

# Imperialism

*An Age of Revolutions*  
(1750–1914)



**New Imperialism**

India and Africa

Southeast Asia and the U.S.

Persian and Ottoman Empires

## Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Religion and thought



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

**Icons:** For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will have learned about New Imperialism, and be able to answer the following key questions:

- What form did New Imperialism take?
- What reasons were used to justify these Imperialist actions?
- How many of these reasons were social, and how many were economic?



In order to contextualize imperialism,  
use this timeline to recap previous  
key historical events.  
Either press on a date or drag the pointer  
along the timeline to find out information  
about what happened in each year.  
Press **start** to begin.

**start**





By definition, imperialism is:

*“the policy of extending the rule or authority of an **empire** or nation over foreign countries, or of acquiring and holding **colonies** and dependencies.”*

However, it was a much less easy-to-define practice for European nations in the 19th and early 20th century.

Imperialism was a complicated policy that was influenced by political, economic, social and moral factors, and no two nations practiced it the same way for the same reasons.

What reasons do you think might have been used to justify imperialist activities?







# New Imperialism



In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, imperialism began to take on a different form than in the two centuries before it.

Press on the tabs to learn more about these differences

Press **start** to begin.

start



Why do you think these changes occurred?



# The spread of colonization



There was a large increase in colonization in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Watch this animation to see how countries were colonized in the 1800s.

Press **start** to begin.

**start**





# The reasons for New Imperialism



Throughout the 19th century industrialization brought about an explosion of new technologies, modes of transportation, and industries.

Industrial growth meant the need for more raw materials, and markets for the sale of finished products.

The rise of global commerce through the use of larger, faster ships meant a need for more ports. It also required countries to have naval deployments throughout the world to protect their shipping and economic interests.



How did new imperialism help countries to obtain these things?







The popularity of **Social Darwinism** and **racial theory** in the late 1800's gave many Europeans confidence in the superiority of their race and culture.

Europeans had made great progress in industry, science and technology. This often led to a belief that non-Europeans were inferior because they had not made the same developments.



Many Europeans believed that they had a duty towards other countries to 'civilize' them, and bring them in line with the progress that they themselves had made.



How else do you think racial theory drove imperialism?





Christian **missionaries** from Europe saw imperialism as a chance to spread Christianity to the natives of colonies, who they believed were either pagan or without religion.

This led to a sense of duty amongst missionaries to “save” those who “needed saving”, and to help them better their lives in spite of themselves and their circumstances. Many Westerners came to the colonies to ‘convert and tame’ the natives.





As the 19th century wore on, the size and strength of nations was on display more and more. Nations began to prove their worth by the size of their armies, navies, and land holdings.

Industrialization brought with it a renewed sense of national confidence in many countries, and this manifested itself in a desire to spread their control further. Competition for colonies intensified as countries became more desperate to prove their worth on the world stage.





Watch this animation about potential influences on people's views about imperialism. Press the zoom tool to view the images close-up.

Press **start** to begin.

start







# Social or economic?



There were a number of reasons put forward to justify imperialist activity. These reasons were generally either **social** or **economic**.

Drag each reason to the correct place, depending on whether it should be considered to be a social or economic reason for imperialism.

Press **start** to begin.

**start**

