghanistan. The political cartoon illustrates an atmosphere of tension and distrust that existed between the two empires.

KEY TERMS BY THEME

GOVERNMENT: Rulers

King Leopold II
Cixi

GOVERNMENT: Countries

Sierra Leone
Gold Coast
Cape Colony
Congo Free State
Abyssinia
Liberia
Ceylon
Dutch East Indies
Indochina
Malaya
Siam
Australia
New Zealand

GOVERNMENT: Treaties

Berlin Conference
Treaty of Waitangi

GOVERNMENT: Ideas

Scramble for Africa
Monroe Doctrine
Manifest Destiny
Roosevelt Corollary
Great Game

GOVERNMENT: Systems

concentration camps
penal colony

GOVERNMENT: Wars and Rebellions

Boer Wars
Seven Years' War
Taiping Rebellion
Boxer Rebellion
Spanish-American War

ECONOMICS: Systems

corvée laborer
spheres of influence
settler colony

ECONOMICS: Companies

East India Company (EIC)
Dutch East India Company (VOC)

SOCIETY: Peoples

Afrikaners
Maori

SOCIETY: Organization

Colonization Society
Indian Territory
Trail of Tears

ENVIRONMENT: Tropics

quinine
Suez Canal

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Questions 1 to 3 refer to the passage below.

“The American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers. . . .

We should consider any attempt on their [Europeans’] part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintain it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States.”

James Monroe, annual presidential message to Congress, 1823

1. Which statement summarizes the main idea stated in the passage?
 - (A) Many former colonies of European nations in the Western Hemisphere desired a return to colonial status.
 - (B) The United States intended to interfere in the administration of existing European colonies.
 - (C) The European powers must respect the sovereignty of independent nations in the Western Hemisphere.
 - (D) The United States must remain neutral in any attempt of a European nation to claim land in the Western Hemisphere.
2. Which event indicates that the Monroe Doctrine might have included a desire of U.S. leaders to engage in economic imperialism?
 - (A) the War of 1812
 - (B) the Mexican-American War
 - (C) the Civil War
 - (D) the Seven Years’ War
3. Which aspect of the Spanish-American War most directly demonstrated that the United States wanted to become an imperial power?
 - (A) declaring war against a country in Europe
 - (B) seizing territories from Mexico
 - (C) helping Cuba become independent of Spain
 - (D) taking control of the Philippines

SHORT-ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. Use the cartoon below to answer all parts of the question that follows.



Source: Wikipedia Commons

The characters represented are (left to right in the foreground) Queen Victoria of England, William II of German, Nicholas II of Russia, Marianne (the symbol of France), and a Japanese samurai. Behind them, a Qing official throws up his hands but cannot stop them.

- (A) Explain why the artist who created the cartoon would choose to use caricatures to portray the representatives of the nations shown.
- (B) Explain ONE historical development represented in the cartoon.
- (C) Explain ONE reason why China was unable to withstand the development represented in the cartoon.
2. Answer all parts of the question that follows.
- (A) Explain ONE way in which imperialism in Africa was similar to imperialism in East Asia in the period 1750–1900.
- (B) Explain ONE way in which imperialism in Africa and imperialism in Southeast Asia differed in the period 1750–1900.
- (C) Explain ONE way in which imperialism in state-run colonies was similar to imperialism in settler colonies in the period 1750–1900.

**THINK AS A HISTORIAN: SITUATE THE MONROE DOCTRINE
IN CONTEXT**

Following on the heels of the American and French revolutions, Argentina declared its independence from Spain in 1816 and Mexico declared its independence in 1821.

Use the information above as well as your knowledge of state expansion to describe the context in which President Monroe issued his doctrine on Latin American countries. In two or three sentences, explain why he may have issued the proclamation at the time he did.

REFLECT ON THE TOPIC ESSENTIAL QUESTION

1. In one to three paragraphs, describe the processes by which state power shifted in various parts of the world between 1750 and 1900.



Source: watchingamerica.com

Newspaper cartoon from 1912