

## Chapter XV: Europe's World Supremacy

Intro:

Social scientists have used a variety of terms to refer to the bifurcation between modern and traditional societies, rich and poor: European/non-European, Western/non, and now developed/less developed, or “developing,” or Third (Fourth and Fifth) World--and even North and South. By 1900, there was a world civilization, with all nations participating in a world economy and the attributes of modernity available to all. The West reaped the fruits of progress, while native industry suffered. European railroads threw native boatmen, carters, innkeepers out of work; migratory tribes were forced to settle; native farmers were required to produce for export and were tied to the world markets.

Imperialism, the colonialism of the late 19th century, may be defined as the government of one people by another. It proved transitory. Subject peoples wanted to advance; they took Western science, skill, and capital, but also assimilated ideals of liberty, equality, democracy, and anti-capitalism.

### 78. Imperialism: Its Nature and Causes

pp. 642-650

#### A. The New Imperialism

1. From 1815-1875 there were no significant colonial rivalries. Britain alone was fully industrialized and was the supreme colonial power. The French moved into Algeria, the Dutch developed Indonesia more intensively, and China and Japan were opened, but there were no overt conflicts. The “Old Imperialism” was maritime and mercantile--the purchase from native merchants of items made by native methods. Powers had no territorial ambitions except in America, which was regarded as “open.”
2. The new imperialism of the late 19th century developed mines, plantations, docks, factories, railroads, banks, and all the suitable amenities for Europeans. Natives often became wage employees; money was loaned to native rulers. Imperialist powers gained a financial stake, and thus sought to secure their goods. Thus: **Colonies**: territories brought under outright control. **Protectorates**: territories where a local ruler was maintained, under European “guidance.” Bahrain, Aden, Oman were good examples. **Spheres of Influence**: territories under the dominance of several European powers; each had a local monopoly on trade, investment, and advisory control. China and Iran were the two best examples.
3. Europeans had an enormous power advantage, based on military technology and backed by a nation able to marshal resources for any purpose. Nations like India, Turkey, Persia, China, and Japan were exceptionally weak. Colonial “wars” were fought, always between decidedly unequal parties. The mere threat of a naval bombardment often brought surrender.

#### B. Incentives and Motives

1. European life required material goods, many from tropical regions, as tea, cotton, rubber, petroleum, jute, coconut oil. European manufacturers also need better markets for their products (neo-mercantilism). Money invested in “backward” countries earned higher rates of interest--for greater risk and due to cheap labor. And investors tended to prefer “civilized” political control over areas where their railroads, mines, loans, etc. were situated.
2. Hobson, an English socialist, and Lenin blamed imperialism on the need for capitalist to invest surplus capital. Hobson argued that proper taxation would end imperialism. Europe really needed enormous imports to sustain its dense population, complex industry, and high living standard. The need for raw materials made investment profitable. And only a fraction was actually invested in colonies. But the average European worker gained in real wages.
3. Colonies were useful for surplus population--but few Europeans moved to the new areas. They were also symbols of power. Finally: “Imperialism arose from the commercial, industrial, financial, scientific, political, journalistic, intellectual, religious, and humanitarian impulses of Europe compounded together.” Faith in civilization became a substitute religion, imperialism its crusade, Social Darwinism its holy writ. Europeans had to advance the work of humanity. Much good was done--but the real purpose often was self-interest, and the tone was complacency and condescension, as seen in Kipling's poem, “The White Man's Burden.”

### 79. The Americas

pp. 650-654

#### A. The United States and Mexico

1. The Latin American Republics (plus the Brazilian monarchy) were weak but did not face a strong external threat. Mexico did face US cotton growers anxious to expand their plantation culture. Mexico opposed slaves, the Texans declared their own republic which in 1845 was annexed to the US. The annexation brought a war which cost Mexico half its territory to US “**manifest destiny.**”
2. Next came problems with Europe; rulers borrowed money at high interest. When Juárez repudiated the loans, a force was sent to force payment from seized customs revenues. Nap III also had dreams of an American Empire and set up **Maximilian** on the throne. US protests brought French withdrawal and the execution of Max. A main feature was US ambivalence: we protected Latin American from Europe but ourselves became an economic menace--the **Colossus of the North**. President Hayes of the US advanced the claim that “citizens of advanced states, operating in more primitive regions, should continue to enjoy the security of property characteristic of their home countries.” President Diaz of Mexico argued that Americans should expect no more right to protection than natives.

#### B. US imperialism in the 1890s:

1. In 1903 the US manipulated a revolution in Panama against Columbia and then guaranteed the revolution--all to get the Panama Canal built. In 1898, US sentiment backed a Cuban revolution against Spain--but the key was self-interest: US citizens had \$50 million invested, needed Cuban sugar, and had strategic interests. Spain was built up as barbaric and brutal in the US "yellow press," and the loss of the Maine brought war. In the resulting peace treaty, the US took Puerto Rico and the Philippines, and Cuba was made a protectorate by means of the Platt Amendment. During the same time T. R. advanced the **Roosevelt Corollary** to the Monroe Doctrine: the weakness of a nation allows intervention to prevent problems. The US was to intervene constantly in Central America/Caribbean until 1932--**Dollar Diplomacy**.
2. The story of Hawaii is typical: By 1840, US sailors, whalers, missionaries and merchants were established. Hawaii became a protectorate in 1875 to gain access to Pearl Harbor and trade privileges. US capital was invested heavily in sugar and pineapple (brought from Mexico by the Doles, missionaries). In 1891 Queen Liliuokalani tried to limit Western penetration. Her government was overthrown, Hawaii became a republic and was annexed in 1898 as part of US "destiny."

## 80. Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire

pp. 654-662

- A. The large, diverse Ottoman Empire included North Africa, the Arabian peninsula and Middle East, Asia Minor, and much of the Balkans. Many of its people were Muslims, but there were also Jews and many Christian sects. Only Muslims served in the army; all paid taxes. Each group was under its own laws, courts, and customs, with religious leaders responsible to the Turkish government. Europeans had special rights ("capitulations") under which they were tax-exempt and followed European law. Declining since 1700, the empire was called the "Sick Man of Europe" by Nicholas II; it was only kept from dissolution by the European power balance. Russia took the Crimea and crossed the Caucasus Mts; Greece had won independence; Serbia was autonomous, Rumania "self-governing" since the Crimean War; the French occupied Algeria; the Saud family ruled Arabia, and Egypt was under hereditary Khedives.
- B. Defeat in the Crimean War led to a move to modernize. The Hatt-i Humayan edict called for reforms, but the Empire lacked trained officials, corruption was rampant, and numerous officials were deeply in debt. Abdul Hamid II was set up as reform sultan, with a parliament and a constitution; he took power and ruled 32 years as an autocrat (1876-1908). Reform-minded Turks lived and plotted in exile in West Europe. Meanwhile, Turkish fears of revolts brought massacres of ethnic groups: the Bulgars (1876) and the Armenians (1894).
- C. Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78: The **Congress of Berlin**
  1. Russia still dreamed of capturing Istanbul and the vital straits. They supported Slavic nationalist movements, leading to insurrections in Bosnia and Bulgaria. The result was the (6th) Russo-Turkish War. The Russians forced the Turks to accept the Treaty of San Stefano (1877), giving them Caucasus territories and bringing varying degrees of autonomy to Rumania, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Bosnia. Britain, nervous over Suez, called for war in a jingoistic clamor. To avert problems which might aid France to gain allies, Bismarck entered as "honest broker" and called the Congress of Berlin:
  2. Russia kept the trans-Caucasus region (Armenia, Azerbaijan); Serbia, Rumania, Montenegro were independent; Bulgaria was nominally independent under the Ottoman Empire; Bosnia was occupied and administered by Austria. Britain got Cyprus, France expanded into Tunisia, and Italy was promised Albania. Italy had a great appetite but poor teeth, as Bismarck noted. Germany took no territory, but it had earned Turkish good will; German capital was exported, as for the Berlin to Bagdad RR.
- D. Egypt, meanwhile, moved to modernize. Railroads were built and cotton export increased hugely, 1861-1865. (Why?) Mismanagement and luxury spending by the elite brought debt, and increased Western influence--bringing nationalistic, anti-Western feeling and riots--which Britain used as an excuse to move in, with Egypt as a protectorate. Upset, the French began to expand, moving from Algeria into Tunisia and Morocco, upsetting the British and the Germans.
- E. "Young Turks" gained control of the Ottoman government in 1908 and returned to the constitution of 1876. Bulgaria declared its independence and Austria annexed Bosnia; Italy took Libya by force in 1911-12. The Balkan wars of 1912-13 cost Turkey virtually all of its European territory. In 1914, Russia declared war on Turkey, which joined Germany in World War I. (Modern Turkey emerged in its present form in 1919.)

## 81. The Partition of Africa

pp. 662-669

- A. The Opening of Africa: Africa was the romanticized "Dark Continent" of gold and slaves, and missionaries like David Livingstone. H. M. Stanley went to Africa on a journalistic junket to "find" Livingstone--who was not "lost." Stanley found Dr. L., but more importantly he realized the imperialistic future of Africa. Backed by Leopold of Belgium and financiers, he founded the International Congo Association (1878) to exploit the region. He concluded 500 "treaties" with chiefs, gaining vast areas for small outlays from peoples who had no concept of property in the Western sense. Karl Peters in East Africa, Brazza in the West, did the same for Germany and France. Portugal, too, began to expand its coastal holds deep inland. The Berlin Congress of 1885 called for open trade, protection of native rights, and no slavery, but there was no enforcement machinery. The reality was the incredible brutalization of the people of the Congo to squeeze out maximum profits. Nowhere was imperialism worse.
- B. The establishment of "rules" led to a scramble for territory in the interior--and by 1900 all of Africa except Liberia and Ethiopia were claimed. Chiefs rarely had power to grant any sort of rights, so the Europeans built up the chiefs in order to gain control. They then ruled through these chiefs. The main problem was always labor, since the African lacked a sense

of money or possessions and regarded continuous labor as the lot of women. The result was forced labor--either semi-slavery or by levying a money tax or reducing native lands to the point that survival required work. Native societies were uprooted, and the individual was left alone, with nothing to replace his tribe or village. The westernized class grew--chiefs, Christian priests, clerks. Many went to western universities, where they came to resent paternalism and exploitation. African nationalism had its genesis in these young people.

C. Rivalries between the powers:

1. Ethiopia proved able to defend itself, defeating the Italians at Adowa in 1895. For the most part, Italy, Portugal, and Spain got sizable holdings--since the Great Powers disliked large chunks falling into the hands of their more important rivals. Germany entered late, to gain prestige and to weaken its rivals--and hoping to unite with Portugal as a bloc. The French controlled West Africa, and aimed at a solid block across the continent. Britain had territories in both the south and north which it hoped to be able to unite. The British were defeated in the Sudan in 1885, but victory in 1895 at Omdurman led to a confrontation with the French at Fashoda. The French had to back down, and considerable ill-will emerged on both sides.
2. **South Africa:** Angered at the abolition of slavery, the Dutch Boers of Capetown had trekked north to the Orange Free State and Transvaal regions to escape British rule. They defeated both the migrating Zulus and the British troops who were sent to force them out. The Boers had become a barrier in the British geopolitical dream of a strip of territory from the Cape to Cairo push. The discovery of gold and then diamonds in the Boer Republics brought a great rush of Europeans. Boer insistence on running things their way, plus the machinations of British imperialist Cecil Rhodes brought a powder-keg atmosphere which exploded into war in 1898. The outnumbered Boers fought bravely in their kommandos, but they were finally crushed brutally. They were allowed self-government, and in 1910 were joined with British Capetown into the Union of South Africa. The Boer War was a turning point in another sense; the British learned they were extremely unpopular as imperialists in Europe, and as a result they began to rethink their international position. Could they continue to rely on the English Channel to safeguard their "splendid isolation"?

**82. Imperialism in Asia: Dutch, British, Russians**

pp. 669-674

A. The Dutch East Indies and British India

1. Both were ideal colonies: they had a strong export surplus, the result of investment combined with the low purchasing power of the native. They were large, so there was a great internal business to enrich Europe--commerce, insurance, banking, transport. Both had rich, tropical natural resources. They were so divided by language and religion that they were easy to rule. They could be run by a native civil service, with the top positions reserved for Europeans. Colonial governments curbed war, plague, and famine, bringing a population surge. Neither faced an external challenge to their rule.
2. The British in India faced the Sepoy Revolt of 1857, caused by the British attitude to caste and Muslim fundamentalism, with both Hindus and Muslims agitated by rumors. The main result was the closing out of the British East India Co rule and the last Moguls, replacing them with direct rule with and through Indians. Some 200 Indian states were kept as protectorates. British industry wiped out India's textiles, and promoted exports of cotton, tea, jute, indigo, and wheat. A major rail system was built to ease trade. English was made the language of rule. Indians were promoted slowly. A major westernized Indian class developed. Nationalism spread, both anti-British and pro-Hindu or pro-Muslim.

B. Conflict of British and Russian interests: Afghanistan and Persia

Russian imperialism was promoted by the government and had little to do with demand for markets or raw materials or investment. Russia wanted access to warm water ports; it founded Vladivostok in 1860, and took Tashkent in 1864. Britain already fought Afghan wars to keep Afghanistan as a buffer, giving it a 20 mile wide strip in the Pamirs to separate Russia from India. The Russians also pressed on Persia, taking Tiflis and Baku. The British were moving in from the south, beginning by building a telegraph line and soon interested in newly discovered oil fields--as the British navy was converting from coal to oil. Persian nationalism grew, but by 1907 Britain and Russia had agreed to divide Persia into spheres of influence.

**83. Imperialism in Asia: China and the West**

pp. 674-681

- A. China before Western Penetration: Immense Manchu Empire faced increasing revolts and upheavals--grievances of poverty, extortionate government and landlords as the population grew to 300 million. Europeans wanted Chinese products, especially tea, but China rejected trade offers. The East India Co. came up with opium, and the trade imbalance rapidly shifted. China attempted to control and destroyed a year's supply, bringing Britain to bombard Canton to force payment and concessions: the Opium War. The Chinese were forced to open "treaty ports" to Europeans and grant extra-territoriality; they were also limited as to tariffs--with those collected by Europeans. The Manchu dynasty was left in control, but European powers grabbed their own exclusive spheres.
- B. Annexations and Concessions: Russia in 1860 sliced off the Amur River region, taking Vladivostok. Japan defeated China quickly in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894, gaining control of Korea and Taiwan. They also took the Liaotung Peninsula; Russia, which wanted that area for itself, forced Japan out and then took it--with Port Arthur and the right to build a railroad across Manchuria. Britain took Burma (1866) and France moved into Indo-China (1883). Germany extorted special rights on the Shantung Peninsula. Left out, the US called for an "Open Door" to replace closed concessions. One result

of the exploitation of China was a xenophobic explosion called the Boxer Rebellion, an insurrection of 1899 that was crushed easily. China was forced to pay \$330 million for the “insult.” Nationalism began to grow, with the revolutionary movement of Dr. Sun Yat-sen called the Kuomintang, “National People’s Party.”

#### 84. Russo-Japanese War and Its Consequences

pp. 681-982

- A. Japan and Russia were at odds over the control of Korea and Manchuria. Japan needed both recognition and resources; Russia needed success to stifle domestic criticism and to protect its new rights in Manchuria. Britain, alarmed by its isolation after Fashoda, made a military alliance with Japan. War broke out in 1904 with a Japanese attack on Port Arthur. Major forces battled in Manchuria to a draw, and the Japanese sank a second Russian fleet at the Battle of Tsushima Straits. With US mediation (T. Roosevelt), the Treaty of Portsmouth ended the war. Japan got Liaotung and Port Arthur, control of Korea, and the south half of Sakhalin Island, and a position in Manchuria. Both sides were upset by the compromise.
- B. What were the three main consequences of this war?
1. Frustrated in the East, Russia turned back to Europe and became embroiled in the Balkans. A major step towards World War I had been taken.
  2. Defeat and the clear weakness of Russia brought on the 1905 Revolution in Russia--a step on the way to the Russian Revolution
  3. The rise of Japan proved an alarming precedent to the West, and helped foster nationalistic revolutions in Europe’s colonies, especially in Asia.
- A. 1. What was the impact of imperialism on “backward countries.”
- B. 2. Compare the “old imperialism” (17th-18th centuries) to the new imperialism of the 19th century.  
3. Describe European motives for imperialism, giving examples.
- C. 4. Evaluate the morality of the process by which the US acquired its rights in Panama and gained control of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines
- D. 5. Evaluate the significance of the break-up of the Ottoman Empire.
- E. 6. Evaluate the impact of white rule on black Africa
- F. 7. Evaluate the results of British rule in India  
8. Describe British-Russian conflict over Russian expansionism in the 19th century.
- G. 9. What was the impact of Western imperialism on China? Compare the Chinese response to imperialism with the Japanese response (as presented in Chapter XIII).