

The New Imperialism and the Partition of Africa

- Definitions -- Imperialism
 - The process of extending one state's control over another
 - Formal imperialism
 - Colonialism or direct control
 - Colonizing countries annexed territories outright
 - Established new governments
 - Informal imperialism
 - Conquering nations reached agreements with indigenous leaders and governed through them
 - Allowed weaker state to maintain its independence while reducing its sovereignty
 - Carving out zones of European sovereignty and privilege
- Imperialist endeavors
 - 1875–1902: Europeans took up 90 percent of Africa
 - 1870–1900: small group of European states colonized one-quarter of the world's lands
- Eighteenth-century losses
 - The British in the North American colonies
 - French Atlantic trade
 - Spanish and Portuguese in South America
- Nineteenth-century imperialism
 - Appeared against the backdrop of industrialization, liberal revolutions, and the rise of nation-states
 - The need for raw materials
 - Bringing progress to the world
 - Imperialists sought to distance themselves from earlier histories of conquest
 - Colonial resistance and rebellion forced Europeans to develop new strategies of rule
 - The British granted self-government to Canada, Australia, and New Zealand

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- Nineteenth-century empires established carefully codified racial hierarchies
- Guided more by “settlement and discipline” than independent entrepreneurial activity
- The creation of new kinds of interaction between Europeans and indigenous peoples
- Economic arguments
 - J. A. Hobson (1858–1940), *Imperialism* (1902)
 - Imperialism was driven by a small group of financiers
 - International capitalists
 - Investors sought out secure investment opportunities in colonies
 - The manufacturing, military, and armaments interest
 - Lenin (1870–1924), *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1917)
 - Imperialism as an essential stage in the development of capitalism
 - The internal contradictions of capitalism produced imperialism
 - The overthrow of capitalism would check imperialism
 - London as the banker of the world
 - Demand for raw materials made colonization a necessary investment
- Strategic and nationalist motives
 - International rivalries fueled the belief that national interests were at stake
 - The French supported imperialism as a means of restoring national honor
 - The British worried about German and French industrialization and losing world markets
 - The link between imperialism and nation building
- The cultural dimension
 - David Livingston (1813–1873) and putting an end to the African slave trade
 - Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) and the “white man’s burden”
 - Civilizing the barbaric and heathens
- Imperial policy

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- Less a matter of long-range planning
- More a matter of quick responses to improvised situations

British takeover of Egypt 1882

- Muhammed Ali (1789-1849) modernizes aspects of Egypt as part of the Ottoman Empire
- Europeans settle in port city of Alexandria – 50,000 by 1854
- 1876 takeover of Egypt's finances by France and G.B.
- 1882 rebellion crushed and full occupation by Great Britain.

The Congo Free State

- The 1870s
 - A new drive into central Africa—the fertile valleys of the Congo River
 - European colonizers under the Belgian king, Leopold II (1835–1909, r. 1865–1909)
 - Herbert M. Stanley and his “scientific” journeys
 - International Association for the Exploration and Civilization of the Congo (1876)
 - Signed treaties with local elites
 - Opened the Congo to commercial exploitation (palm oil, rubber, diamonds)
 - Other colonizers reacted (especially Portugal)
 - The Treaty of Berlin (1884)
 - Chaired by Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898)
 - Established ground rules for a new phase of European expansion
 - Britain, France, and Germany joined forces to settle the issue
 - The Congo would be open to free trade and commerce
 - The Congo Free State
 - Actually run by Leopold's private company
 - Slave trade suppressed in favor of free labor

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- The Congo becomes a Belgian colony (1908)
- Clerk on the docks of Brussels suspects slavery
- Leopold cedes the Congo Free State to the Belgian government after international movement to end the rule of Leopold II in Africa.
- The partition of Africa
 - Colonial powers increase their holdings in Africa (1880s)
 - Germany
 - Bismarck was a reluctant colonizer
 - Seized strategic locations (Cameroon and Tanzania)
 - Britain
 - Southern and eastern Africa
 - Cecil Rhodes (1853–1902)
 - Made a fortune from South African diamond mines (DeBeers)
 - Prime minister of Cape Colony (1890)
 - Personal goal was to build an African empire founded on diamonds
 - Carved out territories in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Botswana
 - The “Cape-to-Cairo” railway
 - Making Britain self-sufficient

Cecil Rhodes (1853-1902)

- Made a fortune in African diamond production
- Believed in racial superiority of British and territorial expansion
- Founded Rhodesia and the Rhodes Scholar program
- Led military campaigns to topple Dutch holdings in Africa

Further Reading:

- *King Leopold's Ghost* by Adam Hochschild

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- *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad