

CHAPTER 17 READINGS THE AGE OF WESTERN IMPERIALISM

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of *Kultur* in great dimensions. Weimar produced a Goethe and a Schiller; still these poets would have been greater had they been citizens of a German national state. . . .

ON WAR

The idea of perpetual peace is an illusion supported only by those of weak character. It has always been the weary, spiritless, and exhausted ages which have played with the dream of perpetual peace. A thousand touching portraits testify to the sacred power of the love which a righteous war awakes in noble nations. It is altogether impossible that peace be maintained in a world bristling with arms, and even God will see to it that war always recurs as a drastic medicine for the human race. Among great states the greatest political sin and the most contemptible is feebleness. It is the political sin against the Holy Ghost.

War is elevating because the individual disappears before the great conception of the state. The devotion of the members of a community to each other is nowhere so splendidly conspicuous as in war.

Modern wars are not waged for the sake of goods and chattels. What is at stake is the sublime moral good of national honor, which has something in the nature of unconditional sanctity, and compels the individual to sacrifice himself for it.

ON THE ENGLISH

The hypocritical Englishman, with the Bible in one hand and a pipe of opium in the other, possesses no redeeming qualities. The nation was an ancient robber-knight, in full armor, lance in hand, on every one of the world's trade routes.

The English possess a commercial spirit, a love of money which has killed every sentiment of honor and every distinction of right and wrong. English cowardice and sensuality are hidden behind unctuous, theological fine talk which is to us free-thinking German heretics among all the sins of English nature the most repugnant. In England all notions of honor and class prejudices vanish before the power of money, whereas the German nobility has remained poor but chivalrous. That last indispensable bulwark against the brutalization of society—the duel—has gone out of fashion in England and soon disappeared, to be supplanted by the riding whip. This was a triumph of vulgarity. The newspapers, in their accounts of aristocratic weddings, record in exact detail how much each wedding guest has contributed in the form of presents or in cash; even the youth of the nation have turned

their sports into a business, and contend for valuable prizes, whereas the German students wrought havoc on their countenances for the sake of a real or imaginary honor.

ON JEWS

The Jews at one time played a necessary role in German history, because of their ability in the management of money. But now that the Aryans have become accustomed to the idiosyncrasies of finance, the Jews are no longer necessary. The international Jew, hidden in the mask of different nationalities, is a disintegrating influence; he can be of no further use to the world. It is necessary to speak openly about the Jews, undisturbed by the fact that the Jewish press befouls what is purely historical truth.

Does Germany Need Colonies?

Friedrich Fabri

Imperialism swept through Europe with extraordinary force in the late nineteenth century. Probably the most apparent motive for the new imperialism was economic. With each conquest, people expected to develop new commerce and particularly new markets for manufactured goods. But there was another, perhaps even more important motive: nationalism. The step between the increasingly assertive nationalism of the time and the new imperialism was a short one. Both of these views are reflected by Friedrich Fabri in his 1879 pamphlet, "Does Germany Need Colonies?" A former inspector of a German missionary association in South West Africa, Fabri emphasizes Germany's "cultural mission" in becoming an imperial power.

CONSIDER: *What arguments Fabri mounts to justify Germany's acquisition of colonies; what Fabri means by Germany's "cultural mission" and how that relates to imperialism.*

Should not the German nation, so seaworthy, so industrially and commercially minded, more than other peoples geared to agricultural colonization, and possessing a rich and available supply of labor, all these to a greater extent than other modern culture-peoples, should not this nation successfully hew a new path on the road of imperialism? We are convinced beyond doubt that the colonial question has become a matter of life-or-death for the

SOURCE: LOUIS L. SNYDER, *The Imperialism Reader* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1962), pp. 18–20 as excerpted.

development of Germany. Colonies will have a salutary effect on our economic situation as well as on our entire national progress.

Here is a solution for many of the problems that face us. In this new Reich of ours there is so much bitterness, so much unfruitful, sour, and poisoned political wrangling, that the opening of a new, promising road of national effort will act as a kind of liberating influence. Our national spirit will be renewed, a gratifying thing, a great asset. A people that has been led to a high level of power can maintain its historical position only as long as it understands and proves itself to be *the bearer of a culture-mission*. At the same time, this is the only way to stability and to the growth of national welfare, the necessary foundation for a lasting expansion of power.

At one time Germany contributed only intellectual and literary activity to the tasks of our century. That era is now over. As a people we have become politically minded and powerful. But if political power becomes the primal goal of a nation, it will lead to harshness, even to barbarism. We must be ready to serve for the ideal, moral, and economic culture-tasks of our time. The French national-economist, Leroy Beaulieu, closed his work on colonization with these words: "That nation is the greatest in the world which colonizes most; if she does not achieve that rank today, she will make it tomorrow."

No one can deny that in this direction England has by far surpassed all other countries. Much has been said, even in Germany, during the last few decades about the "disintegrating power of England." Indeed, there seems to be something to it when we consider the Palmerston era and Gladstonian politics. It has been customary in our age of military power to evaluate the strength of a state in terms of its combat-ready troops. But anyone who looks at the globe and notes the steadily increasing colonial possessions of Great Britain, how she extracts strength from them, the skill with which she governs them, how the Anglo-Saxon strain occupies a dominant position in the overseas territories, he will begin to see the military argument as the reasoning of a philistine.

The fact is that England tenaciously holds on to its world-wide possessions with scarcely one-fourth the manpower of our continental military state. That is not only a great economic advantage but also a striking proof of the solid power and cultural fiber of England. . . .

It would be wise for us Germans to learn about colonial skills from our Anglo-Saxon cousins and to begin a friendly competition with them. When the German Reich centuries ago stood at the pinnacle of the states of

Europe, it was the Number One trade and sea power. If the New Germany wants to protect its newly won position of power for a long time, it must heed its *Kultur-mission* and, above all, delay no longer in the task of renewing the call for colonies.

The White Man's Burden

Rudyard Kipling

Imperialism was often glorified both by those actively involved in it and by the public at home. Part of this glorification involved perceiving imperialism as a Christian and nationalistic venture. More broadly it involved portraying imperialism as a heroic deed carried out by idealistic leaders of Western civilization in an effort to spread the "benefits" of "true civilization" to "less advanced" peoples of the world. One of the most popular expressions of this is found in the writings of Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), particularly in his poem "The White Man's Burden," written in 1899 to celebrate the American annexation of the Philippines.

CONSIDER: What Kipling means by "the White Man's burden"; how Kipling justifies imperialism; why such a justification might be so appealing.

Take up the White Man's burden—

Send forth the best ye breed—

Go, bind your sons to exile

To serve your captives' need;

To wait, in heavy harness,

On fluttered folk and wild—

Your new-caught sullen peoples,

Half devil and half child.

Take up the White Man's burden—

In patience to abide,

To veil the threat of terror

And check the show of pride;

By open speech and simple,

An hundred times made plain,

To seek another's profit

And work another's gain.

Take up the White Man's burden—

The savage wars of peace—

Fill full the mouth of Famine,

And bid the sickness cease;

SOURCE: Rudyard Kipling, "The White Man's Burden," *McClure's Magazine*, vol. XII, no. 4 (February 1899), pp. 290-291.

And when your goal is nearest
 (The end for others sought)
 Watch sloth and heathen folly
 Bring all your hope to nought.

Take up the White Man's burden—
 No iron rule of kings,
 But toil of serf and sweeper—
 The tale of common things.
 The ports ye shall not enter,
 The roads ye shall not tread,
 Go, make them with your living
 And mark them with your dead.

Take up the White Man's burden,
 And reap his old reward—
 The blame of those ye better
 The hate of those ye guard—
 The cry of hosts ye humour
 (Ah, slowly!) toward the light:—
 "Why brought ye us from bondage,
 Our loved Egyptian night?"

Take up the White Man's burden—
 Ye dare not stoop to less—
 Nor call too loud on Freedom
 To cloke your weariness.
 By all ye will or whisper,
 By all ye leave or do,
 The silent sullen peoples
 Shall weigh your God and you.

Take up the White Man's burden!
 Have done with childish days—
 The lightly-proffered laurel,
 The easy ungrudged praise:
 Comes now, to search your manhood
 Through all the thankless years,
 Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom,
 The judgment of your peers.

Controlling Africa: The Standard Treaty

Royal Niger Company

Europeans used many means to gain control over African lands, the most obvious being force. However, more subtle means included "treaties," or what the Europeans could

SOURCE: Edward Hertslet, ed., *The Map of Africa by Treaty*, 2nd ed. (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1896), vol. 1, pp. 467-468.

consider "legal contracts." During the scramble for Africa, African chieftains signed hundreds of these documents. The following document is an example of one of these "standard treaties" issued in the 1880s by the British firm, the Royal Niger Company. The company had already been granted a trade monopoly over the area around the Niger River in West Africa by the British government and was competing with the French for control over that area. The treaties would eventually form the basis for creating the British colony of Nigeria.

CONSIDER: What the treaties offered to each side; what the Africans were giving up; why the British found this way of gaining control so appealing.

We, the undersigned Chiefs of _____, with the view to the bettering of the condition of our country and people, do this day cede to the Royal Niger Company, for ever, the whole of our territory extending from _____.

We also give to the said Royal Niger Company full power to settle all native disputes arising from any cause whatever, and we pledge ourselves not to enter into any war with other tribes without the sanction of the said Royal Niger Company.

We understand that the said Royal Niger Company have full power to mine, farm, and build in any portion of our country.

We bind ourselves not to have any intercourse with any strangers or foreigners except through the said Royal Niger Company.

In consideration of the foregoing, the said Royal Niger Company (Chartered and Limited) bind themselves not to interfere with any of the native laws or customs of the country, consistently with the maintenance of order and good government.

The said Royal Niger Company agree to pay native owners of land a reasonable amount for any portion they may require.

The said Royal Niger Company bind themselves to protect the said Chiefs from the attacks of any neighboring aggressive tribes.

The said Royal Niger Company also agree to pay the said Chiefs _____ measures native value.

We, the undersigned witnesses, do hereby solemnly declare that the _____ Chiefs whose names are placed opposite their respective crosses have in our presence affixed their crosses of their own free will and consent, and that the said _____ has in our presence affixed his signature.

Done in triplicate at _____, this _____ day of _____, 188 _____.
 Declaration by interpreter I, _____, of _____, do hereby solemnly declare that I am well acquainted with the lan-

guage of the country, and that on the _____ day of _____, 188 _____, I truly and faithfully explained the above Agreement to all the Chiefs present, and that they understood its meaning.



FIGURE 13.2 (© Bettmann/Corbis)

Imperialism Glorified

George Harcourt

The following 1900 painting by George Harcourt (figure 13.2) conveys some of the meaning of imperialism to Europeans. First displayed at the Royal Academy in 1900, it shows British soldiers leaving by train for the Boer War in South Africa. The soldiers are clearly cast in the role of masculine heroes, both in their own eyes and in the eyes of civilians, young and old. This is further evidenced by the couple in the center, representing the epitome of sentimentalized British masculinity and femininity. For many, imperialism enabled Europeans to have a sense of adventure and to prove their superiority to themselves and the rest of the world. Avoided in

this picture is the reality of the bloodshed and exploitation to be experienced by these same soldiers and the populations of the colonized lands.

CONSIDER: How this painting fits with Kipling's description of "the White Man's burden."

American Imperialism in Asia: Independence Day 1899

The Spanish-American War of 1898 led to the Spanish defeat and withdrawal from Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. It also occasioned an impassioned debate in the United States about whether America should follow in Europe's footsteps



FIGURE 13.3 © New York Public Library/Art Resource, NY

and acquire colonies. The “liberation” of the Philippines led to a ten-year war against Philippine insurgents who fought for independence from both Spain and the United States. American imperialists were interested in the Philippines in large part because it gave them access to trade and investments in other Asian countries, especially the fabled China market that would be able to buy untold quantities of American goods. In this cartoon (figure 13.3) we see Uncle Sam about to bayonet a Filipino youth who is trying to defend himself with a sword, suggesting the massive difference in power between the U.S. Army and the Philippine insurgents. In back of Uncle Sam, then President McKinley waves the flag, suggesting the patriotism and jingoism that was seen to be behind American imperialism.

CONSIDER: How Americans were able to rationalize their support for colonialism with their long opposition to European imperialism.

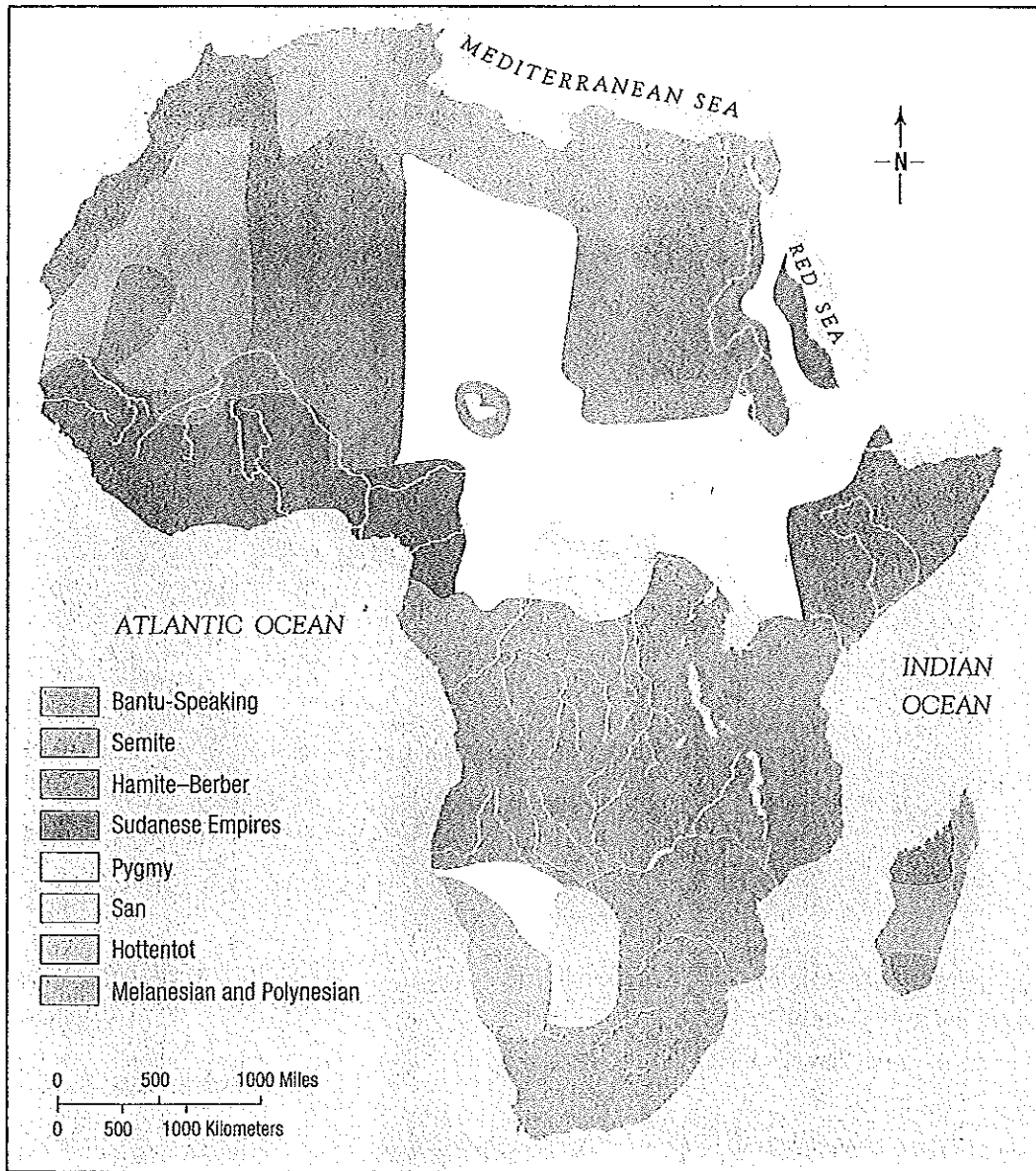
Imperialism in Africa

Map 13.1 shows the approximate divisions among indigenous peoples in the centuries prior to European colonization. Map

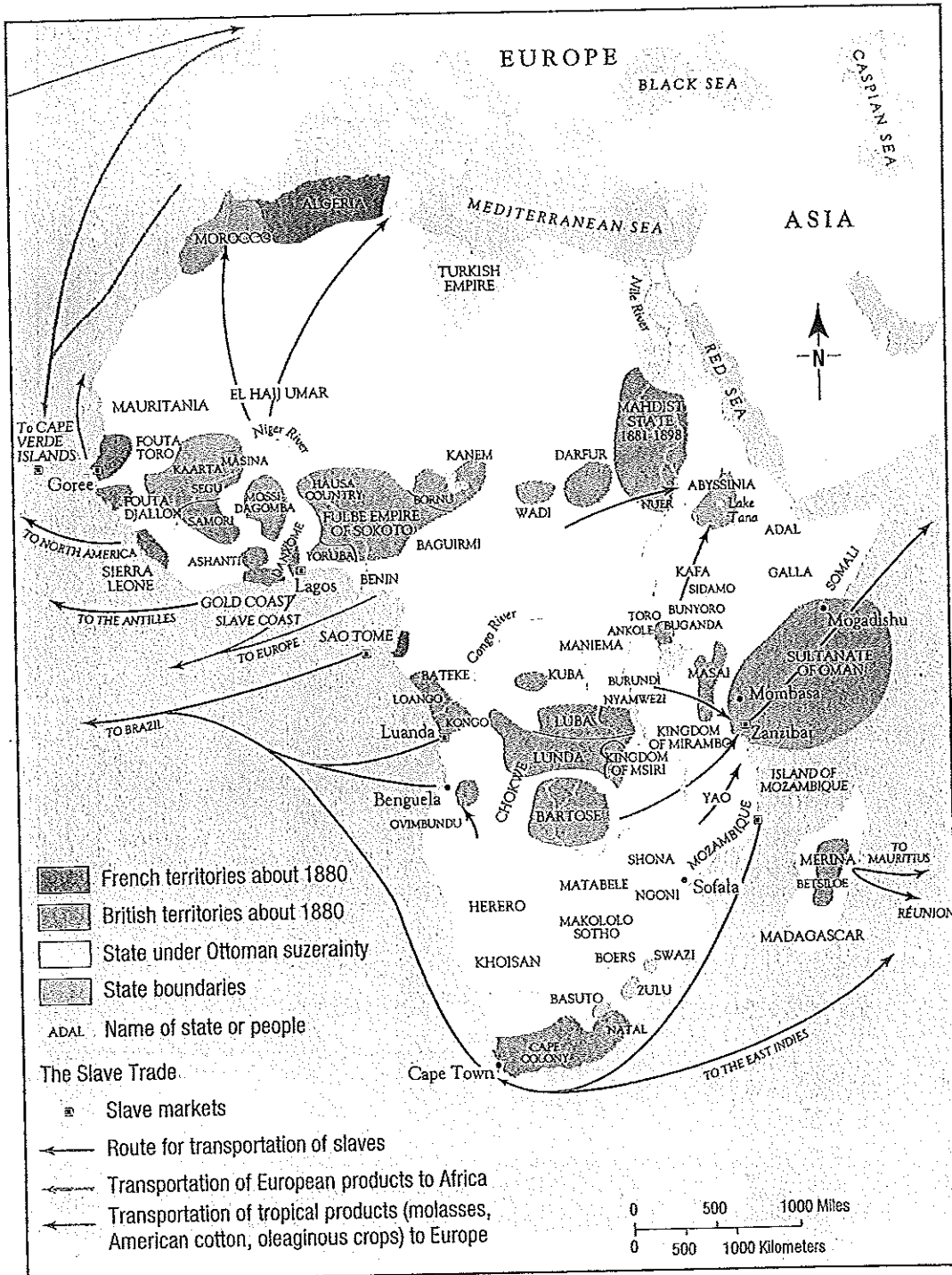
13.2 (on p. 183) highlights political and cultural divisions in nineteenth-century Africa prior to 1880. Map 13.3 (on p. 184) shows the colonial partition of Africa between 1880 and 1914.

Together these maps indicate a number of things about imperialism in Africa. First, the manner and speed with which Africa was divided demonstrate the intense competition involved in this late-nineteenth-century imperial expansion. Second, the European partition of Africa did not take account of the already established social, political, cultural, and ethnic divisions among Africans. From this geopolitical perspective alone, one can imagine some of the disruption to native societies and cultures caused by imperialism. Third, these maps help explain problems experienced by Africans after decolonization occurred. The new African nations were generally formed on the basis of the arbitrary political lines established by European colonizers. Thus many African countries had to deal with persisting divisions and rivalries among their populations, stemming from the nineteenth-century partition of Africa.

CONSIDER: How these maps help explain the effects of imperialism on Africans.

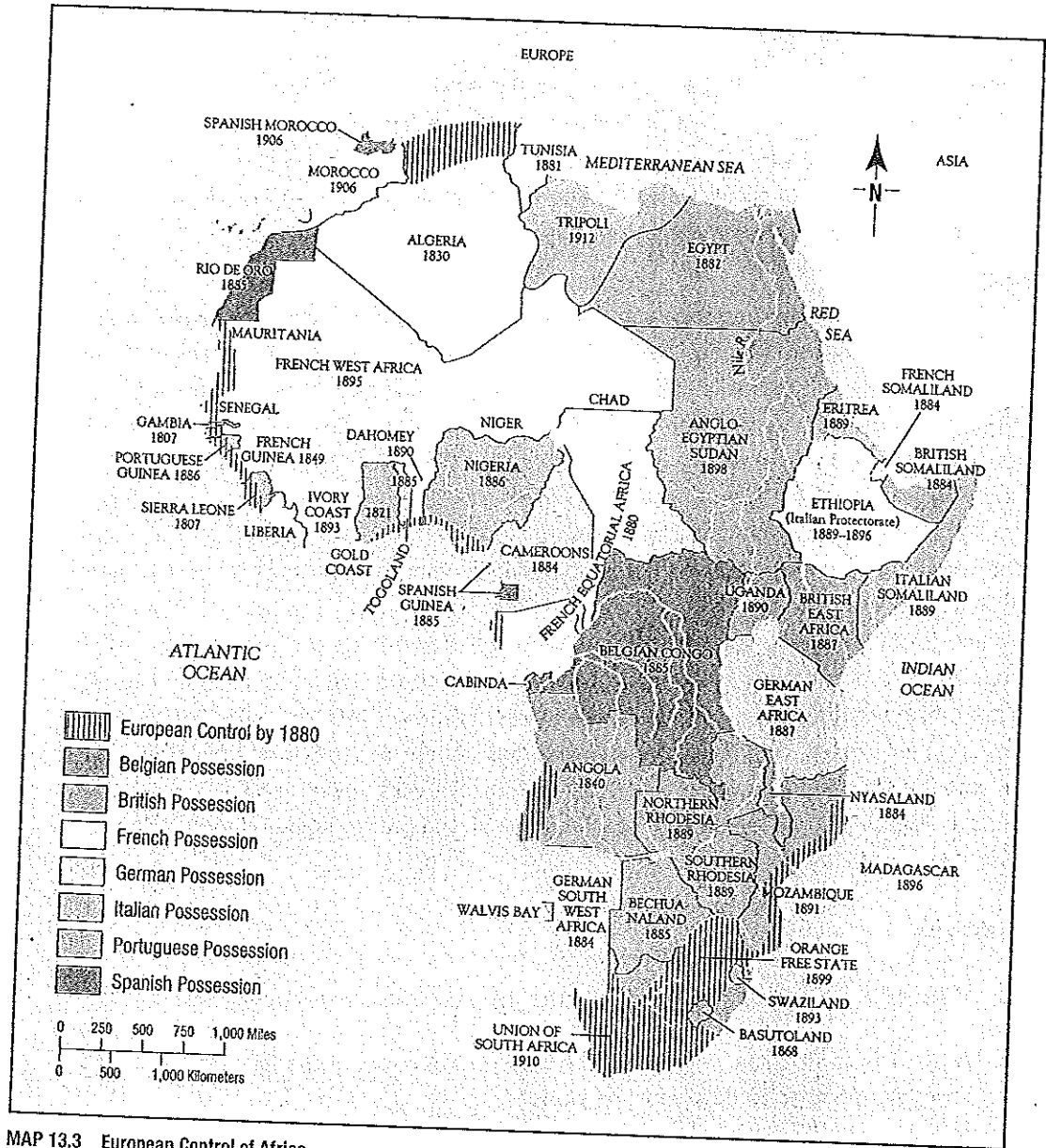


MAP 13.1 Divisions Among Indigenous Peoples



MAP 13.2 Political and Cultural Divisions

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MAP 13.3 European Control of Africa

Secondary Sources

A Sterner Plan for Italian Unity: Nationalism, Liberalism, and Conservatism

Raymond Grew

During the first half of the nineteenth century, nationalism was most often connected to liberalism. After the revolu-

tions of 1848 there were increasing ties between nationalism and conservatism, particularly in the movements for national unification. In the following selection Raymond Grew, an advocate of comparative history from the University of Michigan, analyzes the relationships among nationalism, liberalism, and conservatism in a comparative context.

SOURCE: Raymond Grew, *A Sterner Plan for Italian Unity*. Reprinted by permission of Princeton University Press (Princeton, NJ, 1963), pp. 465-466. Copyright © 1963 by Princeton University Press.

CONSIDER: How nationalism could appeal to both liberals and conservatives; why, during the second half of the nineteenth century, liberal ideals were often sacrificed in the name of nationalism.

Karl Pearson, "Social Darwinism and Imperialism"

One of the intellectual foundations of the New Imperialism was the doctrine of social Darwinism, a pseudoscientific application of Darwin's ideas about biology to nations and races. The impact of social Darwinism was substantial. In the selection that follows, an Englishman, Karl Pearson (1857–1936), attempts to connect concepts from evolutionary theory—the struggle for survival and the survival of the fittest—to the development of human societies.

History shows me one way, and one way only, in which a state of civilisation has been produced, namely, the struggle of race with race, and the survival of the physically and mentally fitter race. This dependence of progress on the survival of the fitter race, terribly black as it may seem to some of you, gives the struggle for existence its redeeming features; it is the fiery crucible out of which comes the finer metal. You may hope for a time when the sword shall be turned into the ploughshare, when American and German and English traders shall no longer compete in the markets of the world for raw materials, for their food supply, when the white man and the dark shall share the soil between them, and each till it as he lists. But, believe me, when that day comes mankind will no longer progress; there will be nothing to check the fertility of inferior stock; the relentless law of heredity will not be controlled and guided by natural selection. Man will stagnate. . . The path of progress is strewn with the wreck of nations; traces are everywhere to be seen of the hecatombs of inferior races, and of victims who found not the narrow way to the greater perfection. Yet these dead peoples are, in very truth, the stepping stones on which mankind has arisen to the higher intellectual and deeper emotional life of today.

Questions

1. What role did Pearson assign race in the dynamic of historical development?
2. According to Pearson, what would be the consequences of the *failure* of European peoples to dominate the globe?
3. How would you explain Pearson's certainty that history is the story of progress and that his society represented the pinnacle of human development?

Pearson, Karl. *National Life from the Standpoint of Science*. 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1907), pp. 21, 26–27, 64.

Vladimir Lenin on Imperialism, 1916

The Russian Communist leader Vladimir Lenin brought a socialist perspective to the debate over imperialism. Linking imperialism to advanced capitalism, Lenin saw the establishment of overseas colonies as evidence that capitalism was reaching its final phase. In Lenin's view, once further global expansion was no longer possible, the collapse of capitalism would begin in earnest. As you read the excerpt from Lenin's writing on imperialism included below, pay particular attention to the way he used Marxist ideas to interpret the previous century of world history.

Imperialism, as a Special Stage of Capitalism

[. . .] Imperialism emerged as the development and direct continuation of the fundamental characteristics of capitalism in general. But capitalism only became capitalist imperialism at a definite and very high stage of its development, when certain of its fundamental characteristics began to change into their opposites, when the features of the epoch of transition from capitalism to a higher social and economic system had taken shape and revealed themselves all along the line. Economically, the main thing in this process is the displacement of capitalist free competition by capitalist monopoly. Free competition is the fundamental characteristic of capitalism, and of commodity production generally; monopoly is the exact opposite of free competition, but we have seen the latter being transformed into monopoly before our eyes, creating large-scale industry and forcing out small industry, replacing large-scale by still larger-scale industry, and carrying concentration of production and capital to the point where out of it has grown and is growing monopoly: cartels, syndicates and trusts, and merging with them, the capital of a dozen or so banks, which manipulate thousands of millions. At the same time the monopolies, which have grown out of free competition, do not eliminate the latter, but exist over it and alongside of it, and thereby give rise to a number of very acute, intense antagonisms, frictions and conflicts. Monopoly is the transition from capitalism to a higher system.

If it were necessary to give the briefest possible definition of imperialism we should have to say that imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism. Such a definition would include what is most important, for, on the one hand, finance capital is the bank capital of a few very big monopolist banks, merged with the capital of the monopolist combines of industrialists; and, on the other hand, the division of the world is the transition from a colonial policy which has extended without hindrance to territories unseized by any capitalist power, to a colonial policy of monopolistic possession of the territory of the world which has been completely divided up.

Lenin, Vladimir. *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, no date), pp. 141-44, 121-25.

unconsciously and insensibly, that the pleasure of observing and reasoning was a much higher one than that of skill and sport. The primeval instincts of the barbarian slowly yielded to the acquired tastes of the civilized man. That my mind became developed through my pursuits during the voyage, is rendered probable by a remark made by my father, who was the most acute observer whom I ever saw, of a sceptical disposition, and far from being a believer in phrenology; for on first seeing me after the voyage, he turned round to my sisters and exclaimed, "Why, the shape of his head is quite altered."

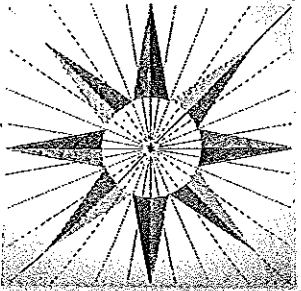
* * *

As far as I can judge of myself I worked to the utmost during the voyage from the mere pleasure of investigation, and from my strong desire to add a few facts to the great mass of facts in natural science. But I was also ambitious to take a fair place among scientific men,—whether more ambitious or less so than most of my fellow-workers I can form no opinion.

* * *

Towards the close of our voyage I received a letter whilst at Ascension, in which my sisters told me that Sedgwick had called on my father and said that I should take a place among the leading scientific men. I could not at the time understand how he could have learnt anything of my proceedings, but I heard (I believe afterwards) that Henslow had read some of the letters which I wrote to him before the Philosophical Soc. of Cambridge and had printed them for private distribution. My collection of fossil bones, which had been sent to Henslow, also excited considerable attention amongst palaeontologists. After reading this letter I clambered over the mountains of Ascension with a bounding step and made the volcanic rocks resound under my geological hammer! All this shows how ambitious I was; but I think that I can say with truth that in after years, though I cared in the highest degree for the approbation of such men as Lyell and Hooker, who were my friends, I did not care much about the general public. I do not mean to say that a favourable review or a large sale of my books did not please me greatly; but the pleasure was a fleeting one, and I am sure that I have never turned one inch out of my course to gain fame.

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European Imperialism

Cecil Rhodes, "Confessions of Faith"

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, European nations began the drive to establish profitable colonies in Africa and Asia. Fueled by extreme nationalism and a sense of cultural and social superiority, Europeans conquered vast territories bringing the people who lived there under the authority of colonial administrations. European industrialization provided the tools for empire building. Resistance efforts on the part of local populations proved to be no match for superior, industrialized, European weaponry. Novel modes of transportation resulting from industrialization, such as the steam engine, gave the Europeans the means by which they could penetrate the interior of these vast continents, as they never had been able to do before. As the colonial empires grew, Europeans defended and justified imperialism drawing on many different ideas, beliefs, and arguments. Justifications for European imperialism included the notion of racial superiority, nationalism and patriotism, the quest for converts to Christianity, and the promise of economic growth. Cecil Rhodes (1853-1902), was one of Britain's strongest promoters of imperialism. Born in England, Rhodes made his fortune as one of the founders of the De Beers diamond mining company in South Africa. After establishing successful economic ventures in colonial Africa, Rhodes entered politics in 1881. He became a member of the parliament of the Cape Colony in British South Africa and, in 1890, became the prime minister of the colony. He outlined his views on British imperialism in this tract, published in 1877.

Source: John Flint, *Cecil Rhodes* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974), 248-250.

FOCUS QUESTIONS:

1. What were Rhodes' views regarding the British empire in the past, and how did he use this history as arguments for expanding the empire?

2. What were Rhodes' plans for expanding the British empire? What actions does he propose?
3. How did Rhodes define "civilization"? What ideas and beliefs informed his perceptions of who was "civilized," and who was not?

It often strikes a man to inquire what is the chief good in life; to one the thought comes that it is a happy marriage, to another great wealth, and as each seizes on his idea, for that he more or less works for the rest of his existence. To myself thinking over the same question the wish came to render myself useful to my country. I then asked myself how could I and after reviewing the various methods I have felt that at the present day we are actually limiting our children and perhaps bringing into the world half the human beings we might owing to the lack of country for them to inhabit that if we had retained America there would at this moment be millions more of English living. I contend that we are the finest race in the world and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race. Just fancy those parts that are at present inhabited by the most despicable specimens of human beings what an alteration there would be if they were brought under Anglo-Saxon influence, look again at the extra employment a new country added to our dominions gives. I contend that every acre added to our territory means in the future birth to some more of the English race who otherwise would not be brought into existence. Added to this the absorption of the greater portion of the world under our rule simply means the end of all wars, at this moment had we not lost America I believe we could have stopped the Russian-Turkish war by merely refusing money and supplies. Having these ideas what scheme could we think of to forward this object. I look into history and I read the story of the Jesuits I see what they were able to do in a bad cause and I might say under bad leaders.

In the present day I become a member in the Masonic order I see the wealth and power they possess the influence they hold and I think over their ceremonies and I wonder that a large body of men can devote themselves to what at times appear the most ridiculous and absurd rites without an object and without an end.

The idea gleaming and dancing before ones eyes like a will-of-the-wisp at last frames itself into a plan. Why should we not form a secret society with but one object the furtherance of the British Empire and the bringing of the whole uncivilised world under British rule for the recovery of the United States for the making the Anglo-Saxon race but one Empire. What a dream, but yet it is probable, it is possible. I once heard it argued by a fellow in my own college, I am sorry to own it by an Englishman, that it was a good thing for us that we have lost the United States. There are some subjects on which there can be no arguments, and to an Englishman this is one of them, but even from an American's point of view

just picture what they have lost, look at their government, are not the frauds that yearly come before the public view a disgrace to any country and especially theirs which is the finest in the world. Would they have occurred had they remained under English rule great as they have become how infinitely greater they would have been with the softening and elevating influences of English rule, think of those countless 000's of Englishmen that during the last 100 years would have crossed the Atlantic and settled and populated the United States. Would they have not made without any prejudice a finer country of it than the low class Irish and German emigrants? All this we have lost and that country loses owing to whom? Owing to two or three ignorant pig-headed statesmen of the last century, at their door lies the blame. Do you ever feel mad? do you ever feel murderous? I think I do with those men. I bring facts to prove my assertion. Does an English father when his sons wish to emigrate ever think of suggesting emigration to a country under another flag, never—it would seem a disgrace to suggest such a thing I think that we all think that poverty is better under our own flag than wealth under a foreign one.

Put your mind into another train of thought. Fancy Australia discovered and colonised under the French flag, what would it mean merely several millions of English unborn that at present exist we learn from the past and to form our future. We learn from having lost to cling to what we possess. We know the size of the world we know the total extent. Africa is still lying ready for us it is our duty to take it. It is our duty to seize every opportunity of acquiring more territory and we should keep this one idea steadily before our eyes that more territory simply means more of the Anglo-Saxon race more of the best the most human, most honourable race the world possesses.

To forward such a scheme what a splendid help a secret society would be a society not openly acknowledged but who would work in secret for such an object.

I contend that there are at the present moment numbers of the ablest men in the world who would devote their whole lives to it. I often think what a loss to the English nation in some respects the abolition of the Rotten Borough System has been. What thought strikes a man entering the house of commons, the assembly that rules the whole world? I think it is the mediocrity of the men but what is the cause. It is simply—an assembly of wealth of men whose lives have been spent in the accumulation of money and whose time has been too much engaged to be able to spare any for the study of past history. And yet in the hands of such men rest our destinies. Do men like the great Pitt, and Burke and Sheridan not now exist. I contend they do.... They live and die unused unemployed. What has been the main cause of the success of the Romish Church? The fact that every enthusiast, call it if you like every madman finds employment in it. Let us form the same kind of society—a Church for the extension of the British

Empire. A society which should have its members in every part of the British Empire working with one object and one idea we should have its members placed at our universities and our schools and should watch the English youth passing through their hands just one perhaps in every thousand would have the mind and feelings for such an object, he should be tried in every way, he should be tested whether he is endurant, possessed of eloquence, disregardful of the petty details of life, and if found to be such, then elected and bound by oath to serve for the rest of his life in his Country. He should then be supported if without means by the Society and sent to that part of the Empire where it was felt he was needed.

Take another case... of the younger son with high thoughts, high aspirations, endowed by nature with all the faculties to make a great man, and with the sole wish in life to serve his Country but he lacks two things the means and the opportunity, ever troubled by a sort of inward deity urging him on to high and noble deeds, he is compelled to pass his time in some occupation which furnishes him with mere existence, he lives unhappily and dies miserably. Such men as these the Society should search out and use for the furtherance of their object.

(In every Colonial legislature the Society should attempt to have its members prepared at all times to vote or speak and advocate the closer union of England and the colonies, to crush all disloyalty and every movement for the severance of our Empire. The Society should inspire and even own portions of the press for the press rules the mind of the people. The Society should always be searching for members who might by their position in the world by their energies or character forward the object but the ballot and test for admittance should be severe.)

Once make [the society] common and it fails. Take a man of great wealth who is bereft of his children perhaps having his mind soured by some bitter disappointment who shuts himself up separate from his neighbours and makes up his mind to a miserable existence. To such men as these the society should go gradually disclose the greatness of their scheme and entreat him to throw in his life and property with them for this object. I think that there are thousands now existing who would eagerly grasp at the opportunity. Such are the heads of my scheme.

Carl Peters, "A Manifesto for German Colonization"

Newly unified, Germany entered the nineteenth-century competition for colonies late, long after Britain and France had already amassed substantial territories. In the 1880s and 1890s, however, Germany did establish colonies in Southwest and Eastern Africa, taking part in the European partition of Africa. Carl Peters (1856-1918) played a major role in Germany's empire-building on that continent. Peters founded the Society for German Colonization, in 1884, an organization that supported German colonial expansion in Africa. Peters played a major role in establishing a German colonial foothold in East Africa. Months after the establishment of the society in 1884, he seized land in the region of Tanganyika (now a part of Tanzania). Named to a high-ranking colonial post in 1891, he was forced to step down in 1897 as a result of charges of mistreating Africans and abusing his position for personal gain. He remained in Africa, and in the late 1890s he voyaged down the Zambezi River, with a view to colonizing it, and published an account of the old mines and gold mines he saw along the coasts entitled *The Eldorado of the Ancients* (1902). This excerpt comes from documents establishing the Society for German Colonization in 1884.

Source: Carl Peters, *Die Grundung von Deutsch-Ostafrika* (Berlin: Schwetschke, 1906), 43-45, in *Modern Imperialism: Western Overseas Expansion and its Aftermath, 1775-1996*, ed. Ralph A. Austen (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1969), 62-63.

FOCUS QUESTIONS:

1. What were the functions and goals of this society?
2. What arguments does Peters make about Germany's quest for colonies? Why did he think it was important?
3. What was the relationship between nationalism and the quest for colonial empires?

APRIL, 1884

In the partition of the earth, as it has proceeded from the beginning of the fifteenth century up to our times, the German nation received nothing. All the remaining European culture-bearing peoples possess areas outside our continent where their languages and customs can take firm root and flourish. The moment that the German emigrant leaves the borders of the Reich behind him, he is a stranger sojourning on foreign soil. The German Reich, great in size and strength through its bloodily achieved unity, stands in the leading position among the continental European powers: her sons abroad must adapt themselves to nations which look upon us with either indifference or even hostility. For centuries the