Thomas Jones Barker
THE SECRET OF ENGLAND'S GREATNESS, CA. **1863**
Painted by Thomas Jones Barker in 1861, this painting, entitled *The Secret of England's Greatness,* **epitomizes the nineteenth-century liberal conception of empire. Prince Albert and the statesmen Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell look on as Queen Victoria gives a Bible to a kneeling African. The queen represents empire as a benevolent, paternalist force, bestowing European civilization and Christianity on the colonies. The African symbolizes the colonial subject, who embraces his subordinate position and gratefully receives these gifts.**
The National Portrait Gallery, London

Chapter Twenty-Six
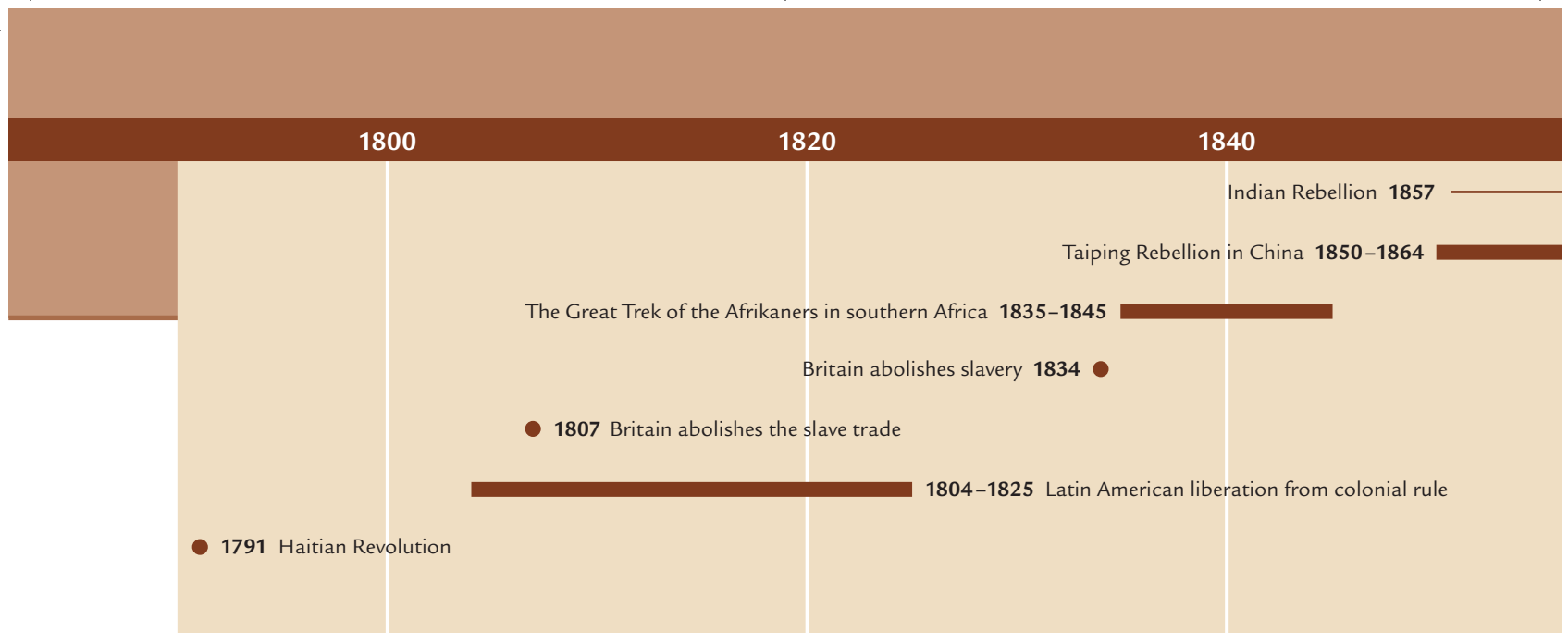
NINETEENTH-CENTURY EMPIRES

THE BIRTH OF THE LIBERAL EMPIRE • EUROPEAN EXPANSION IN THE MIDCENTURY •
THE NEW IMPERIALISM, 1870–1914 • IMPERIALISM AT ITS PEAK

Since the first invasions of the Spanish conquistadors in the early sixteenth century, Europeans had amassed a vast New World empire. A flourishing plantation economy, sustained by African slave labor, formed the economic base of this world, the hub of which was the prosperous sugar colonies of the West Indies. The New World colonies served the mercantilist goal to enrich the monarchical state through the creation of advantageous trade monopolies with its colonies and found moral justification in the religious mission of saving the immortal souls of "heathens."

In the early nineteenth century, a new liberal empire supplanted this older religious-mercantilist colonial regime. Abandoning the New World, European entrepreneurs, merchants, missionaries, and explorers staked claims in Asia and Africa. European governments frequently followed in their wake, carving out spheres of influence to protect their interests and activities. Operating increasingly within the context of a market economy, nineteenth-century Europeans perceived the non-Western world as untapped markets for European manufactures and capital investment and as sources of raw materials for Europe's burgeoning industries. Steeped in the culture of the Enlightenment and principles of liberal universalism, moreover, Europeans saw empire not just as a means of benefiting themselves, but as an opportunity to bring the fruits of European civilization to the non-Western world.

In the late nineteenth century, empire's foundations shifted once more. The "new imperialism" of this period was characterized by the aggressive expansionism of competing European nation-states. In the space of a few decades, Europeans conquered and colonized virtually all of Africa and vast regions of Asia. European attitudes toward colonial subjects changed as well, shaped by anticolonial insurgence and, after Darwin, the ascendancy of biological determinism in thinking about culture and race. These developments undermined the liberal aims of the early nineteenth century, raising new doubts about both the desirability and the feasibility of Europeanizing non-European peoples. The turn of the century was thus a moment of intense contradictions: the peak moment of Europe's global power, but also one in which Europeans began to rethink the scope and future of empire.

1800	1820	1840

Indian Rebellion **1857**

Taiping Rebellion in China **1850–1864**

The Great Trek of the Afrikaners in southern Africa **1835–1845**

Britain abolishes slavery **1834** ●

● **1807** Britain abolishes the slave trade

1804–1825 Latin American liberation from colonial rule

● **1791** Haitian Revolution

THE BIRTH OF THE LIBERAL EMPIRE

In the nineteenth century, Europeans lost their Atlantic empires and built new ones in Asia and Africa. Although the first two-thirds of the century saw little outright colonization, Europeans steadily expanded their influence overseas. As European merchants, missionaries, explorers, and settlers penetrated different parts of the world, European governments provided them with support and, in so doing, became increasingly involved in the affairs of foreign polities. The expansionism of this period had its economic foundation in the growth of a capitalist market economy and its philosophical roots in the Enlightenment culture of liberal universalism. Europeans thus saw the acquisition of overseas spheres of influence as a way to secure new sources of raw materials and new markets for their industrial manufacturers and, equally important, as an opportunity to "civilize" the non-Western world by making it over in the European image.

The Decline of the Mercantile Colonial World

The mercantile colonial world sustained an unprecedented series of external and internal challenges during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Outside of Europe, the threat to empire came primarily in the form of independence movements and slave revolts. Simultaneously, within Europe, the gradual rise of a market economy and the cultural revolution sparked by the Enlightenment undermined the foundations of the old empire.
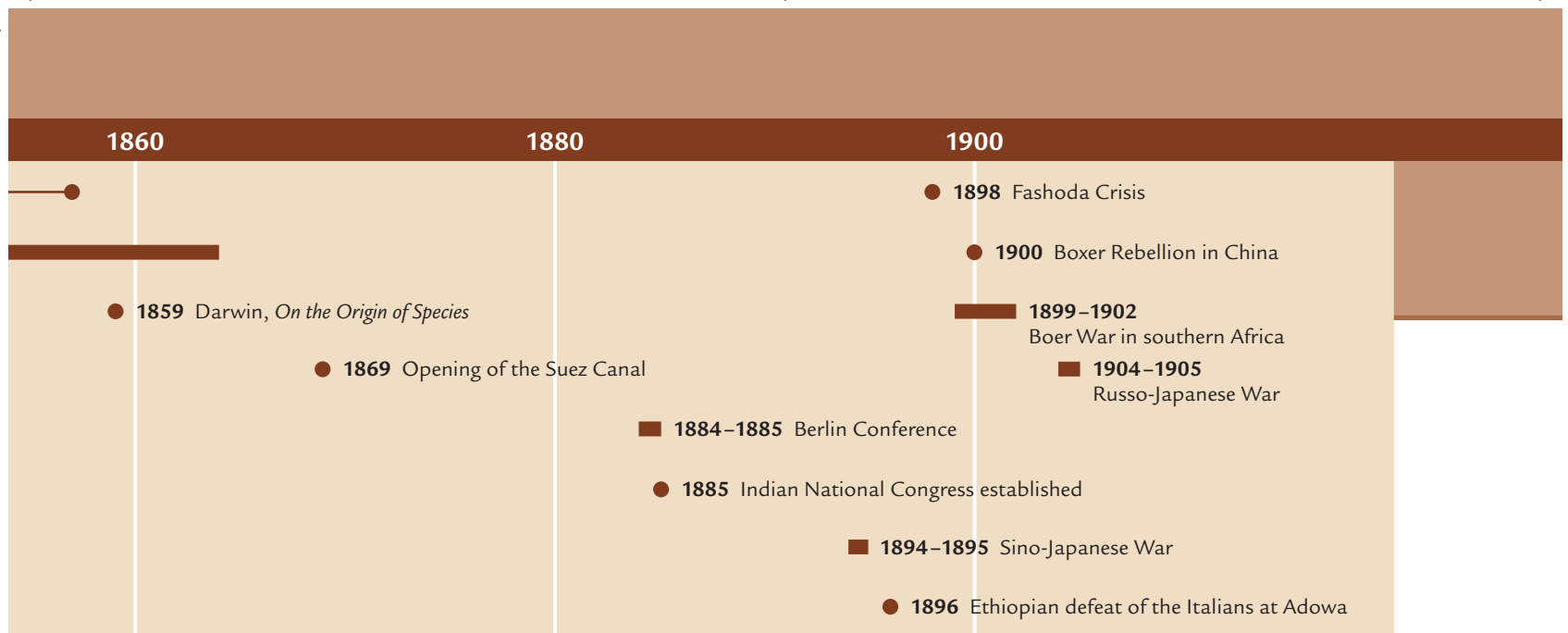
External Challenges Independence movements, starting with the American Revolution of 1776, drove European colonial powers from much of the New World at the turn of the nineteenth century. From 1804 to 1824, France lost control of Haiti (then known as Saint-Domingue); Portugal of Brazil; and Spain the rest of Latin America except for Cuba and Puerto Rico (see chapter 21). Led by landed Creole elites (American-born people of European descent), Latin American independence movements were influenced by Enlightenment thought and the examples of the French and American Revolutions.

Slave agitation constituted a central part of the assault on the mercantile colonial world. From the late eighteenth through the early nineteenth centuries, runaway slaves called *Maroons,* living in outlaw societies behind the lines of colonial settlement in South America, the Caribbean, and Spanish Florida, waged sporadic guerilla attacks against local plantations, a phenomenon known as the Maroon Wars. Simultaneously, a series of increasingly well-planned and militant slave revolts from Dutch Surinam to British Jamaica erupted in the second half of the eighteenth century, culminating in the Haitian Revolution in the French colony of Sainte-Domingue in 1791 (see "The Fight for Liberty and Equality in Saint-Domingue," p. 598).

The Antislavery Movement in Europe A rapidly expanding European movement to end slavery further threatened the Atlantic colonial system during the late eighteenth century. Although abolitionists organized in the Netherlands and France as well, the British campaign was by far the strongest and most effective.

Religious antislavery sentiment served as the catalyst to abolitionism. In spite of the fact that most world religions had historically sanctioned slavery, by the eighteenth century newer forms of Protestantism—Quakerism among them—condemned slavery as a sin antithetical to religious tenets of brotherly love and

1860	1880	1900

● **1898** Fashoda Crisis

● **1900** Boxer Rebellion in China

● **1859** Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*

■ **1899–1902**
Boer War in southern Africa

■ **1904–1905**
Russo-Japanese War

● **1869** Opening of the Suez Canal

■ **1884–1885** Berlin Conference

● **1885** Indian National Congress established

■ **1894–1895** Sino-Japanese War

● **1896** Ethiopian defeat of the Italians at Adowa

spiritual equality. These religious dissenters sparked the movement and established its emotive tone and ethic of benevolence, but antislavery soon spread from there to the religious mainstream, including well-connected Evangelicals, such as the parliamentary member William Wilberforce.

The Influence of the Enlightenment   Secular reformers joined forces with religious abolitionists. Although philosophers had debated the morality of slavery well before sustained Christian opposition to slavery burgeoned, most had found ways to justify slavery as a rational and efficient economic and social system. Such justifications became more difficult to make in the humanist intellectual climate of the Enlightenment. Thus, while the seventeenth-century political theorist John Locke himself condoned slavery, his ideas—in particular, his critique of arbitrary power, appeal to rule by reason, and championing of natural and universal human rights—shaped arguments mounted against slavery by Enlightenment humanists such as Baron Montesquieu and Denis Diderot a century later.

Most fundamentally, Enlightenment universalism, or belief in the basic sameness of all humans, undermined the acceptance of slavery and allowed eighteenth-century thinkers to link oppressed Africans to the disenfranchised poor of Europe. Values and principles rooted in this universalist framework, including belief in the individual's natural and inalienable right to freedom, ownership of one's self and labor, and equality before the law, also clashed deeply with the concept of human bondage. Finally, the Enlightenment's optimism and emphasis on the inner goodness and malleability of human beings made it difficult to defend slavery as a necessary evil for less "civilized" peoples. This view was perhaps best encapsulated in Rousseau's cult of the noble savage, which contrasted the natural

Illustration from a nineteenth-century British children's book of a slave being flogged. Part of the abolitionist campaign against British slavery, the image was intended to stir compassion for the slaves' suffering in young readers. The British Library, London

virtues of the so-called primitive with the moral flaws of civilized Europeans and further fostered popular sympathy for enslaved Africans. Taken together, these ideas persuaded Enlightenment thinkers across Europe to soundly reject slavery as an unreasonable, unnatural, and immoral system.

Enlightened philosophical and religious arguments also influenced a romantically oriented popular culture of feeling in the late eighteenth century. This helped make antislavery a pervasive, even fashionable, position among the European elite, especially among well-to-do women, who came to play a pivotal role in the British movement. Religious emphasis on the goodness of humans and the importance of compassion fit with a

secular, sentimental worldview that cast the slave as innocent victim and the civilized European as heroic savior. Similarly, Enlightenment universalism and recognition of the decadence of European civilization fed educated European outrage against slavery as a barbaric system that not only violated the rights of slaves, but also impeded Europe's own moral progress. Popular primitivism in the wake of Rousseau also elevated the status of the African slave in the public eye, while acclaimed Romantic poets such as William Wordsworth, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Robert Burns fashioned their own poetic attacks on tyranny and human bondage, making antislavery ever more modish. All over Western Europe, and especially in Britain, elite women and men of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century inspired by these trends joined abolitionist circles, signed antislavery petitions, and circulated tracts and images that exposed the cruelties of human bondage.

The Free-Trade Lobby　　By themselves these intellectual and cultural developments probably would not have had the force to abolish slavery. However, antislavery sentiment was strongly reinforced by merchants and industrialists seeking to replace the mercantile colonial system—and its system of protective tariffs intended to privilege trade between colony and mother country—with free trade. By the early nineteenth century, European manufacturers objected increasingly to the protective tariffs levied on foreign imports in the mercantile marketplace. These tariffs effectively prevented domestic manufacturers and consumers from buying cheaper foreign goods, compelling them instead to purchase goods exclusively from domestic producers, at home or in the colonies. British sugar refiners, for example, felt exploited by a system that forced them to buy high-priced raw sugar from Jamaica, while shielding Jamaican sugar producers from competition from French sugar producers in Sainte-Domingue and Spanish sugar producers in Cuba.

Capitalists in favor of free trade based their arguments on both theory and real-world experience. For theoretical support, they drew on critiques of **mercantilism** and the slave economy elaborated by Enlightenment classical economists such as Adam Smith and David Ricardo. Smith and Ricardo contended that the mercantile colonial economy was an inefficient, irrational system that flouted the natural law of rational utility by preventing most people from pursuing their economic self-interest. In contrast, they argued, market competition was both natural and rational because it afforded economic liberty to individuals and benefited the majority by generating lower prices all around. Smith also censured the built-in inefficiency and inflexibility of the slave economy, pointing out that slaves, unlike wage laborers, lacked the incentive to work hard and could not be laid off in the event of an economic slump.

For those unconvinced by arguments based on utility or natural law, the rapid deterioration of Haiti and Jamaica in the closing years of the eighteenth century offered compelling evidence that the mercantile slave economy was economically retrograde. By the turn of the nineteenth century, economic troubles in the West Indies, combined with the growing wealth and influence of industrial and merchant capitalists in Europe, made the claims of the free traders more convincing.

The End of European Slavery　　In the early years of the nineteenth century, the convergence of religious and humanitarian sentiment and economic support for free market competition led to the abolition of the European slave trade. Denmark outlawed the Atlantic slave trade first in 1803, followed by Britain and the United States in 1807. Although Spain, Portugal, France, and the Netherlands agreed to abolish the slave trade in 1815, they did little to eliminate it. Britain, by contrast, embarked on a zealous antislaving mission, searching ships in the Atlantic suspected of carrying slave cargo and rescuing slaves along the West African coast. They provided the latter with passage to Liberia, an African settlement created for and partly by freed American slaves in 1821. By 1850 the European slave trade had essentially ended.

Britain abolished slavery itself in 1834, emancipating the remaining 780,000 British-owned slaves in the West Indies. The British government paid £20 million to slave owners to compensate them for their loss of property. While France and Denmark followed suit in 1848, slavery continued until 1863 in the Dutch New World colonies, 1865 in the United States, 1886 in Spanish Cuba, and 1888 in Brazil. These dates often mattered more to Europeans than to freed slaves, however, who in some cases continued to be treated as slaves for several decades after emancipation.

New Sources of Colonial Legitimacy

Just as the economic, religious, and intellectual forces of the Enlightenment undermined the mercantile colonial world, they also built the new liberal empire that replaced it.

The Growth of the Market Economy　　The continued growth of industrial capitalism and the market economy brought a new economic rationale to empire. Free-trade advocates in the business world became richer and more influential during the early nineteenth century. By the 1830s, their belief in the individual pursuit of profit in a free, self-regulating market as efficient, natural, and moral was considered common sense. Yet, while free market competition was the mantra of early-

to-mid-nineteenth-century capitalists, economic practice sometimes contradicted imperial rhetoric. From 1830 to 1870—the peak era of economic liberalism—European nation-states competed with one another for spheres of economic influence abroad. Europeans were quick to abandon free trade, in other words, when they perceived their own economic interests to be threatened by indigenous and other European competitors.

Enlightenment Universalism   The liberal empire's philosophical underpinnings also differed fundamentally from those of early modern empire. Liberal empire had roots in Enlightenment theories of human biological and cultural sameness and belief in human improvement through the application of reason to social reform. While pre-Enlightenment Europeans had emphasized the irreconcilable, permanent gap between themselves and others, eighteenth-century philosophers from Montesquieu to Voltaire claimed the similarities between human societies to be far more significant than the differences. Likewise, although Enlightenment natural scientists like the Swede Carolus Linnaeus or the Frenchman Georges-Louis Leclerc de Buffon sought to classify the varieties of human physical types, they assumed that the "races" of man belonged to a single species. Enlightened Europeans posited that, while different societies had attained different levels of civilization, all of them occupied positions along a common developmental path. This belief meant not only that change was possible, but that the process of development could be guided and accelerated through reasoned social intervention.

Cultural Relativism   Europeans at the turn of the nineteenth century were also less firmly convinced of their own superiority and more critical about the colonial enterprise than their forebears. The universalist framework of the eighteenth century allowed for a new cultural relativism that recognized the value and achievements of other societies. Voltaire's respect for ancient Chinese and Islamic civilizations and the English historian Edward Gibbon's admiration for Islam exemplify this trend, as does the rhetoric of Christian brotherhood preached by evangelical missionaries. Similarly, cultural relativism permitted Rousseau and his followers to exalt New World societies as models of virtue and freedom for a decadent Europe. In the main, however, European cultural relativists still insisted on their own supremacy, even while acknowledging the achievements of other cultures.

These Enlightenment ideas had radical implications for the colonial project. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, colonizers had concerned themselves primarily with the "heathen" nature of "savage" societies and the future of their immortal souls. Assim-

ilation to a European way of life had occurred largely as an unintended consequence of missionary efforts to impart Christian faith to New World peoples. By the turn of the nineteenth century, in contrast, universalism had humanized the colonial subject, and assimilation, rather than exclusion or outright exploitation, emerged as the dominant model for confronting the difference of the non-European. The majority of Europeans, both secular and religious, saw the assimilation of other peoples to European political, economic, and cultural models as a moral imperative and colonial domination as the ideal means to achieve this end. At the same time, a powerful new sense of instrumentality—of the ability of humans to shape the world around them—lent confidence to their civilizing endeavors.

The Case of Captain Cook   The new ideological underpinnings of the emergent liberal empire were exemplified by Captain James Cook's expeditions to the South Pacific. The prototypical colonialist of the Enlightenment, Cook's explicit goals were not merely commercial but also scientific: his voyage was part of a series of eighteenth-century expeditions to explore this region, the last maritime frontier for Europeans, and, in particular, to locate the missing continent, known as *Terra Australis.* Toward this end, a team of more than twenty ethnographers, geographers, botanists, and other scientific experts, accompanied Cook on his South Seas voyages.

Cook's voyages to the South Pacific also bore traces of Europeans' new moral scruples in their interactions with non-Europeans. Unlike earlier generations of colonizers, Cook and his contemporaries were self-conscious about the delicate nature of their enterprise and sought to justify their intrusion with the lofty goals of advancing science and spreading civilization. As universalists, they accorded rights to non-Europeans; as cultural relativists, they ascribed value to cultural difference. In practical terms, this meant that King George III authorized Cook to establish British authority in Hawaii in 1779, for example, but cautioned him to do so only with the express consent of the natives; similarly, the Royal Scientific Society, one of the chief backers of the voyage, instructed Cook to treat the local customs and culture with the utmost respect. In ways such as these, late-eighteenth-century colonizers sought not only to legitimize their role as civilizers in the eyes of the colonized but to reinforce their own identities as the civilized by divorcing themselves from the brutality of their imperial precursors.

The Civilizing Mission in India   In the early nineteenth century, India was the laboratory in which Britain conducted its most ambitious civilizing experiments. While evangelical missionaries such as Charles Grant

Johann Zoffany
***THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN JAMES COOK*, 1779**
Zoffany's painting depicts the prototypical explorer-scientist of the Enlightenment, Captain James Cook (lying on the ground in the center of the image), and his men being attacked by angry, armed Hawaiians in Kealakekua Bay in 1779. Cook was killed in the fracas. His death helped call into question the popular myth of the noble savage, marking a turning point in European views of "primitive" people.
National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

Thomas Rowlands
***THE BURNING SYSTEM*, 1815**
This engraving shows an Indian woman committing sati, or burning herself on the funeral pyre of her dead husband. On one side are native musicians. On the other, Englishmen debate the pros and cons of abolishing sati, the practice of which was considered a sign of India's backwardness.
The British Library, London

and William Wilberforce sought to bring religious enlightenment and to stamp out Indian "superstition," secular liberal reformers like Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, his son, John Stuart Mill, and Thomas Macaulay determined to rid India of "Oriental despotism" by eradicating "barbaric" Indian laws and customs and introducing a British-style educational system (see "Macaulay's Minute on Indian Education," p. 779). Macaulay claimed that the "entire native literature of India and Arabia" was not worth "a single shelf of a good European library," asserting that a British model of education was needed to produce "a class of persons Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and intellect." The potent triad of law, education, and free trade, British reformers believed, would bring the hopelessly backward Indians into the modern world.

Liberal reformers sought to apply liberal ideas to eliminate the barriers of custom and tradition and managed to bring about several important policy changes in India. One of the controversial reforms was to prohibit *sati*, the practice of the widow burning herself to death on the funeral pyre of her dead husband.

MACAULAY'S MINUTE ON INDIAN EDUCATION

Thomas Macaulay (1800–1859) was the Law Member of the Governor General's Council and an important exam-ple of the British liberal voice in India. He believed that "backward" societies like India's could be transformed through the introduction of law, free trade, and education. In the early part of the nineteenth century, Orientalist scholars and administrators felt that India should be ruled through its own laws and through indigenous institu-tions and languages. British liberals like Macaulay thought otherwise. In 1835 a major debate took place as to what kind of education the British should promote and finance. Macaulay argued that Indians should be taught Western subjects and the English language instead of Arabic and Sanskrit. This was seen as imperative to dissemi-nate moral values as well as maintain and strengthen British rule in India. On Macaulay's advice, English was made the medium of education in secondary schools established in major cities across India.

"How, then, stands the case? We have to educate a people who cannot at present be educated by means of their mother-tongue. We must teach them some foreign lan-guage. The claims of our own language it is hardly neces-sary to recapitulate. It stands pre-eminent even among the languages of the west. It abounds with works of imagina-tion not inferior to the noblest which Greece has be-queathed to us; with models of every species of eloquence; with historical compositions, which, considered merely as narratives, have seldom been surpassed, and which, con-sidered as vehicles of ethical and political instruction, have never been equalled; with just and lively representa-tions of human life and human nature; with the most pro-found speculations on metaphysics, morals, government, jurisprudence, and trade; with full and correct information respecting every experimental science which tends to pre-serve the health, to increase the comfort, or to expand the intellect of man. Whoever knows that language has ready access to all the vast intellectual wealth, which all the wisest nations of the earth have created and hoarded in the course of ninety generations. It may safely be said, that the literature now extant in that language is of far greater value than all the literature which three hundred years ago was extant in all the languages of the world together. Nor is this all. In India, English is the language spoken by the ruling class. It is spoken by the higher class of natives at the seats of Government. It is likely to become the lan-guage of commerce throughout the seas of the East. It is the language of two great European communities which are rising, the one in the south of Africa, the other in Aus-tralasia; communities which are every year becoming more important, and more closely connected with our In-dian empire. Whether we look at the intrinsic value of our

literature, or at the particular situation of this country, we shall see the strongest reason to think that, of all foreign tongues, the English tongue is, that which would be the most useful to our native subjects. . . .

"To sum up what I have said, I think it clear that we are not fettered by the Act of Parliament of 1813; that we are not fettered by any pledge expressed or implied; that we are free to employ our funds as we choose; that we ought to employ them in teaching what is best worth knowing; that English is better worth knowing than Sanscrit or Ara-bic; that the natives are desirous to be taught English, and are not desirous to be taught Sanscrit or Arabic; that nei-ther as the languages of law, nor as the languages of reli-gion, have the Sanscrit and Arabic any peculiar claim to our engagement; that it is possible to make natives of this country thoroughly good English scholars, and that to this end our efforts ought to be directed.

"In one point I fully agree with the gentlemen to whose general views I am opposed. I feel with them, that it is im-possible for us, with our limited means, to attempt to edu-cate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population."

G. M. Young (ed.), *Speeches by Lord Macauley with His Minute on Indian Education,* Oxford University Press, 1935.

For the British, *sati* epitomized both the moral weak-ness of Indian men, who degraded rather than protected their women, and the general backwardness of Indian civilization as a whole. Although *sati* became a key public symbol of the liberal reform agenda, it was not, in fact, a widespread practice, but was actually limited only to certain groups of upper-caste Hindus.

British civilizing efforts came to an abrupt halt, however, with the Indian Rebellion of 1857 (see "The Indian Rebellion of 1857," pp. 800–802). Hereafter, British officials ceded issues of Indian reform to Indian social reformers, since they saw their interference in Indian religion and ritual as one of the key causes of the discontent that had sparked the rebellion.

EUROPEAN EXPANSION IN THE MIDCENTURY

During the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century, European commercial involvements in Africa and Asia intensified, and Europeans acted to protect their economic interests in new, more assertive ways. This intensification was driven primarily by industrialization in Britain and, with that, the rise of British economic, military, and technological might. Although other Western European nations behaved similarly, it was the British who took the initiative in aggressively developing and safeguarding overseas commercial contacts during this period.

India and the Rise of British Sovereignty

The economic penetration of Asia in the nineteenth century exploited commercial ties between Europe and the East cultivated over the course of several centuries. From the seventeenth century on, joint stock companies—the Dutch, the French, and the English East India companies—were the chief players in a European-Asian trade based on the exchange of Asian spices, silks, and other luxury goods for European specie. By the early eighteenth century, Europeans, including the representatives of the East India Companies, clustered in what were known as "factories"—trading posts—along the coasts from India to Java, the Philippines, and China, in ports such as Bombay, Batavia, and Canton. Although traders and trading companies of several nationalities could be found in any of these locations, different nations dominated the Asian trade in periods. The Portuguese were leaders in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century trade with Asia, superseded by the Dutch in the late seventeenth century and by the French and British in the early eighteenth century.

The British East India Company Until the middle of the eighteenth century, nothing distinguished the British East India Company from the other companies in Asia. This state of affairs changed dramatically in 1757, when the decisive victory over the nawab of Bengal in the Battle of Plassey catapulted the British to ascendancy in Asia and, indeed, the world (see Chapter 18). Plassey's significance was both economic and symbolic: it dealt a crushing blow to the already weak Mughal Empire, fortified the British East India Company as a political power within the subcontinent, and gave Britain access to enormous Indian wealth. The capture of Bengal thus gave the British East India Company a firm base for territorial expansion in India over the course of the next century.

The conquest brought economic disaster to Bengal, until then a flourishing center of Indian commerce and industry (and the source of 75 percent of the British East India Company's trade). Before 1757, the British had paid for Bengali textiles, metal goods, and spices in silver bullion from the New World. With the conquest secured, the British used Bengali land revenues to pay for Bengali goods and assumed direct control of Bengal's external trade. As the British expanded out of Bengal, this same pattern repeated itself all over India. The British conquest thus transformed the Indian economy into a closed system, forcing India through taxation to effectively give away its exports to Britain and severing its independent trade connections with the outside world.

British rule in India also irrevocably altered the structure and orientation of the Indian economy. As it industrialized at the turn of nineteenth century, Britain stopped importing Indian calicoes and other textiles, transforming India into a supplier of raw materials (especially cotton and indigo) for British textile mills as well as a major market for British manufactures. As a consequence, Indian manufacturing went into decline, with British imports accounting for more than half of India's textile consumption by the 1840s. In addition, the commercialization of Indian agriculture led to the abandonment of subsistence farming, leaving the Indian peasantry more vulnerable than ever to famine.

Further British Expansion in Asia The British East India Company's conquest of India also promoted British expansionism elsewhere in central Asia, as the company sought to extend its power and influence in neighboring territories to protect its Indian empire. Their chief adversary was Russia, which harbored imperial ambitions in the region. In the 1840s Britain annexed Punjab and Sind, to the west of India, as buffer zones against the Russians. When the British tried to do the same to Afghanistan, they met with stubborn resistance in the Afghan Wars of 1839–1842 and 1878–1880. Although the British never formally colonized Afghanistan, it became, for all practical purposes, a client state by the 1880s. Simultaneously, the fiercely independent kingdom of Burma (Myanmar) harassed the British on the northeastern frontier of the Indian Empire. After a series of Anglo-Burmese wars fought in 1826, 1852, and 1886, the British annexed Burma.

The "Sick Men": The Ottoman Empire and China

While the British tightened their territorial stranglehold over Mughal India, Europeans took a fundamentally different approach to the other two major non-Western empires, that of the Ottomans and Qing China. Labeled respectively the "Sick Man of Europe" and the "Sick Man of the East," the Ottoman Empire and Qing China were perceived as ailing polities. But in

contrast to the military conquest and direct rule of Mughal India, Europeans exploited the Chinese and Ottoman empires through financial subjugation and political maneuvering. This strategy avoided the costs of direct rule, which promised to be especially high since the Qing and the Ottomans were relatively successful at holding their empires together. It also allowed Europeans to use the empires as buffers against Russian and Japanese expansionism.

The Ottoman Empire   The Ottoman Empire was ripe for this kind of infiltration by the nineteenth century. The empire was still vast, stretching from Algeria in the west to the borders of Persia and Arabia in the east and from the Balkans in the north to Egypt and Sudan in the south, but its power had declined sharply from its peak point in the sixteenth century. While the predominantly Muslim identity of Ottoman subjects gave the empire some political and cultural cohesion, the ambitions of provincial governors were challenging the authority of the Sultan, Mahmud II.

Hoping to rejuvenate the empire, the sultan himself attempted to initiate a program of administrative, legal, and technological Westernization known as the *Tanzimat* (reorganization) reforms in the 1830s. Although he faced strong resistance to his efforts on the part of the Muslim military and clerics who feared the pollution of Islamic culture by the West, the European powers, especially the British, supported his efforts for their own diplomatic and political reasons. This support turned into Ottoman dependency on Britain in 1838, when the sultan asked the British to intervene militarily to restore Ottoman control in Syria, which had been seized by the breakaway Ottoman province of Egypt in 1831. In return for military assistance, the British and French demanded the full implementation of Tanzimat, along with trade privileges and extraterritorial judicial rights for themselves.

By the early 1840s, the sultan's efforts to check the burgeoning power of the Europeans faltered and the Ottoman Empire became a de facto economic colony of the British, forced to export raw materials (cotton, cereals, opium) to Britain and to import British manufactures (textiles, machinery) in large quantities. These new arrangements dealt a near-fatal blow to local Ottoman handicraft industries, especially textile production. Economic dependence turned into subjugation during the Crimean War (1852–1854) (see chapter 24), when the Ottoman government borrowed money on extremely unfavorable terms from the French and the British to subsidize its military mobilization. The formation of the Ottoman Public Debt Commission in 1881 formalized British and French control of the bankrupt Ottoman economy, including taxation, tariffs, and the provincial tribute system.

European financial involvement was not without social and cultural repercussions. The once culturally cohesive Ottoman Empire fragmented across ethnic and religious lines as the British and the French sought to align themselves with non-Muslim Ottoman minorities. Local Christian and Jewish intermediaries who facilitated the economic transactions of British and French merchants were permitted to buy European passports, which qualified them for the same judicial immunity granted to Europeans. Economic considerations only partially motivated the Europeans, who also saw themselves as the civilizers of a degenerate "Oriental" empire, shoring up Christianity and rooting out all traces of "despotism." Overall, internal discord within the empire grew as privileged groups profited from a European presence that brought extensive suffering to peasants and artisans.

China   The narrative of imperial domination was roughly similar in China. At the turn of the nineteenth century, the ruling Qing Dynasty, members of the foreign Manchu minority who had ruled China since the mid-seventeenth century, enjoyed considerable economic prosperity and sought to extend the boundaries of the empire in Asia. However, they remained resolutely isolated from and indifferent to Europe. Not only did the Chinese remain unaware of the culture of Enlightenment influencing elites in Europe, North America, and South America, but they also exhibited no interest in European manufactures. By contrast, Europeans long had been eager consumers of Chinese tea, silk, porcelain, and paper, among other goods.

This imbalance was dramatically reversed in the late eighteenth century, when opium smoking became an entrenched practice at all levels of Chinese society. Despite an official ban on opium imports, the Chinese demand for opium skyrocketed as the British East India Company, followed by other European merchants, flooded the Chinese market with cheap Indian-produced opium, which they used to pay for Chinese goods, especially tea. By the turn of the nineteenth century, this situation had wreaked economic and social havoc. Not only did the Chinese experience huge silver shortages as Europeans stopped paying for Chinese imports with metal specie, but opium addiction was debilitating large segments of Chinese society. In 1840, when the emperor tried to gain control of the situation by blockading the port of Canton and seizing the opium supplies of foreign merchants, the British sent a naval force to defy him. The Opium War of 1840–1842 ended in Chinese defeat. The Treaty of Nanjing ceded Hong Kong to Britain, gave the British trading rights in five ports, and forced the Chinese to pay an indemnity for the war. A second Opium War (1856–1858), fought over the same issues, also ended in Chinese defeat and

In this American newspaper cartoon of 1864, England, personified by John Bull, forces China to accept opium at gunpoint. The Opium Wars, which erupted when the Chinese attempted to restrict the opium trade in the mid-century, ended in Chinese defeat and in treaties conferring extraordinary economic and legal privileges on the European victors. How did European encroachment in China differ from the European penetration of Africa?
The Granger Collection, NY

the ceding of extraterritorial rights, trading privileges, and missionary protection to Britain, France, the United States, and Russia. When the Qing emperor refused to ratify the peace treaties, British and French forces occupied Peking in 1860 and burned the emperor's imperial gardens at the Summer Palace, while Russia obtained Vladivostock.

Fomented by the economic hardships and political humiliation brought by the Opium War, the bloody Taiping Rebellion of 1850–1864 further destabilized Chinese politics and society. A millenarian peasant movement to overthrow the European-dominated Qing regime and establish a harmonious, egalitarian society, the rebellion ravaged the Chinese countryside, with a staggering death toll of twenty million. In the mid-1850s, the European powers intervened militarily in the conflict, acting to safeguard their trading privileges. By 1864, the Western-trained "Ever-Victorious Army," under the leadership of General Charles "Chinese" Gordon, definitively quashed the rebellion, although sporadic resistance continued in parts of the country until 1868. The European role in rescuing the floundering Qing Dynasty greatly strengthened European commercial interests in China.

Although the British constructed an economically exploitative relationship with China during the nineteenth century, they never formally colonized it (except for Hong Kong). Moreover, since European traders remained clustered in port cites, foreigners did not penetrate Chinese society to the extent that they did elsewhere. Even so, British-Chinese relations had deeply colonial overtones. From the British point of view, China's economic subjugation was part of a larger plan to make empire self-financing. India was at the center of this system, both as a model of economic exploitation and as a source of cheaply obtained goods that the British used to trade with others. By the turn of the nineteenth century, the British had incorporated the Chinese into this arrangement; since the British bought opium at a mere pittance from Indian producers, they effectively forced India to finance Britain's trade with China. Like India, China lost access to the silver bullion that the British formerly had used to buy its goods, but China also squandered its metal reserves to sustain its debilitating opium habit. In both cases, overtaxed peasants bore the brunt of lost government revenues, fomenting political unrest in the countryside.

Expansion in Southeast Asia and the Pacific Rim

European engagement in India and China led to further expansion in Southeast Asia. In Australia and New Zealand, Europeans established settler colonies in this period, while in Japan, their attempts to exert influence met with failure for the first time.

Southeast Asia   To safeguard the critical trade route between India and China, the British East India Company sought to establish fortified settlements in Southeast Asia from the 1780s on. They seized the opportunity to consolidate their position when the Dutch—the most important European power in the area—asked the British to oversee their Southeast Asian holdings during the French revolutionary occupation of the Netherlands starting in 1795. Although the Dutch resumed control of these holdings in 1808, the episode provided the British with additional territory and whetted their appetite for greater involvement in the region. By the 1820s, they had emerged as the preeminent European commercial presence in Southeast Asia, in possession of the valuable ports of Penang, Malacca, and Singapore (known collectively as the Straits Settlements).

This flourishing British-dominated trade economy, however, soon came to an abrupt halt. With the passage of the Charter Act of 1833, the British East India Company lost its monopoly of the China trade and the company's interest in the India-China trade route waned sharply. While the British no longer valued Southeast Asia as a trade depot, they did develop an interest in the region as a source of raw materials, investing in tin

mining and rubber production. In this way, Southeast Asia entered into the classic colonial economic arrangement, producing raw materials for industrial production in Europe.

Meanwhile, kingdoms and chiefdoms outside of the British sphere of interest were also being gradually drawn into the European orbit. Even Siam (Thailand), often touted as the exception to the rule, ultimately lost its political and cultural sovereignty, if not its formal political independence, to the British. The process began in the 1820s and 1830s, when the Siamese monarch abandoned a century-long isolationist policy and resumed relations with Europe, negotiating trade treaties and relinquishing some of Siam's border territories in the interests of maintaining the kingdom's political independence. While he managed to fend off direct conquest, he did so in part by launching an ambitious program of Westernization, including the implementation of a European-style educational system and the appointment of foreign advisors to the government While the fiction of independence was maintained, Siamese policy decisions were essentially dictated by foreign advisors or made within the context of the competing European interests in the region. Following a pattern emerging in many parts of the world, the Siamese king's decision to modernize along Western lines constituted a form of implicit colonization.

The Pacific Rim   There were a few notable exceptions to the European pattern of implicit colonization in the Pacific Rim. The conquest of Australia and New Zealand and establishment of settler colonies there deviated sharply from the ideology of liberal paternalism and practices of economic imperialism that characterized European ventures abroad during the early nineteenth century. The narrative of settlement in Australasia instead mirrored the conquest of the Americas in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in its strident frontier mentality, thirst for land, and unapologetic decimation of indigenous populations.

Although the British government claimed Australia as a penal colony—and a humane alternative to capital punishment—in 1788, the government nonetheless opposed the emigration of free labor there as a drain on British manpower. Land-hungry settlers came anyway, in pursuit of economic opportunity. British settlement in Australia increased in the 1840s as the first generations of free settlers offered cash incentives to try to induce more and more affluent Britons to emigrate. Emigration soared after the Australian Gold Rush of 1851. New Zealand followed a similar path. British settlers began to arrive in 1839, enticed by the foundation of the New Zealand Trading Company, even though the British government actively discouraged emigration.

As increasing numbers of settlers poured in—over a million British citizens emigrated in the 1850s alone,

most of them to Australia—the British government grew more psychologically invested in its settler colonies and came to perceive emigration as a demographic and economic necessity. The preponderance of British-descended settlers in these colonies, known as "the White Dominions," naturally afforded them a uniquely privileged position in the colonial hierarchy. Over time British settlers began to self-identify as natives of the region and, as that happened, to press for self-government. They achieved that status incrementally. In the 1850s, Britain granted New Zealand and Australia limited autonomy. It conferred Dominion status—a classification that offered domestic autonomy to the settler colonies but retained British control over foreign policy and trade—first on Canada in 1867, then on Australia in 1901, New Zealand in 1907, and South Africa in 1910.

White settlement in Australasia devastated indigenous populations and destroyed existing economies, just as it had in North and South America. European diseases killed most of the local inhabitants. Of those who survived, most were forced off their land by expropriating settlers. They also lost major food sources as entire ecosystems were destroyed by settlers seeking to turn forest and prairie into farmland. The British government offered crucial military support for settlers and made the displacement of local peoples a violent affair. In New Zealand, for example, both the settlers and the British government signed the Waitangi Treaty in 1840 promising indigenous Maoris protection of their land rights, but the settlers quickly reneged on their promises. When the Maoris fought back and the settlers were drawn into armed conflict with them, the British government ultimately intervened to savagely crush Maori resistance during the 1860s.

Japan   Only Japan managed to escape European rule, implicit or explicit, in nineteenth-century Asia. Nonetheless, during the first two-thirds of the century, it appeared that Japan would follow in China's footsteps. Starting with Russian interference in the late eighteenth century, Europeans and Americans tried to end Japanese isolationism and foster trading contacts. Once the American naval commander Commodore Matthew Perry induced the Japanese Tokugawa government to sign a treaty opening some of its ports to Western trade in 1854, other major European nations soon followed suit. By midcentury, the European penetration of Japan was under way, although on a considerably smaller scale than in China.

But Japan was to radically shift course with the downfall of the Tokugawa regime and the advent of the revolutionary Meiji Restoration in 1868. Meiji leaders dismantled an essentially feudal system that had lasted for seven centuries by promoting rapid-fire industrialization of the economy and Westernizing key

At the turn of the nineteenth century, the Scottish explorer Mungo Park led two ill-fated expeditions to west Africa to explore the course of the Niger River. This drawing, the frontispiece of his book, *Travels in the Interior of Africa*, shows him, assisted by local guides, as he locates the Niger for the first time. Explorers' accounts such as Park's were enormously popular reading and helped stoke public interest in Africa.
To come
To come
To come
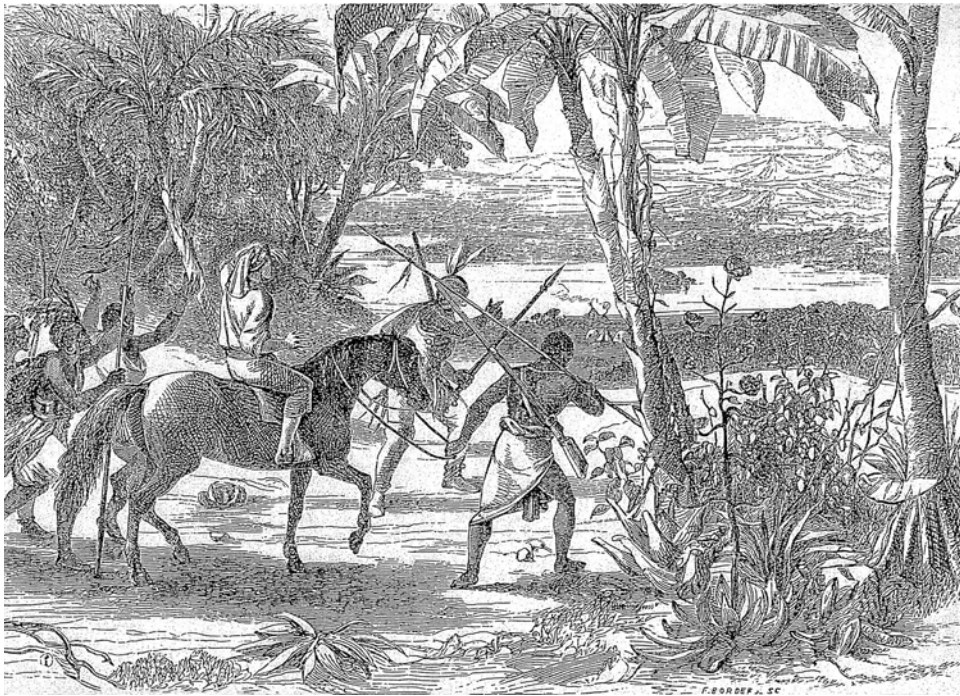
aspects of the government and educational system. Industrialization rapidly catapulted Japan to the status of a global economic competitor. It also made Japan strong enough to retain control of the Westernization process, thus preempting the kind of covert European colonialism experienced elsewhere in Asia. Instead, Japan was able not only to revise the unequal trade treaties it had signed with the West at midcentury, but to emerge as a world political player and an imperialist nation in its own right, forcing trade concessions from Korea and extending its influence there starting in 1873.

The European Awakening to Africa

Perhaps the greatest imperial shift of the nineteenth century was in the European stance toward Africa. Before the late eighteenth century, the vast majority of Europeans had paltry knowledge of Africa and, in marked contrast to the New World and the South Seas, scant interest in it. In maps, writings, and visual imagery, Europeans tended to imagine Africa as outside the bounds of civilization: a hostile natural terrain whose few human inhabitants were savage brutes bereft of civilization. The fact that Africans had constituted the primary labor source for the Atlantic slave economy for four centuries only reinforced this notion of Africa as beyond the human pale.

New Interest in Africa   In large measure, European ignorance and indifference stemmed from a lack of contact with Africa. Apart from Portuguese slave traders, who settled along the west African coast (Angola), French traders in the Senegambia region (Senegal), and Dutch and English settlers on the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa, Europeans had little experience of Africa.

This pattern of negligible contact changed at the turn of the nineteenth century. As a capitalist economy based on free enterprise took shape in Western Europe, Africa came into focus as a potential marketplace. For the first time, Europeans perceived Africa both as a source of raw materials to feed its industrial economy (peanut and palm oil from West Africa, for example, were used to lubricate industrial machinery) and as an outlet for its new manufactures. Thinking about Africa's economic potential in this way meant imagining it as a site of civilization in a way Europeans had never before done: an Africa that could be a European trading partner was an Africa that had states, cities, and markets of its own. The late-eighteenth-century formation of the African Association, dedicated to British commercial expansion in Africa, reflected this sudden surge of awareness of Africa's commercial potential. The best known of the Association's agents was the explorer Mungo Park, whose expeditions up the Niger River in West Central Africa in 1795 and 1805 brought him into contact with the sophisticated Fulani and Bambara states, confirming hopes that Africa possessed the commercial infrastructure to become a significant British trading partner.

But if Park's expeditions exemplified the new interest in Africa, they also demonstrated the obstacles to European penetration in the early nineteenth century. The devastation of both his expeditions by illness curbed the enthusiasm of would-be explorers. Disease posed a formidable barrier to the European pursuit of African commercial ties until the middle of the nineteenth century. Unlike the New World, where European strains of disease virtually obliterated indigenous peoples, in Africa it was the local inhabitants who had the advantage. Dysentery, yellow fever, typhoid, and, above all, malaria decimated European visitors so predictably that nineteenth-century Africa became widely known by the epithet "The White Man's Grave." Standard remedies for malaria were either ineffective or—as in the case of dosing with mercury—lethal. Not until the 1820s did European chemists discover that quinine, a substance from the bark of the South American cinchona tree, could treat malaria. By the 1850s, Europeans realized that the prophylactic use of quinine prevented the contraction of the disease. Yet, even though improvements in the treatment and prevention of malaria and other tropical diseases by midcentury made European infiltration of Africa possible, death rates from disease remained so high that, as late as the 1870s, more European soldiers involved in African military campaigns died from disease than from warfare.

Africa's topography, with its jungles, deserts, and complex river systems, also impeded European access to the continent. The early-nineteenth-century advent of the steamboat, which applied James Watt's steam engine to boat travel, greatly facilitated the exploration of continental interiors by river in Africa, as well as in Asia and Australia. Not only could steamboats navigate independent of wind conditions, but the power of the steam engine allowed them to travel against the current at high speeds. Once steamboats were in use, Europeans were able to gain access to virtually every region in Africa, with the notable exception of areas lacking navigable waterways such as the Horn of Africa (these areas, not incidentally, were among the last to be colonized). Even so, steamboat exploration in Africa remained difficult for some time, in part because steamboats had to be dismantled, carried in sections around rapids, and then reassembled.

Missionaries and Explorers   By the middle of the nineteenth century, many of the obstacles preventing European expansion into Africa thus had been removed. Missionaries, many of them abolitionist evangelicals seeking to end slavery in Africa, often ventured first into the African interior. They strove not merely to save souls, as their early modern predecessors had, but to Europeanize native subjects whom they now saw as more primitive brethren. Likewise, they saw the cultivation of commerce and the conversion to Christianity as mutually reinforcing goals, since both were part of the overall civilizing process that would ultimately elevate non-Europeans to the level of Europeans. Mission stations in the African interior quickly attracted other Europeans, in particular traders, who made use of missionary expertise and contacts with the local population for commercial ends. In seeking government backing and protection, moreover, missionaries also promoted European political involvement in Africa.

Following in the footsteps of missionaries, explorers raised public interest in Africa to a fever pitch by midcentury. Most explorers were unknown adventurers who publicized their exploits in book form and on lecture tours in the hope of raising money for their expeditions from the government, scientific authorities, and the general public. The most successful were often the most skilled speakers and rhetoricians, able to dramatize their experiences and aggrandize their contributions. Many of these became national icons. Among the best known was David Livingstone, a missionary-explorer who described his dual quest to open central Africa to commerce and religion in his book *Missionary Travels* (1857). A distinctly different model of the explorer as adventurer and entrepreneur was represented by Henry Stanley, an Anglo-American hired by the *New York Herald* to find Livingstone when the latter was thought to be missing in the Central Congo. Stanley became an overnight celebrity with the publication of his great scoop, *How I Found Livingstone,* in 1872.

While explorers' encounters brought Africa to life for European audiences, they also provided Europeans with extensive misinformation and helped to fashion an increasingly negative portrait of African cultures and societies. Henry Stanley's writings, for example, influenced Europeans in their association of darkness—defined variously as savagery, irrationality, and immorality—with Africa. Stanley's exploits captured the imagination of writers and intellectuals, including the American novelist Edgar Rice Burroughs (*Tarzan of the Apes,* [1912]) and the Polish-English novelist Joseph Conrad (*Heart of Darkness* [1902]).

Expansion into the Interior   European traders and settlers on the African coast also began to spread out of established enclaves into new areas in the interior during this period. In the southwest, the Portuguese extended their holdings in present-day Angola. In the northwest, the French moved inland from the coastal city of Saint Louis into modern-day Senegal. They also expanded from Algiers—conquered in a military invasion in 1830—into the Algerian interior. French troops spent the better part of the 1840s and 1850s trying to consolidate their holdings in Algeria, fighting a costly and difficult war with well-armed Algerian guerrillas under the leadership of Abdelkader. By 1869 France claimed Algeria as a colony.
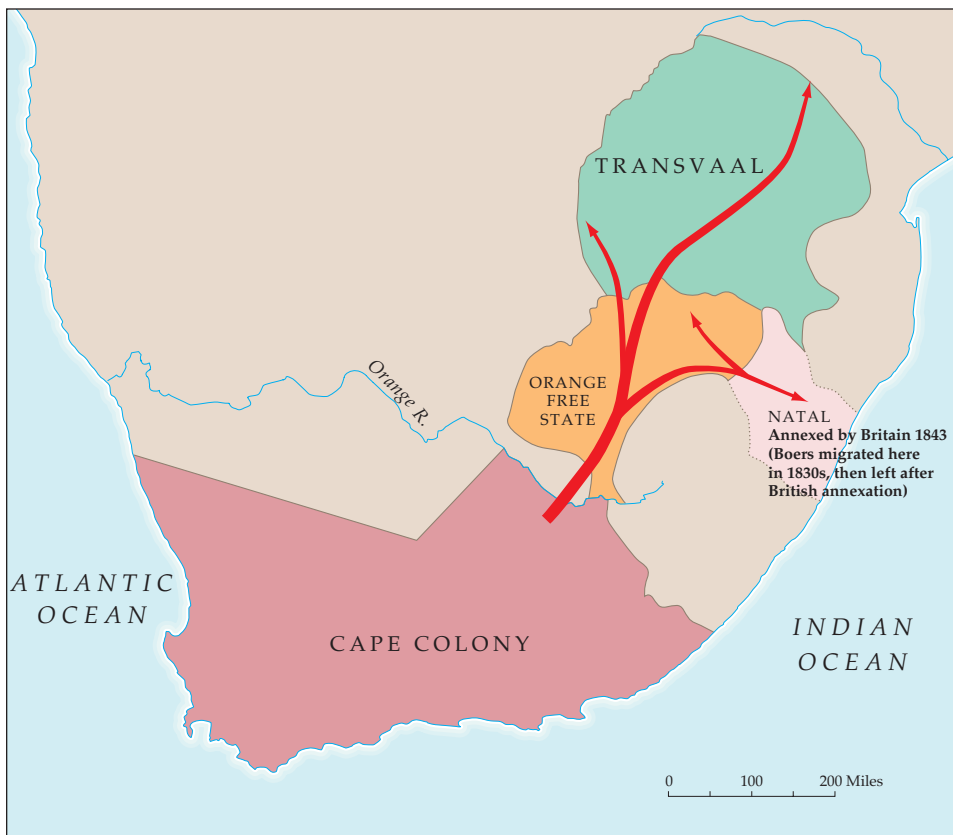
MAP 26.1
Friction between Afrikaner and British settlers in southern Africa sparked Afrikaner emigration from the Cape Colony during the 1830s and 1840s (the Great Trek) and led to the establishment of independent Afrikaner republics. British expansionist aspirations, intensified by the discovery of diamond and gold in Afrikaner territory in the late nineteenth century, threatened the long-term survival of the republics. They were absorbed into British South Africa after the Boer War of 1889–1902. How did conflict between Europeans and Africans in the region affect the intra-European conflict?
◆ For an online version, go to www.mhhe.com/chambers9 > chapter 26 > book maps

In southern Africa, fifteen thousand Afrikaners migrated north of the Orange River in the Great Trek of 1835–1845, fleeing British control and seeking land of their own. Despite ongoing battles over territory with Bantus, in particular the Zulus (a southern Bantu people), the Afrikaners flourished as cattle ranchers and, by the late 1830s, had established independent Afrikaner republics in the Natal, the Orange Free State, and the Transvaal. For the British, however, Afrikaner expansionism threatened their own sovereignty and plans for further expansion in southern Africa. To cut the Afrikaners off from strategic coastal access, they annexed the Natal province outright in 1843 and, although the British eventually recognized the sovereignty of the Orange Free State and the Transvaal in 1854, they meddled continually in Bantu-Afrikaner conflicts.

Clashes with African Powers   These European incursions did not meet with a passive, quiescent Africa. Parallel to the European infiltration of Africa, widespread internal war and conquest destabilized African politics and economic life in large parts of the continent during the early to mid-nineteenth century. In particular, Zulu political ambitions in southern Africa and the theocratic aims of Islamic jihad states in West Africa during this period created political and economic upheaval across broad swathes of Africa. In many cases, African polities on the move collided with expansionist Europeans, often ending in violent confrontation.

The sudden ascendancy of the Zulus in South Africa in the early nineteenth century was a case in point. In the 1820s, the military genius Shaka Zulu built a powerful and extensive Zulu empire in the Natal region, sparking major disturbances in Southern Africa. Although many inhabitants of the area capitulated outright to Shaka's dominion, his raiding armies also drove many other Bantu peoples, including the Ndebele, to seek refuge elsewhere. As huge numbers of Bantus fled the Zulus south into British territory and north into the Afrikaner republics, Bantus and Afrikaners warred

continually over land. The Zulus themselves also battled Afrikaners who migrated north into Zulu dominions in 1837–1838, as well as the British, most notably in the Anglo-Zulu War of 1878–1879. Although the latter marked the first defeat of a European power by an African force in the Battle of Isandhlwana, the British ultimately crushed the Zulus.

The expansion of Islam in Africa during this period also triggered great turmoil. In the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century, a fundamentalist Islamic revival emerged among the Fulani people in West Africa. The Fulani reviled indigenous religious beliefs and practices as well as European Christianity as threats to the purity of Islam. Overthrowing the local Hausa chieftains, the Fulani established an enduring decentralized state structure known as the Sokoto caliphate in 1809, which waged *jihad*—holy war—to impose Islam throughout the region. By midcentury, expansionist Fulani jihadists came into conflict with French colonizers moving east out of Senegal.

European Encroachment in Egypt   Europeans sought control of Egypt, an Ottoman province since the sixteenth century, because of its strategic location on the Red Sea en route to India. When Ottoman control wavered in the late eighteenth century, Napoleon seized the opportunity to invade Egypt in 1798, although British forces, backed by Ottoman Turks, ultimately destroyed his fleet in the Battle of the Nile. Although the Ottomans regained nominal rule of the province, the Sultan lost control when Mohammed Ali, an Al-banian officer in the Ottoman army of reoccupation, seized power. Mohammed Ali's efforts to establish Egyptian autonomy were thwarted, however, by the Sultan's continued resistance and British and French commercial interests in Egypt. By midcentury, Europeans controlled a large portion of Egypt's trade and European bankers were financing modernization projects. These included constructing an Egyptian railway system from Alexandria to Cairo and building the Suez Canal connecting the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea under Ferdinand Lesseps's direction from 1859 to 1869.

THE NEW IMPERIALISM, 1870–1914

In the closing decades of the nineteenth century, Europeans remapped the contours of empire. By the 1870s, the piecemeal expansionism of the earlier part of the century gave way to a systematic campaign of explicit conquest and occupation of much of Africa and Asia. This global conquest is often described as the "new imperialism" to differentiate it from earlier forms of empire. Indeed, while late-nineteenth-century imperialism was built on many of the same ideological foundations as the midcentury empire and endorsed the liberal civilizing mission at the outset, it soon metamorphosed into a distinctive intellectual and material enterprise.

Four features of the new imperialism stand out as novel. First, late-nineteenth-century European nations adopted imperialism as an official policy for the first

In 1897, the British troops attacked and looted the Edo capital of Benin, in present-day southern Nigeria. The Benin expedition was a punitive one, responding to the ambush of a British military party sent to force trade concessions from the Edo king a year earlier. This photograph shows British officers of the expedition surrounded by booty, including the famed Benin bronzes, seized from the royal compound. The plundered objects ended up in European and American art museums.
Courtesy of the Trustees of The British Museum

time, replacing empires governed largely by traders with those ruled by expansionist states. Although European nation-states had sponsored imperial expansion earlier in the century, they had most often done so after the fact, in an effort to protect and promote the activities of their missionaries and merchants overseas; now it was the state that took the imperial initiative. Second, the entrance of a new group of nations into the race for territory during this period changed the rules of the imperial game. In Europe, Germany, Belgium, and Italy appeared on the imperial scene, while outside Europe, the United States and Japan emerged as major imperial powers. As multiple players competed aggressively for territory and power, Britain's longstanding global sovereignty began to fade. Third, the more competitive imperial climate changed the political objectives of imperial nations. No longer content with informal influence, they now sought explicit territorial occupation and political conquest. Finally, the new imperialism defined its own distinctive ideological mission, gradually abandoning the universalist premise of the liberal empire for a belief in the unbreachable gap between Europe and its colonial subjects. As that happened, Europeans began to retreat from the civilizing goals of the early to midcentury and to seek increasingly to secure and consolidate imperial rule through force. Unfettered by the moral constraints of early nineteenth-century colonizers, the new imperialism brought Europe to the peak of its power.

Europe Transformed: Explaining the New Imperialism

No single factor can explain the new imperialism. Rather, it emerged out of a number of significant changes that occurred in Europe during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Technology   By the late nineteenth century, Europeans had access to new and astonishingly efficient technologies that would change the course of colonial conquest and domination. To be sure, technology had played a major role in spreading European influence abroad throughout the nineteenth century and earlier; steamships, industrial weaponry, and the use of quinine to treat malaria had allowed Europeans to penetrate continental Africa, and the arrival of gunboats—armed steamboats—had played decisive roles, for example, in the conquest of Burma and the opening of China. Nevertheless, the advent of the second industrial revolution (see chapter 25) in the late nineteenth century made technology an even more important factor in the speed, extent, and vigor of the conquests. Ironclad warships with steam turbines now spread the power of far more advanced and

deadly European weaponry overseas, while the invention of the telegraph radically simplified the logistics of military mobilization from afar. After conquest, dynamite lessened the difficulty of building roads, and modern medicine significantly reduced the dangers of fighting and living in the tropics.

Nationalism   While turn-of-the-century technologies made possible conquest on a global scale, they did not create new incentives to conquer. Most historians would agree that it was nationalism—understood in the broadest sense of the term—that propelled the new imperialism forward. Although nationalism was hardly new, it developed in strikingly new ways during this period. The ideological tenor of nationalism changed, moving away from its early-nineteenth-century romantic and liberal origins and tilting toward a more strident, aggressive, and exclusionary variant. Nationalism was transformed, in other words, from a phenomenon associated with the democratic and liberal left to one linked to the emergence of a new mass politics on the right. Based on emotional appeals to community and history, the new nationalism challenged the liberal politics of the midcentury based on the rational individual and the possibilities of societal progress. Imperial domination, in this context, was seen as a sign of national vigor and a marker of prestige.

Nationalism also played an integral role in the rise of a new political and economic order of nation-states in this period. Germany's national unification transformed it overnight into one of the foremost continental powers. Its meteoric economic and political ascent, along with the emergence of Japan and the United States as industrial giants, fundamentally reconfigured the global balance of power and in so doing changed the stakes of empire. The new order sharply challenged British global sovereignty, unrivaled since the late eighteenth century, and demoted Britain's lagging rival, France, to a third-rate power. On the economic and political defensive, Britain and France sought to expand their empires to compensate for their loss of economic primacy and political prestige. Germany, Japan, and the United States responded in turn by carving out their own colonial empires.

Economic Factors   Within this charged nationalist framework, economic, political, and cultural forces each played their role in promoting the imperial scramble. Economic factors were critical. As they had done earlier in the century, turn-of-the-century imperial nations viewed their colonies as vital markets for selling European industrial goods, buying raw materials and cash crops, and investing surplus capital. But now the economic context had changed. One new factor was the presence of Germany and the United States as lead-

ing industrial powers. By 1890 both Germany and the United States had surpassed British steel and iron production and Germany was outselling the British in certain overseas markets (Latin America, China, and the Ottoman Empire). A lengthy industrial depression from 1873 to the early 1890s played a significant role as well. This unstable economic context promoted the view that colonial markets could act as buffers against the fluctuations of global commerce. As a consequence, the Western European nations started to abandon the rhetoric of free trade in the 1880s and 1890s, once again endorsing mercantilist policies that—in addition to raising trade barriers in the domestic market—explicitly demarcated the colonies as protected economic spheres. Finally, the advent of a new, more advanced phase of industrial capitalism in the late nineteenth century brought with it fears of saturation of the domestic market and, with that, industrial overproduction. In this context, many Europeans came to view empire as an essential outlet for surpluses of goods and capital.

As scholars of empire have pointed out, however, economic incentives alone cannot account for the new imperialism, and nation-states often pursued imperial objectives even when their economic costs appeared to outweigh their benefits. Undoubtedly, the colonies furnished attractive markets for Europe's industrial manufactures in the late nineteenth century; in 1890 Britain exported one-third of its industrial goods and one-quarter of its investment capital to India. However, strictly in terms of trade volume, European nations traded far more with other independent countries, including their European neighbors, than they did with their colonies. Britain, the largest overseas investor and trader, traded more with Latin America and the United States, for example, than with its African or even its Asian colonies. Moreover, it was not always the most industrialized, economically powerful nations that took the imperial initiative. Although France lagged far behind Germany as an industrial producer, for example, it was the French who amassed the world's second largest empire.

Political Motives   The primacy of the nation-state during this period also put strategic and territorial ambitions at center stage. The actions of European nations within the imperial arena were taken as much to jockey for political power and to preempt the territorial claims of other nations as they were to pursue economic gain. For Kaiser Wilhelm II, the German ruler from 1888 to 1918, for example, a central motivation for building up a strong German navy was to contest Britain's global power, so dependent on its naval strength, in North Africa, China, and the Ottoman Empire. The new nation of Italy likewise sought a colonial empire in North and East Africa as part of its quest to achieve great-power status.

Cultural Incentives   In the cultural realm, too, late-nineteenth-century nation-states mobilized imperialism to assist with internal processes of state-building. Newly unified nation-states, in particular, but older and established ones as well, actively sought to fully unify their citizens, in large part by inducing them to transfer their primary loyalties from their local community to the far more abstract, "imagined" community of the nation. This process met with significant resistance, particularly since it entailed a loss of regional identity, and national leaders used the attractions of empire as one means of appealing to its citizens. Empire was presented as the shared symbolic property of the nation, an asset that in theory (but not in practice) transcended social class and allowed peasants and workers—as much as members of the upper classes—to cast themselves as superior to the nation's colonial subjects. Governments also encouraged their citizens to conceive of empire as a measure of the nation's virile masculinity, seen in favorable contrast to the supposedly weak, "effeminate" colony. Imperialism and, more specifically, imperial racism helped to consolidate the nation-state, in other words, by substituting race hierarchies for the hierarchies of class.

The Scramble for Africa

The Scramble for Africa constituted by far the most remarkable chapter of the European expansion of the late nineteenth century. Between 1880 and 1912, seven European states partitioned most of the African continent, leaving only Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and Liberia independent.

The Berlin Conference   By the mid-1880s, a number of European governments had begun to object to the haphazardness with which conflicts over African territory were being settled. The Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, presided over by the German Prime Minister Otto von Bismarck, was convened to sort out the conflict between the Portuguese and the Belgians over control of the Congo River in particular and, more generally, to lay the ground rules for colonization. A watershed in European diplomacy, the conference brokered conflicting claims without recourse to intra-European violence, even as it came to inflict bloodshed and suffering on Africa. European cooperation at Berlin owed a great deal to Bismarck's diplomatic shrewdness. Seeking to compensate France and Britain for their loss of power in the European arena and, at the same time, to fuel Franco-British imperial rivalry, he conceded the bulk of African territories to Britain and

This is an image of a popular French children's board game from the late nineteenth century, the objective of which was to conquer Africa. Popular culture proved a powerful tool for propagating ideas about the "natural inferiority" of Africans and the legitimacy of the European conquest.

France. Despite its small number of African colonies, Germany's foreign policy thus decisively influenced the Scramble.

Since the lines of partition had been drawn long before the Berlin Conference, its main role was to formally ratify the principle that coastal settlement by a European nation also gave it claim to the hinterlands beyond as long as it could establish authority in the region. Although the Berlin participants legitimized some new claims in central Africa—such as those of Belgium's King Leopold II in the Congo—in the main, the African partition extended European control from older coastal enclaves into the interior of the continent.

For Africans, the carving up of the continent redrew the African map in ways that consolidated previously separate polities and ethnic groups in new, European-made units—a single new colony, for example, could comprise three hundred smaller political units. The Berlin Conference thus centralized power in a previously decentralized political landscape. In addition, by using the artificial entity of the "tribe" to designate previously distinct groups of the same region, it permanently reconfigured ethnic and cultural identities in African society. While colonial rule and the work of Christian missionaries in standardizing related language dialects ultimately strengthened the cultural bonds between disparate groups, many of the African "tribes" of the present day are at least partial inventions of the Berlin Conference.

The Berlin Conference also extended the European abolition of slavery and the slave trade to Africa. Missionaries such as David Livingstone had campaigned ardently against the slave trade in East Africa since midcentury without making much headway. As formal colonizers, however, Europeans could enforce abolitionism to a much greater extent than before. Their desire to abolish African slavery emerged both from a genuine humanitarianism and from the understanding that it was politically expedient as a justification for conquest. In spite of partial successes, clandestine slav-

As African guides clear their path through thick vegetation, French and German negotiators consult their maps and renegotiate the boundaries of French Equatorial Africa and German Cameroon. European powers frequently came into conflict with one another on African soil, but for the most part were able to resolve their differences peacefully.

ery and slave trading in Africa continued into the early twentieth century and new forms of forced labor, heavily relied upon by European colonizers themselves, also replaced slavery in many regions.

The Wars of Conquest   In the aftermath of the Berlin Conference, the conquest of Africa unfolded in a series of bloody wars that took place between the 1880s and the first decade of the twentieth century. Although European powers faced fierce African resistance, they enjoyed several advantages in these conflicts. Their footholds on the African coast and, in many cases, longstanding commercial connections with coastal communities provided them with a base of operations and a ready source of supplies. Europeans also benefited from, and sometimes ruthlessly exploited, the divi-

sions between local communities. In their expansion into West Africa (Nigeria) in the 1890s, for example, the British profited from local enmity by mobilizing the subjugated Nupe against their Fulani overlords, only to conquer the Nupe soon afterward.

Most important in facilitating the conquest was the immense and growing technological advantage enjoyed by the Europeans, especially in weaponry. To be sure, the weapons gap was nothing new. But the new military equipment produced by the second industrial revolution magnified the inequality between African and European forces. By the time Africans acquired rifles in the late nineteenth century, Europeans were deploying, first, rapid-firing breechloaders (repeating rifles) and, later, machine guns. In fact, most of the new weaponry of the First World War was first tested in the laboratory of late-nineteenth-century colonial warfare. One example of the devastation wrought by these new technologies was in the Battle of Omdurman in Sudan in 1898, where field artillery and hand-driven Gatling machine guns allowed Anglo-Egyptian forces to kill 11,000 and wound 16,000 Sudanese soldiers, with only 49 dead and 382 wounded among their own ranks. In the few cases where Africans had access to equally advanced technology, they were often able to thwart conquest. In part of French West Africa (Mali), for example, the troops of Islamic Malinké ruler Samori Touré, armed with up-to-date European weaponry, staved off French conquest from the mid-1880s to the late 1890s. These exceptions further underscore how critical advanced weaponry was to the European conquest.

New Imperial Nations   While France and Britain dominated the conquest, other European nations carved out significant African territories as well. After the Berlin Conference had recognized King Leopold II's claims in the Congo in exchange for free trading and shipping rights in the region for other European states, Belgium emerged as a major African power. The full-scale subjugation of the massive Congo Free State (Democratic Republic of the Congo)—76 times as large as Belgium—took over ten years and met with continued insurgence, particularly from Arab slave traders of the Lualaba River region.

Germany also played a central role in the Scramble. At Berlin, Bismarck had ceded dominance in Africa to Britain and France, claiming a few protectorates in the areas where German traders and missionaries were most active, such as Togoland (Togo), Cameroon, South West Africa (Namibia), and East Africa (Tanzania). In 1888, however, the accession of Wilhelm II to the German throne and the subsequent dismissal of Bismarck ushered in a new era of aggression in German foreign policy. Thereafter, Germany posed an active threat to

CHRONOLOGY
Scramble for Africa

1881	French occupy Tunisia.
1882	Revolt in Egypt (against British and French financial influence by Arabi Pasha) prompts occupation by British.
1883	Start of French conquest of Madagascar.
1884	Germany acquires South West Africa, Togo, Cameroon. Berlin Conference.
1885	King Leopold II of Belgium acquires Congo.
1886	Germany and Britain divide East Africa.
	Discovery of gold in South Africa.
1889	Italy establishes colonies in Eritrea and Somaliland.
	Cecil Rhodes's British South Africa Company begins colonization of Rhodesia.
1894	Britain occupies Uganda.
1896	Abyssinian (Ethiopian) army defeats invading Italian army.
1898	Fashoda Crisis.
1899–1902	Boer War.
1905–1906; 1911	Morocco Crises.

France and Britain in the imperial arena. The Moroccan Crisis of 1905–1906 developed, for example, when Germany protested against the Franco-Spanish division of power in the region and demanded a sphere of its own. A second crisis, the Agadir Incident of 1911, erupted when the kaiser sent a gunboat to the Moroccan port of Agadir in a display of German power meant to intimidate the French. Although both crises were resolved diplomatically, with France retaining effective control of Morocco, episodes like these signal the belligerent diplomatic stance of post-Bismarckian Germany and the consequent heightening of imperial competition.

Worried about Belgian and German encroachment on its colonial borders, Portugal managed to enlarge its Angolan holdings on the West African coast and to establish Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique) on the southeastern coast of Africa. These incursions sparked extended wars of resistance, especially in the Zambezi Valley. Meanwhile, the new nation-state of Italy, seeking to enhance its international standing by staking out terrain in East Africa, faced the unique humiliation of being defeated by an African polity. On the Horn of Africa, Italy seized Eritrea and Somaliland (Somalia) as colonies

in 1889, but failed to conquer Abyssinia (Ethiopia), when King Menelik II's troops—about 100,000 soldiers armed with European breechloaders, a few machine guns, and field artillery—soundly defeated an Italian force of 14,500, equipped with inaccurate maps, at the Battle of Adowa in 1896. Italy fared better in Tripoli (Libya), declaring a protectorate there in 1912.

France   French and British expansion in Africa overshadowed that of all other powers. Although the British denigrated the French Empire as a large "sandbox," France clearly dominated West Africa and North Africa. From Algeria, where they had been entrenched since 1830, France expanded in virtually every direction. To the east, it squeezed out Italian and British interests, using the growing indebtedness of the ruling bey as the pretext for making Tunisia a French protectorate in 1881. To the west, France moved on Morocco, thwarting German interests and appeasing Spain with a small zone of control. By 1895 they dominated an enormous swath of sub-Saharan territories known as French West Africa (Ivory Coast, Senegal, Guinea, Mali). In 1897, France seized the French Congo in central Africa (Republic of the Congo) and, three years later, invaded the Lake Chad region, thereby linking up its possessions in the west and the north with those in central Africa. In 1911 it combined Chad and French Congo to form French Equatorial Africa. On the east coast, the French also claimed part of Somaliland and, in 1896, conquered the island of Madagascar, where they established a prosperous sugar plantation economy based on the forced labor of the local population.

Britain and the Boer War   British imperialists envisioned a railway from Capetown to Cairo that would span their African Empire. Starting in the 1880s, Britain moved to consolidate its hold on Egypt and Sudan. Although Britain had shared financial control with France over an increasingly bankrupted Egypt during the late nineteenth century and the French had financed the construction of the Suez Canal, the British finally edged the French out of Egypt in the 1870s and 1880s, claiming it as a protectorate in 1882 (see "The Earl of Cromer: Why Britain Acquired Egypt," p. 794).

Once entrenched in Egypt, the British moved to extend their power south into Turco-Egyptian-controlled Sudan. There they clashed with the millenarian jihadist Mahdist state, which had sought repeatedly to overthrow Egyptian rule during the 1880s. In 1885, the armies of the Mahdi (the Guided One) attacked Khartoum, the Egyptian capital of Sudan and, after a ten-month siege, annihilated Anglo-Egyptian troops led by General Charles Gordon (known as "Chinese" Gordon because of his role in suppressing the Taiping Rebellion). At nearby Omdurman, the Mahdi established an Islamic

Image of the Battle of Adowa of 1896, in which the troops of Menelik II, armed with European weaponry, routed the Italian army and effectively saved Abyssinia (Ethiopia) from colonial conquest.
The Mary Evans Picture Libary

state, which thrived for the next twelve years. But the British did not forget the defeat at Khartoum and in 1896 launched a new campaign to take the Sudan. In 1898 British troops led by Lord Kitchener handed the Mahdist State a fatal defeat at the battle of Omdurman.

The expansion into Sudan allowed Britain to link up Egypt with its territories to the southeast, British East Africa (Kenya) and Buganda (Uganda), seized in 1888 and 1894, respectively. At the same time, in West Africa, the British expanded from trading forts along the Gold Coast, purchased earlier from the Dutch and the Danes, and defeated the Asante to colonize Ghana. In an effort to protect the commercial interests of British palm oil merchants in the Niger River delta, the British-chartered Royal Niger Company, under the leadership of George Goldie, also expanded into Nigeria between 1886 and 1899.

Pressing north from the British Cape Colony, the British fought the Zulus in the Anglo-Zulu War of

1878–1879. Led by the archetypal expansionist Cecil Rhodes, they took Bechuanaland (Botswana) in 1885, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) in 1889, and Nyasaland (Malawi) in 1893. In so doing, the British managed to create a wedge separating German South West Africa (Namibia) and German East Africa (Rwanda, Burundi, continental Tanzania, part of Mozambique) and to approach the southern border of the Congo Free State. More importantly, this expansion threatened the independent Afrikaner republics north of the Cape Colony, a conflict that ultimately led to the Boer War of 1899–1902, in which approximately 75,000 lives were lost.

The British encroachment on the Afrikaner republics had been fueled by the discovery there of diamonds in the 1860s and gold in the 1880s. By 1890 the Afrikaner republics were overrun by British citizens and surrounded by British colonies. Conflicts between the two groups grew more heated, and in 1899 the Afrikaners declared war. British forces rapidly occupied

THE EARL OF CROMER: WHY BRITAIN ACQUIRED EGYPT

Evelyn Baring (1871–1917), First Earl of Cromer, was the first British Commissioner of the Egyptian Public Debt Office and then British Agent and Consul General after Egypt became a British colony in 1882. Ruling Egypt with an iron hand, Cromer reorganized its financial, judicial, and administrative system as well as defended it from the incursions of other European powers. Although he brought about important changes in Egypt and virtually rescued it from bankruptcy, the Egyptians disliked his autocratic ways and his willingness to subordinate the interests of Egypt to that of Britain. He ignored demands by middle-class Egyptians for higher education, for instance, for fear that it would lead to the emergence of nationalist sentiment, as it had in India. Likewise, the primary objective of his successful agricultural experiments to promote the growth of Egyptian cotton was to provide British industries with raw materials. Still, Cromer was greatly admired in the West. When he died in 1917, the London Times called him the "Maker of Modern Egypt." In this excerpt, Cromer explains why the British and not any other European power could—and did—take over Egypt.

"History, indeed, records some very radical changes in the forms of government to which a state has been subjected without its interests being absolutely and permanently shipwrecked. But it may be doubted whether any instance can be quoted of a sudden transfer of power in any civilized or semi-civilized community to a class so ignorant as the pure Egyptians, such as they were in the year 1882. These latter have, for centuries past, been a subject race. Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs from Arabia and Baghdad, Circassians, and finally, Ottoman Turks, have successively ruled over Egypt, but we have to go back to the doubtful and obscure precedents of Pharaonic times to find an epoch when, possibly, Egypt was ruled by Egyptians. Neither, for the present, do they appear to possess the qualities which would render it desirable, either in their own interests, or in those of the civilized world in general, to raise them at a bound to the category of autonomous rulers with full rights of internal sovereignty.

"If, however, a foreign occupation was inevitable or nearly inevitable, it remains to be considered whether a British occupation was preferable to any other. From the purely Egyptian point of view, the answer to this question cannot be doubtful. The intervention of any European power was preferable to that of Turkey. The intervention of one European power was preferable to international intervention. The special aptitude shown by Englishmen in the government of Oriental races pointed to England as the most effective and beneficent instrument for the gradual introduction of European civilization into Egypt. An Anglo-French, or an Anglo-Italian occupation, from both of which we narrowly and also accidentally escaped, would have been detrimental to Egyptian interests and would ultimately have caused friction, if not serious dissension, between England on the one side and France or Italy on the other. The only thing to be said in favor of Turkish intervention is that it would have relieved England from the responsibility of intervening.

"By the process of exhausting all other expedients, we arrive at the conclusion that armed British intervention was, under the special circumstances of the case, the only possible solution of the difficulties, which existed in 1882. Probably also it was the best solution. The arguments against British intervention, indeed, were sufficiently obvious. It was easy to foresee that, with a British garrison in Egypt, it would be difficult that the relations of England either with France or Turkey should be cordial. With France, especially, there would be a danger that our relations might become seriously strained. Moreover, we lost the advantages of our insular position. The occupation of Egypt necessarily dragged England to a certain extent within the arena of Continental politics. In the event of war, the presence of a British garrison in Egypt would possibly be a source of weakness rather than of strength. Our position in Egypt placed us in a disadvantageous diplomatic position, for any power, with whom we had a difference of opinion about some non-Egyptian question, was at one time able to retaliate by opposing our Egyptian policy. The complicated rights and privileges possessed by the various powers of Europe in Egypt facilitated action of this nature."

From The Earl of Cromer, *Modern Egypt,* vol. 1, New York: Macmillan, 1908, pp. xvii–xviii.

the major cities of the Afrikaner republics, but it took two years to subdue the Afrikaners' skillful guerrilla resistance. The rest of Europe watched Britain's slow progress with surprise and then shock as farmhouses were destroyed and homeless Afrikaners herded together in guarded areas called concentration camps, where disease and starvation killed at least 20,000 of them. In Great Britain, the Boer War initially produced patriotic fervor, but politicians and the public alike grew disillusioned as the war dragged on. British victory allowed the establishment in 1910 of the Union of South Africa, a partial fulfillment of Rhodes's ambitions. To appease the disaffected Afrikaner minorities, British leaders implemented Afrikaner policies of

MAP 26.2 AFRICA, 1914
This map shows the European partition of Africa. Only Liberia and Ethiopia were independent after the turn of the century. Notice how the west-east axis of French territories runs into the north-south axis of British holdings. How were the European powers able to overrun an entire continent in such a short period of time?
◆ For an online version, go to www.mhhe.com/chambers9 > chapter 26 > book maps

Apartheid, and the legal segregation of white and black Africans became the law of the land.

Intra-European Conflict in Africa   By the turn of the century, the extent of European expansion, compounded by the heightened tension within Europe, led to a growing number of intra-European imperial clashes. The Boer War, in which Afrikaners were armed with German weapons, was one of these. Another important confrontation occurred between Britain and

France at Fashoda, on the Nile, in 1898. With the French driving inland across Africa from west to east and the British expanding south from Egypt and north from the Cape Colony, such conflict was inevitable. At Fashoda, British troops marching south from Omdurman met French expeditionary forces advancing east from the Congo. Both sides declared that their national honor was at stake, but after several weeks of threats the French government backed down, distracted by the Dreyfus affair at home. After the French retreat from

Fashoda, the French agreed to recognize British control of the Nile in return for British recognition of French West Africa.

Conquest in Asia

While Africa was the main theater of late-nineteenth-century imperial expansion, Asia was the second key site of aggressive expansionism at the turn of the twentieth century.

The Middle East   In the late nineteenth century, the British began to withdraw their support from the Ottoman Empire. Although the empire had been strategically and commercially important to the British as the gateway to Asia, it no longer played that role after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Bankrupted, in commercial decline, and riven by internal dissent, the empire ceased to be the attractive ally the British had made use of earlier in the century.

South and Central Asia   India, ruled directly by the British crown after 1857, remained the jewel of the British Empire. It continued to be invaluable, both in terms of trade and capital investment. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, London financiers invested more than £2.5 million in India, most of it in railways. By the eve of the First World War, India also had emerged as the chief export market for British industrial goods.

The security of India continued to obsess British politicians, who sought to protect her borders from other expansionist powers, in particular Russia. The British, allied with the French and the Ottoman Turks, had fought the Russians directly in the Crimean War (1854–1856) but otherwise grappled with the Russian threat through a combination of formal and informal diplomacy known as the "Great Game." The political maneuverings of the Great Game finally ended with the Anglo-Russian Entente of 1907, which resolved British and Russian differences over Persia, Tibet, and Afghanistan, dividing Persia into British and Russian spheres of influence and effectively consolidating Russian power in Central Asia.

Southeast Asia and the South Pacific   In Southeast Asia, the Dutch strengthened their hold over the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia), including Sumatra, Java, Borneo, and the western half of New Guinea, and continued to prosper from a colonial plantation economy based largely on rubber and coffee. The British, meanwhile, expanded their territories in Southeast Asia, annexing upper Burma in 1886 and a part of Malaya (Malaysia) in 1896. The French, who had established commercial interests in Indochina at the turn of the

Russian postcard (ca. 1902), showing the United States and Britain pushing Japan, the only imperial Asian state, into a confrontation with Russia. Japan would defeat Russia shortly thereafter in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905.
© British Museum

nineteenth century, steadily increased their holdings there in the late nineteenth century, taking Tonkin and Annam (Vietnam) in 1883 and Cambodia and Laos in 1893. Although a militant and well-organized Vietnamese resistance movement, known as the "Black Flags," fought French infiltration (even appealing for help from the Chinese, their former colonial masters) the French prevailed. Following a series of protracted military campaigns, France formed the French Indochina Union in 1894.

From the mid-nineteenth century on, the South Pacific also emerged as an arena for competition among the colonial powers. Europeans perceived South Pacific Islanders, like Africans, to be childlike "primitives," in need of European protection and divided the many islands of the region among themselves. While Britain and Germany split the western half of New Guinea, France seized New Caledonia and Tahiti. Germany also acquired the Marshall Islands, and the British took Fiji and Tonga. The Germans, British, and Americans fought for dominance in Samoa, resulting in a split between German and American Samoa, while the Germans and the British divided up the Solomon Islands. In addition to a highly prosperous sugar economy centered in Fiji, the region also provided cheap labor for Australian sugar plantations.

As the European powers snatched up Pacific islands, the generally isolationist United States became involved in the imperial politics of the region. In 1898 it annexed Hawaii, a strategic Pacific naval base and a profitable sugar cane and pineapple producer. After defeating Spain in the Spanish-American War, ignited by conflict over the control of Cuba, the United States re-

Chinese woodblock print showing Western soldiers being humiliated in a battle during the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 directed against Western exploitation of China. Although China was battered by the Rebellion and the Western powers emerged with still more influence over Chinese affairs, the Rebellion influenced the establishment of the first Chinese nationalist movement, led by Sun Yat-sen.
The British Library, London

ceived a number of Spanish territories, including the Philippines, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Guam. In the Philippines, the Americans faced a fierce indigenous resistance movement that sought Filipino independence, but after three years of fighting and the capture of the insurrection leader, Emilio Aguinaldo, the United States declared the Philippines its territory. These conquests, combined with growing American influence and economic power in Latin America during this period, transformed the United States into a formidable global power.

East Asia   The continued decline of China and rise of Japan were the central developments in East Asia during the late nineteenth century. Although some Chinese reformers favored economic and technological modernization, including the building of railways, as a way to strengthen the nation, considerable conservative opposition to the process existed. The pattern of the midcentury thus continued unabated, with the European powers and the United States forcing trade concessions, annexing territory, and lending money to the

Chinese government on disadvantageous terms. In the aftermath of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895, fought over control of Korea, the Chinese were forced to borrow money from Europe to pay a war indemnity to Japan and, in return, the Europeans exacted more trade privileges and concessions to build railways. The 1897 murder of two German missionaries in China led to further concessions. The Germans received a lease of the port of Quingdao and the right to build railways in Shandong Province, the Russians took Port Arthur, and the French acquired a lease on Canton Bay and a sphere of influence in southern China. To prevent the further partitioning of China, the United States initiated the Open Door policy in 1898, agreed upon by all colonizing nations with the exception of Japan. Allowing all nations equal trading rights in all parts of China, the Open Door policy also protected China's territorial integrity.

Foreign encroachment and exploitation sparked the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. A clandestine society called the "Patriotic Harmonious Fists"—known as Boxers because of the martial arts training of its members—or-

MAP 26.3 IMPERIALISM IN ASIA, 1900
This map shows the European colonies in Asia. Notice British dominance in this part of the world, centered largely on India. How did the entry of Japan and the United States into the Asian imperial arena change the power balance in the region?
◆ For an online version, go to www.mhhe.com/chambers9 > chapter 26 > book maps

ganized to protest the corrupting influence of "foreign devils," including missionaries, traders, and soldiers. The Boxer Rebellion erupted in northern China, where Boxers attacked European, American, and Chinese Christians in Shandong Province, sabotaged rail lines, and besieged foreign embassies in Beijing for almost two months. A force of twenty thousand British, French, German, Russian, Italian, American, and Japanese troops viciously suppressed the Boxer Rebellion and imposed a huge indemnity on the Qing regime. Continued degradation and economic exploitation at the hands of the Europeans, Americans, and Japanese (often in the form of disadvantageous railway leases) fueled the Chinese nationalist movement led by Sun Yat-sen, which finally overthrew the beleaguered Qing Dynasty in 1911.

Japan's fate differed dramatically from that of China. An industrial giant after the Meiji Restoration of 1868, Japan sought an empire to reflect its global

standing. A Korean insurrection against Chinese influence in 1894 offered the Japanese an opportunity to establish a foothold in Korea. The ensuing Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895 ended in Chinese defeat, the Japanese annexation of Taiwan, and increased Japanese trade privileges and political influence in Korea. Japan's expansionist ambitions brought it into direct conflict not only with China, but also with Russia. Its victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 stunned the world. A clash over influence in Chinese-held Manchuria and Korea, the war broke out following Russian maneuvers to take the Chinese province of Liaotung (and, in particular, the ice-free harbor of Port Arthur), controlled by the Japanese since the Sino-Japanese War. Japan not only kept Liaotung after victory, but took over the Russian sphere of influence in Chinese Manchuria, as well as half of Sakhalin Island, and seized Russian-controlled railways in Manchuria. The Japanese triumph over Rus-

sia marked a turning point for both European imperialists, who suddenly perceived the limits to their power, and for colonial subjects from Bombay to Cairo, who rejoiced and found hope in the European defeat. Undermining the credibility of Tsar Nicholas' regime, it also contributed to the failed first Russian Revolution of 1905. In 1910 a triumphant Japan annexed Korea.

The New Imperial Mission

New ideological foundations also distinguished the new imperialism from the liberal empire. Responding to anticolonial insurgency in India and to the Darwinian revolution at home, Europeans reconsidered the nature of their political, cultural, and biological relationship to subject peoples.

The Failure of the Liberal Vision   Europeans at the end of the nineteenth century confronted their vast global empire with a transformed sense of mission. Gradually abandoning the liberal conceit of Europeanizing the non-Western world for the more modest goal of improving the "natives" within their own cultural context, Europeans increasingly replaced paternalist justifications of empire with the unabashed consolidation of imperial rule by force. The new mission did not appear overnight. In fact, the self-critical attitude and eagerness to legitimize Europe's imperial presence characteristic of colonial encounters of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were already fading by midcentury, supplanted by a growing intolerance of cultural difference.

By the late nineteenth century, attitudes had further hardened. Europeans still believed in the flagrant inferiority of subject peoples, but, unlike previous generations of colonizers, they were far more inclined to see this inferiority as biological and, therefore, irremediable. While they continued to vaunt their own superiority as the justification for empire, Europeans thus increasingly questioned the extent of their responsibilities as civilizers and the likelihood that such efforts would succeed. The concrete experience of imperial rule contributed significantly to the new cynicism. In the case of Britain, for example, the Indian Rebellion of 1857 (see p. 800–802) irrevocably changed not only the conception of imperial duty but British expectations of their colonial subjects.

By the end of the century, many took the pessimistic view of the British poet Rudyard Kipling, captured in his poem of 1898, "The White Man's Burden." In it Kipling described the unrewarding task of bringing civilization to "new-caught, sullen peoples," whose response to European benevolence was not gratitude but intransigent hostility:

> Take up the White Man's burden—
> And reap his old reward:
> The blame of those ye better,
> The hate of those ye guard—

In Kipling's depiction, the civilizing mission was not only thankless, but futile, because subject peoples inevitably backslid into barbarism:

> And when your goal is nearest
> The end for others sought,
> Watch sloth and heathen Folly
> Bring all your hopes to nought

Darwinian Challenges to the Enlightenment   Even more than the politics of imperial rule, ideological developments within Europe profoundly influenced the civilizing mission. The Darwinian revolution of the late nineteenth century irrevocably changed what it meant to be human and, therefore, to be European. Although decades of nineteenth-century scientific research on race difference and racial development had seriously weakened the Enlightenment conception of a single human species developing largely through environmental influence, it was Darwin's particular formulation of the theory of evolution—and its distortion by social Darwinists (see chapter 25) to explain cultural difference—that most affected late-nineteenth-century European views about the capacity of "primitives" to become civilized.

Darwinian theory undermined several key tenets of liberal Enlightenment thought. First, in linking humans to a common ape ancestor, Darwin raised the specter of the animal nature—and thus, the fundamental primitivity—of all humans. Scandalized Europeans responded by accentuating the gap between their own civilized nature and the primitive nature of other "races." Although they disagreed intensely as to whether the gap was wide enough to warrant the classification of other races as separate species (and Darwin himself favored the idea of a single species), most came to view the differences between the races as more significant than the similarities. As a consequence, some abandoned the Enlightenment notion of a single human trajectory along which all cultures developed at varied paces and came to believe in the separate and incommensurable developmental paths of different cultures. Social Darwinian thought thus dealt the liberal universalism of the Enlightenment a serious blow.

Second, Darwin's theory of **natural selection,** which held that the natural selection of traits best adapted to survival served as the prime motor of human development, also challenged European understandings of human agency. In contrast to Europeans of the Enlightenment, who believed that environment—both natural and social—shaped culture, their late-nineteenth-century

Global Moment

THE INDIAN REBELLION OF 1857

The Rebellion of 1857 was an event of immense significance, not just for modern South Asia but also for British colonialism in general. Sparked off by a military mutiny, the rebellion spread through North India, nearly overthrowing the rule of the British East India Company. Although distinctly local in character, the Rebellion of 1857 had dramatic global repercussions, fundamentally shaping the ways in which British colonies were henceforth viewed and governed by their colonial masters.

In the summer of 1857, rumors spread in the military camps in the town of Meerut that the cartridges for the new English rifles used by Indian soldiers or "sepoys" were greased with cow and pig fat. This practice offended the religious sensibilities of both Hindus and Muslims, and on May 9, the sepoys violently revolted against their British officers, who were caught unawares. Many officers were killed in the fracas that followed.

While the issue of the greased cartridges triggered the rebellion, the causes for dissatisfaction with British rule went far deeper. The rebel sepoys were largely recruited from the peasantry in the princely state of Awadh in Northwestern India. Under the British, peasants in places such as Awadh were forced to pay exorbitant taxes. In addition, the British Governor-General Lord Dalhousie had recently conquered Awadh, disregarding his treaty obligations to its ruler, Nawab Wajid Ali Shah. The peasants of Awadh now faced both financial hardship and the humiliation of having their king treated with indignity. Led by the former elites of the Awadh court, the peasantry joined the sepoys and rose in protest against their colonial masters, attacking institutions representative of British rule, such as courts, police stations, and revenue offices. They marched on the capital, Delhi, to reinstate the old and decrepit Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, as their rightful and legitimate ruler. Many similar rebellions in support of local rulers occurred in other parts of India,

such as Jhansi and Gwalior in Northern India and the territories ruled by the Maratha chieftains of Central India.

Although the rebels of 1857 toppled British administration in many towns, the British army ultimately suppressed the uprising with great brutality. Despite widespread support for the rebellion among the peasantry and the artisanal classes, it was limited to northern and central India alone. Furthermore, the middle-class intelligentsia as well as many Indian princes loyal to the British refused to participate in the movement, seriously weakening its potency. Both factors contributed to British success in regaining control over the rebellious regions.

The East India Company refused to acknowledge that the rebellion was in any way a result of its own conduct, casting it instead as an unprovoked betrayal on the part of ungrateful subjects. Determined to teach the rebelling Indians a lesson and to inspire enough fear to prevent another rebellion, it torched villages, capturing and executing rebels, some of whom were blown to bits from the mouths of cannons. It also exiled the Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, to Burma and killed his sons.

The British Parliament was less than convinced that mistakes on the part of the East India Company had not contributed to sparking the rebellion. As a result, Parliament transferred the right to rule India from the Company to the Crown on August 2, 1858. The supreme authority in India was to be the "Viceroy"; Queen Victoria became the empress of India and, instead of the board of governors of the East India Company in London, a secretary of state for India who belonged to the British cabinet exercised decision-making and control over Indian affairs.

The British government was now determined that none of the administrative errors of the past would ever be repeated. Since many commentators perceived that British interference in Indian religion and customs had fostered the widespread resentment that had led to the uprising, British rule after the rebellion claimed explic-

When the Indian rebellion erupted in 1857, the rebels besieged the city of Lucknow, the capital of Oudh (in northwestern India), for two months. British troops rescued the British inhabitants of the city and took revenge on the local population. This photograph, taken a few months after the British attack, shows the courtyard of the Sikander Bagh, the royal garden and summer estate of the Nawab of Oudh, littered with the skulls and bones (only one skeleton is complete) of about two thousand Indian insurgents killed there.
Hulton Archive/Getty Images

itly to avoid involvement in the religious and customary practices of Indians. In this context, Queen Victoria's Proclamation in 1858 proclaimed grandly that the government would respect the "ancient rites, usages and customs of India."

Postrebellion British rule in India therefore moved away from the liberal civilizing mission of the early nineteenth century to the idea that India could be efficiently ruled only through its own institutions. This shift, however, often had unfortunate repercussions since the government's identification of certain practices and ideas as "customary" was often flawed and inaccurate, in part because it relied on the advice of upper-caste elites who propagated their own biased views. As a result, the British codified, systematized, and made rigid

everyday practices that had been flexible for centuries. This change in ruling ideology and practice affected not just India, but other colonies as well, in particular those in Africa, which were colonized in the late nineteenth century and governed on the Indian model.

Racism also increased alarmingly in the years after the rebellion as the British grappled with feelings of outrage and fear of their subject population. More and more, British and Indians began to live and socialize separately. Furthermore, as social Darwinism became influential in Europe, the British began to see Indians in increasingly racialized ways, often stereotyping groups of people. The British also conferred special privileges on certain segments of the population, such
continued

as rulers who had remained loyal to them during the re-volt, while treating those who had been active in the rebellion as traitors, including many Muslims. By deep-ening the divisions in Indian society, these policies helped the British maintain control over Indian sub-jects and prevent future uprisings.

Antagonistic feelings toward Indians ran high not just among the British in India, but in Britain itself. In spite of the extreme brutality with which the rebellion had been suppressed, the popular press and literature depicted British rule as a noble and benign one that had been attacked by savages. Particularly offensive to the British imagination was the idea that Englishwomen had been "defiled" by the rebels, and Victorian paint-ings and mass market novels were filled with lurid ac-counts and images of white women being raped and mutilated by Indians. Such images contributed to an enduring British view of the Indian as barbaric and un-civilized.

In the final analysis, how does one judge the Rebel-lion of 1857? Depending on the perspective, the Rebel-lion of 1857 has been regarded as a "Mutiny" or the "First War of Indian Independence." As we have seen, British colonial officials perceived the uprising as mindless violence by an ungrateful native population. Indian nationalist leaders and historians have glorified the rebellion as representing the first stirrings of na-tionalist sentiment in India. Most modern historians, however, emphasize that it is somewhat anachronistic to see the Rebellion of 1857 in terms of the emergence of Indian nationalism. No sense of a shared mission united the local rulers who rose up in rebellion against the British. The loyalty of these rulers was to their own kingdoms, not to the Indian nation. Even the Mughal emperor was seen as the supreme head of a feudal sys-tem, not as a representative of a modern state. In their turn, peasants did not always understand that many of their difficulties emerged out of colonial exploitation and attacked the most visible manifestations of oppres-sion such as local landlords and moneylenders. In fact, peasant nationalism was not to emerge in India until the twentieth century.

In spite of its ultimate failure, however, the Rebel-lion of 1857 remains extremely important for many reasons. It was certainly the largest anticolonial move-ment that had taken place so far in British India. More-over, its emphasis on Hindu-Muslim unity made it a powerful symbol for later nationalist leaders. Although many Muslims felt the end of Mughal rule meant that their fortunes and prestige would be under threat, there was also a real recognition that Muslims and Hindus suffered together under British oppression, and in many places they fought side by side against what they per-ceived as a common foreign enemy. In addition, al-though led by the landed elite and feudal chieftains, the rebellion saw the participation of different classes, in-cluding tribal peoples and low castes. In many ways, therefore, the rebellion marked a crucial turning point in the history of colonial India. Perhaps its greatest legacy is that it served as an inspiration to anticolonial movements, not just in India, but also in Asia and Africa in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

counterparts took Darwin's theory to mean that biology determined culture. Darwin's influence thus undercut the liberal Enlightenment belief in the human mastery of nature and the possibility of socially engineered progress.

Finally, whereas Enlightenment thinkers stressed the mutability of human beings, Darwin's theory of race differentiation lent itself to belief in the perma-nence of racial traits. Unlike all other human traits, which evolved continually under the pressures of natu-ral selection, Darwin argued, the superficial physical distinctions between the races emerged early in human history through the process of **sexual selection,** prefer-ences marked out in the sexual competition for mates. Because these sexually selected traits—such as hair texture or skin color—provided no benefit for survival, moreover, they tended either not to change or to evolve much more slowly than other traits. While Darwin himself never said that racial traits were fixed, many

race scientists of the late nineteenth century made that mental leap themselves and erroneously used Darwin to assert that racial difference was permanent. Social Darwinian misinterpretations of Darwin in this way eroded the liberal Enlightenment belief in mutability and progress.

Popular Views of Race   Darwinian and social Darwinian ideas had an astonishingly broad impact on European conceptions of race and empire. Racist tracts influenced by Darwin, in tandem with newspapers, periodicals, and imperial adventure novels, shaped popular conceptions of the colonial "native," inculcating the widespread belief that non-Western peoples were biologically—and not simply culturally—retrograde and lacked the capacity to improve. Although racist propagandists had been disseminating their ideas for decades (two of the most influential racist writers of the nineteenth century, Count Gobineau and Robert Knox, published their works almost ten years before Darwin), Darwinian theory seemed to many to grant them new legitimacy and authority.

Africa and black Africans occupied a special place in post-Darwinian racist hierarchies because of their presumed proximity to apes. While these links had been made much earlier, they were now widely regarded as having been verified by scientific inquiry and therefore to constitute a sound basis for imperial policy. Some of the most extreme arguments—like those made by social Darwinist imperialist propagandists such as Benjamin Kidd, author of *Social Evolution* (1894)—cast Africans as biologically defective and asserted the inevitability of black extinction and white rule in Africa. Similarly, the ideas of social Darwinist Herbert Spencer propagated the notion that the domination and ultimate biological elimination of less fit African societies was the natural—and therefore evolutionarily desirable—outcome of the struggle for survival of the fittest. While Europeans had viewed African blacks as lesser beings for centuries, for many blackness now became the mark of innate and unchanging biological inferiority.

Race Science and Eugenics   Darwin's work decisively influenced scholarly views of the "native" as well. Race scientists, for example, used—and distorted—his ideas to support theories of race hierarchy. Like Darwin, the race scientists of the late nineteenth century believed in the animal nature of humans and the biological, rather than social, determinants of civilization. Unlike Darwin, however, they believed in the permanent character of race traits and in the unbreachable gap between different race-culture groups. These theories were far from new. Polygenism, or the belief in many human species, had been on the rise in the scientific community since 1800 and dominant since 1850.

This photograph was taken around the turn of the twentieth century by Harry Hamilton Johnson (1858–1927), a colonial administrator, geographer, and naturalist. Like many contemporaries, Johnston was preoccupied with the "racial" classification of colonial subjects and used anthropometry, the measurement of differences in the body types of the human "races," as a tool toward this end. Royal Geographical Society, London

But Darwin's work lent new conviction and credibility to this theoretical foundation for race science.

The new field of **eugenics** was also an outgrowth of Darwin's influence. Both a science of human heredity and a social program of selective breeding, eugenics was founded in 1883 by Darwin's cousin, Francis Galton, and Galton's colleague, Karl Pearson. Believing that biological differences between races and individuals determined the social order, eugenicists sought to control the process of natural selection and, thereby, to engineer the production of a fitter race. Using the techniques of **biometry,** early eugenicists such as Pearson and Galton tried to apply statistical analysis to identify the salient traits of the races. But Galton soon realized that the eugenicist project required more research into

the laws of heredity. That recognition led to the acceptance of the new science of genetics, which identified the gene as the unit of inheritance. Although the Austrian scientist Gregor Mendel had first elaborated the gene-based theory of heredity in the 1860s, it was not until Galton and Pearson made use of Mendelian genetics around 1900 that genetic theory gained scientific respectability.

By the turn of the century, the eugenics movement was a highly prestigious scientific movement in Europe, the United States, and Japan. As such, it influenced public policy, including the forced sterilization of "unfit" groups (people with mental impairment, for example) and the introduction of immigration quotas limiting the influx of "racial undesirables." Despite the nefarious connotations of the movement, especially in the aftermath of Hitler, the eugenicists of the early twentieth century were a motley political group. While Galton himself was a Victorian liberal committed to human progress, for example, Pearson embraced social Darwinist views and argued in his work *National Life from the Standpoint of Science* (1901) that Africans must be eliminated from British South Africa for the biological and moral purification of the colony (see "Karl Pearson on National Life from the Standpoint of Science," p. 805).

The Rise of Anthropology　Darwinian theory also had a formative impact on the view of the "native" adopted by the new field of anthropology, which emerged as a formal academic discipline in the late nineteenth century to chart the stages of human cultural evolution and to identify the universal cultural traits of humankind through the comparative study of cultures. Anthropologists and archaeologists of the period fiercely debated whether contemporary "savages" were remnants of the European past, whether they had degenerated from a higher level of civilization, and whether they had the capacity to improve. A dominant model was expounded by the social evolutionary anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor. His **doctrine of survivals** argued that contemporary "savages" were evolutionary atavisms whose cultural life provided a window onto the European past. A liberal universalist and relativist himself, Tylor admired many of the moral traits he observed in "savage" culture and acknowledged certain defects in European society. Nevertheless, his social evolutionary paradigm reinforced the view that contemporary "savage" culture—especially that of black Africans—had developed outside of the evolutionary mainstream and, therefore, would always remain inferior to European civilization.

If nineteenth-century anthropology created images of innate or cultural primitivity that seemed to invite European domination, European colonizers also made use of anthropological study to implement imperial rule. Believing that knowledge of "primitive culture" was the key to the consolidation of colonial rule, European governments were frequently the sponsors of ethnographic research in the late nineteenth century. They had also done this earlier, of course, and the late-nineteenth-century application of scientific study to political control was in a sense merely a continuation of the Enlightenment project of systematically studying the world in order to master it; Captain James Cook's scientific voyages to the Pacific had embodied this project, as had Mungo Park's African expeditions. Two key ideas, however, frequently distinguished the project in the late nineteenth century: first, the conviction that European cultural superiority stemmed from biological roots and, second, that this superiority—and with it the mandate to rule the world—was a permanent feature of the global order.

IMPERIALISM AT ITS PEAK

By the turn of the century, Europeans had transformed the constructed environment, the economic life, the social order, and the cultural practices of their colonial subjects. The emergence of the first anticolonial nationalist movements in this period responded to this upheaval. At the same time, ordinary Europeans were becoming more aware of the empire. By the eve of the First World War, the colonies permeated European consciousness and culture as never before. Just as empire imposed European culture on the non-Western world, it brought that world into the heart of Europe.

The Reordering of Colonial Life

Once Europeans had secured control over their colonies, they moved to consolidate and exploit that power to its fullest. In so doing, they transformed every aspect of colonial life, from building colonial cities and establishing a cash crop economy to introducing Western education and remapping indigenous social hierarchies.

Building Colonial Infrastructure　With the global conquest completed by the turn of the twentieth century, European colonizers embarked on the massive enterprise of building colonial infrastructure and implementing colonial administration. In less urbanized parts of the empire they erected colonial cities, towns, and ports, and in them schools, hospitals, clock towers, and ceremonial gateways. In places where cities and ports existed, such as Cairo, Lagos, Singapore, and Bombay, Europeans undertook ambitious modernization projects, including clearing slums and

KARL PEARSON ON NATIONAL LIFE FROM THE STAND-POINT OF SCIENCE

Karl Pearson (1857–1936) was an English, Cambridge-educated mathematician who also studied law and social and political philosophy. He held the first chair of eugenics at University College, London, and became the director of the eugenics laboratory there. He was a disciple of Francis Galton, the founder of eugenics, which sought to improve the human race through selective breeding. Pearson, in his turn, applied statistical methods to the study of biological problems, especially evolution and heredity, a science he called biometrics. Pearson's views on eugenics are seen as deeply problematic and racist today. He claimed that he was a socialist, committed to uplifting the masses, but in fact, his "scientific" view of a nation, as presented in National Life from the Standpoint of Science, *claimed that a country's progress and well-being depended on constantly replenishing its "better" stock at the expense of its "inferior races." The twentieth century was to see many undesirable applications of the principles of eugenics in the Western world, including the mass exterminations carried out by Nazi Germany.*

"History shows me one way, and one way only, in which a high state of civilization has been produced, namely, the struggle of race with race, and the survival of the physically and mentally fitter race. . . . The struggle means suffering, intense suffering, while it is in progress; but that struggle and that suffering have been the stages by which the white man has reached his present stage of development, and they account for the fact that he no longer lives in caves and feeds on roots and nuts. 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 plowshare, when American and German and English traders shall no longer compete in the markets of the world for their raw material and 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; and unless he ceases to multiply, the catastrophe will come again; famine and pestilence, as we see them in the East, physical selection instead of the struggle of race against race, will do the work more relentlessly, and, to judge from India and China, far less efficiently than of old. . . .

"There is a struggle of race against race and of nation against nation. In the early days of that struggle it was a blind, unconscious struggle of barbaric tribes. At the present day, in the case of the civilized white man, it has become more and more the conscious, carefully directed attempt of the nation to fit itself to a continuously changing environment. The nation has to foresee how and where the struggle will be carried on; the maintenance of national position is becoming more and more a conscious preparation for changing conditions, an insight into the needs of coming environments.

"We have to remember that man is subject to the universal law of inheritance, and that a dearth of capacity may arise if we recruit our society from the inferior and not the better stock. If any social opinions or class prejudices tamper with the fertility of the better stocks, then the national character will take but a few generations to be seriously modified. . . . You will see that my view—and I think it may be called the scientific view of a nation—is that of an organized whole, kept up to a high pitch of internal efficiency by insuring that its numbers are substantially recruited from the better stocks, and kept up to a high pitch of external efficiency by contest, chiefly by way of war with inferior races, and with equal races by the struggle for trade-routes and for the sources of raw material and of food supply. This is the natural history view of mankind, and I do not think you can in its main features subvert it."

From Karl Pearson, *National Life from the Standpoint of Science,* 1900, available at housatonic.net/Documents/333.htm.

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constructing new housing and roadways. They also brought new modes of transportation to their empires, in the form of highway systems, bridges, canals, and railway networks, as well as new systems of communication, notably the telegraph. By 1865 telegraph lines connected India to Europe; by 1871 a cable ran from Vladivostok to Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Singapore. In addition to constructing a new built environment, colonial rulers imposed European models of administration in many spheres of colonial life. Colonial administrators reorganized the police, army, judiciary, and postal service along European lines and, to varying degrees, introduced European models of education—including European language instruction—and Western-style medicine.

Europeans regarded these projects as central to the task of colonial rule. The use of grid layouts in colonial cities and ports and the laying of railway lines were intended to efficiently transport goods to both domestic and metropolitan markets and thus to facilitate

With the conquest of much of the world complete by the turn of the twentieth century, Europeans turned their attention to the introduction of European technologies and communications in their colonies. Using local and imported colonial labor, they built extensive road and rail networks in many parts of Africa and Asia. This photograph of 1891 shows worker clearing the ground for a railway in rural Kenya. What strategic and economic objectives motivated European colonizers to undertake these projects?
Hulton Archive/Getty Images
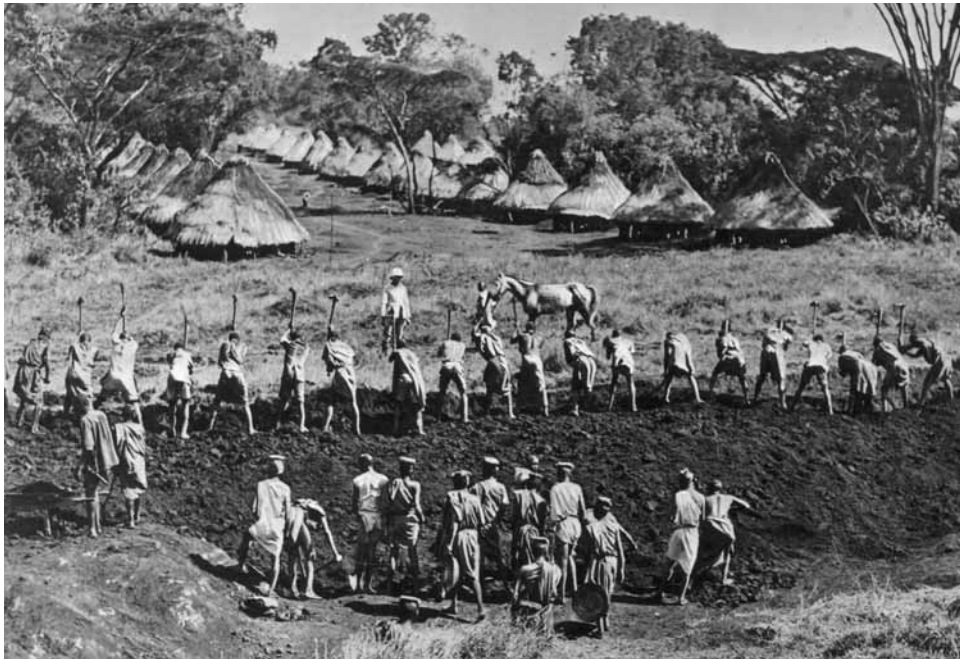
European commercial exploitation of the colonies. This infrastructure also had military and strategic importance. Railways and telegraphs allowed for the rapid mobilization of European troops, while urban street grids permitted the policing and surveillance of local populations. The construction of colonial cities and towns also revealed the European agenda to regulate race relations in this period through the spatial separation of "natives" and Europeans. Colonizers built better ventilated, more sanitary residential areas for themselves—for security reasons, often near military cantonments—where they re-created European-style institutions, including clubs, polo fields, and churches, leaving "natives" to cluster in what they saw as crowded and unhealthy urban spaces. The British, for example, successfully segregated colonial Madras into European and Indian quarters and labeled them, respectively, "White Town" and "Black Town."

The New Colonial Economy   Explicit colonial rule also triggered major economic transformations. Although the global terms of trade had long worked against Asia and Africa, the European conquest, along with increased industrial development in Europe, further widened the gap between **metropole** and colony in the late century. As they had done earlier, the industrial economies of Europe exported manufactured goods to their colonies and imported raw materials, especially cash crops, from them. By the late nineteenth century, however, more countries were flooding colonial markets with industrial goods, while the European adoption of neomercantilist trade policies from the

1880s on prevented the colonies from pursuing trade relationships outside the metropole.

Above all, the conquests of the late nineteenth century ensured that European colonists could use coercion to install and support new agricultural and labor regimes. The advent of a cash-based agricultural economy meant that many peasants no longer primarily relied on subsistence farming, turning instead to the production of crops required as raw materials to feed industrial production in Europe or to wage labor, both on small farms and big European-run plantations. British India, for instance, became a major producer of opium, rice, indigo, tea, and, above all, cotton during this period. While some peasants prospered from cash-crop production, many paid an exorbitant price for the abrupt transition to a new agricultural economy. Their abandonment of subsistence farming based on food grain production made them much more vulnerable to famine and also exposed them to the fluctuations of international commerce. Thus, for example, the invention of synthetic dyes in the early twentieth century rendered Indian indigo, long a staple of the British textile industry, obsolete, leaving thousands of Indian indigo farmers bankrupted. Despite the weakened economic position of peasants, taxes remained high, thus forcing rural populations to migrate to cities and towns in search of work as urban laborers.

Another distinctive feature of the late-nineteenth-century colonial economy was the global migration of labor. The advent of modern transportation allowed Europeans to dispatch millions of indentured laborers to build irrigation systems and railroads and to work on

plantations and in mines in regions far from their homes. This diaspora of migrant labor divided families and created local demographic imbalances. Cochin-Chinese (Vietnamese) laborers worked the plantations of French Cambodia, for example, while tens of thousands of Indian and Chinese laborers, known as "coolies," migrated to work in British possessions, including South Africa, East Africa, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), the West Indies, Burma, Malaya, Fiji, and Australia. In certain cases, indentured labor from existing colonies facilitated the colonization of other regions. The construction of a vast railway network by indentured laborers from India, for example, made possible the British settlement of East Africa.

The Cultural Dimensions of Colonial Rule   Europeans conquered the globe not merely by military, diplomatic, and economic means, but by cultural domination as well. This Western cultural influence reached far and wide—including education, the maintenance of law and order, relations between different groups in society, language use, and dress codes—and often fundamentally transformed and restructured the existing social fabric. In fact, few aspects of everyday life in postcolonial societies are untouched by the colonial encounter, from the architecture in towns like Dakar and Delhi and the vast networks of railroads across Asia and Africa to the immense popularity of cricket in the West Indies and South Asia and the addition of the blouse to the sari at the behest of prudish missionaries in India.

One important effect of European dominance was to create new hierarchies and divisions within colonial society. The establishment of Western-style schools and universities throughout the European empires, for example, served the purpose of producing a Western-educated colonial elite. European colonizers hoped in this way to create loyal subjects who would serve their imperial rulers in the lower levels of the local colonial administration and, to some extent, bridge the gap between colonizers and colonized. However, this vision was only partially fulfilled. In many situations, European colonizers favored traditional elites at the expense of the newly educated professional classes, believing the former to be more reliable supporters of colonial rule. Indeed, Western-educated colonial subjects found themselves doubly marginalized, by Europeans who continued to condescend to them and to exclude them from positions of power, and by their own alienation from the indigenous masses. As one example of this kind of cultural displacement, educated Algerians refused to speak Arabic, favoring French, the language of their colonial masters, instead.

As they sought to understand and classify native societies, European colonial rulers also emphasized particular social identities of the colonized, thus fueling social conflict between different indigenous groups. In late-nineteenth-century British India, for example, colonial administrators and politicians reinforced divisions of caste (the hierarchical division of society based on birth). Following the questionable advice of upper-caste Indian scholars, the British declared caste to be the foundation of traditional Indian society, even though it had been only one of several such social markers in precolonial India. British authorities relied increasingly on caste stereotypes. They labeled the Gurkhas and the Sikhs, for example, as "martial" and considered them to be good recruits for the British army, while they classified others, such as the Kallars, as intrinsically "criminal" and treated them with deep disdain and suspicion. With time, these classifications became increasingly fixed, leading to the hardening of social boundaries within Indian society.

Methods of Governance

How did Europeans govern the vast empire of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? Virtually everywhere, the new imperial mission of the period translated into transformed models of colonial governance, although these models—and their implementation—varied widely from empire to empire and, within each empire, from colony to colony.

Brute Force: Exploitation in the Belgian Congo   In some places, Europeans ruled by brute force. Perhaps the most egregious example of domination through ruthless violence was the Belgian King Leopold II's Congo Free State. There, the increasingly cynical and racist European view of the colonial "native" was taken to its logical conclusion. Between 1898 and 1905, Leopold's troops impressed Congolese men into hard labor at gunpoint. Some were used to build roads, while others served long periods in the army and, after discharge, in the rural police. This indigenous police force, in turn, compelled the rest of the population to abandon subsistence farming and instead produce rubber for the state. When the police encountered resistance to these arrangements, they responded by shooting recalcitrants, turning over baskets of severed hands from the corpses—as well as from the living—to the Belgian authorities as proof that punishment had been carried out.

Although Leopold's methods saved him from bankruptcy, other European powers condemned his de facto enslavement, murder, and maiming of his subjects as a moral outrage. In 1908 the Belgian Parliament assumed control of the colony as a direct consequence of this international outcry. An official inquiry mounted by a Belgian commission reported in 1919 that Leopold's methods had reduced the population of the Congo by

Photograph of mutilated workers from the Belgian Congo from the late nineteenth century. Under the rule of King Leopold II, Africans were forced into rubber cultivation at gunpoint. Those that did not meet their production quotas were either killed or had their hands cut off. The forced labor regime of rubber production in Leopold's Congo was one of the most atrocious chapters in the history of the European colonization of Africa.
Courtesy of Auti-Slavery International

half. Most recent scholarly assessments have been even grimmer, estimating that the population of the Congo Free State shrank from between 20 and 30 million to 8 million during Leopold's rule.

Indirect Rule in the British Empire   More than any other ruling power, Britain took the lessons of empire to heart in elaborating a new system of "indirect rule." Interpreting the Indian Rebellion as evidence of the futility and folly of direct colonial involvement, British administrators devised a relatively hands-off policy that largely delegated power to traditional chiefs, kings, and princes. These traditional leaders, in turn, were expected to carry out the dictates of colonial officials. The system was implemented in its fullest form in colonial Africa.

The British favored indirect rule for a variety of reasons. Because it relied largely on local people, it was far less expensive than other methods of rule. Furthermore, by using indigenous leaders and thus attaching themselves to "tradition," the British sought to gain legitimacy among subject peoples. This legitimacy, it was hoped, would make British colonial administration more stable and better able to withstand colonial insurgence.

Indirect rule had several negative consequences for the colonies. First, although the British made much of the fact that indirect rule left indigenous cultures essentially intact, this was not the case. In the African context, for example, indirect rule removed traditional limitations on the power of the local chieftain. Required to obey the British authorities alone, he was no longer accountable to his subjects or to other political leaders in the community. By thus granting unfettered power to traditional leaders, the British cleared the way for the establishment of despotic regimes. The Fulani Emirs who acted as British agents in Nigeria, for example, were effectively dictators. Second, by casting themselves as the benevolent guardians of African "custom" and "tribal" practice, the British promoted the tribal identity at the expense of other social affiliations and loyalties in colonial society. Indirect rule thus fomented division and conflict along "tribal" or ethnic lines. Finally, in emphasizing African "tradition," indirect rule tended to neglect the higher education of colonial subjects, at the same time marginalizing Western-educated Africans perceived as threatening to British rule.

Sustaining the Civilizing Mission in the French Empire   While the Germans and Dutch adopted some variant of the British model of indirect rule and the Portuguese and the Belgians ruled by unadorned coercion and violence, the French developed an alternative model of governance. In many (although not all) parts of the French Empire, they implemented a system of "direct rule" that unequivocally repudiated the authority of existing leaders and political institutions in favor of that of French officials, laws, and codes. The method of direct colonial rule reflected the French *mission civilisatrice,* its civilizing mission to assimilate the "native" to French culture. The French thus retained the ideal of assimilationism even after other nations had begun to move away from it.

In part, this can be explained as an outgrowth of French chauvinism and the sense that France had been the guardian of "civilization" in Europe for centuries. But there were other reasons as well. Although the *mission civilisatrice* was simply a variant of the liberal civilizing mission, with its origins in Enlightenment universalism and principles of universal equality and rationality, the French tradition of republicanism made these beliefs more central to French political identity

This photograph shows the Lieutenant-General of the Punjab, in northwestern India, surrounded by the chieftains and rulers of various Indian states in traditional regal garb. Although British authority over their kingdoms was unquestioned, the colonial administration often allowed local rulers nominally to remain in power. In return these Indian rulers were often the staunchest supporters of British rule in India. Popperfoto

and culture than they were elsewhere in Europe. Also, because French philosophical and scientific tradition tended to emphasize the importance of environment in determining human development, Darwin's influence and that of biological determinism came later to France and carried less weight there than in other European nations.

The French method of governance had contradictory effects. On the one hand, the French policy destroyed indigenous political and cultural institutions even more than the British policy did. On the other hand, "natives" were in principle seen as potential Frenchmen, with the implication that, once civilized, they could be granted the rights of French citizens. In some instances, France conferred citizenship rights on colonial subjects. For example, in 1848 African males from the coastal region of Senegal were granted voting rights and sent a Senegalese representative, Durand Valentin, to the French legislature. However, even the promise of French citizenship was double-edged, connoting greater dependence on and integration with colonial masters, rather than greater self-determination and autonomy. In practice, moreover, intense racism and violent subjugation undermined lofty French ideals of republicanism and democracy. In places like West Africa, for example, the exclusion of Africans from administrative posts and the denial of their right to elect their own representatives tarnished the rhetoric of full citizenship.

Comparing French and British Rule   Despite these important ideological distinctions, the difference between French and British forms of governance should not be exaggerated. In practice, both Britain and France relied on a combination of direct rule through a European official and indirect rule through local collaborators and paid agents. The French also focused their assimilationist efforts on those colonies—like Algeria—which they

felt had the greatest potential for Europeanization. Elsewhere—as in Indochina, Madagascar, and Morocco—they settled for improving "natives" within the context of their own cultures. Moreover, as Darwinian ideas grew stronger in France, the debate over whether the cultural assimilation of colonial subjects was possible or even desirable intensified, leading to the abandonment of the *mission civilisatrice* as official policy after the First World War. French and British rule thus differed more in theory than they did in practice.

Non-Western Nationalisms

The mid-to-late nineteenth century witnessed the emergence and growth of nationalist sentiments not only in Europe, but in its colonies in Asia and Africa as well.

Characteristics of Colonial Nationalism   In the late nineteenth century, notions of the nation and nationhood in the colonial world shared important features with their European counterparts. Nationalisms in Asia and Africa thus typically centered on the belief in a shared—sometimes fabricated—history and culture. For Chinese nationalists like Sun Yat-sen, the splendors of the Chinese past rendered the present-day subjugation of the Chinese under the Qing and the European powers unnatural and unacceptable. Likewise, the Pan African movement appealed to an imagined precolonial past in which harmony between African polities and ethnicities prevailed.

Like late-nineteenth-century European nationalism, non-Western nationalisms also frequently defined themselves in racial, ethnic, and religious terms. Chinese nationalists, for example, privileged the majority Han as the "true" Chinese and denied equal status to other ethnic groups, such as the Tibetans and Mongols. Exclusion along religious or cultural lines was also

MAP 26.4 RESISTANCE TO IMPERIALISM, 1880–1920
This map reveals widespread opposition to colonial rule at the turn of the twentieth century. Although strategic and technological advantages allowed the European nations to conquer much of Africa and Asia in this period, indigenous resistance made the full-scale pacification of the colonies a longer, more difficult process. How did European methods of colonial governance attempt to thwart rebellion?
◆ For an online version, go to www.mhhe.com/chambers9 > chapter 26 > book maps

common. In India, a Hindu branch of nationalism claimed Indian history as Hindu history, labeling the long periods of Muslim rule in India as the dark years of foreign invasion. With the substantial Muslim population in India thus excluded from Indian nationalism, some Muslim leaders pledged loyalty to the British while others demanded a separate Muslim nation.

Some nationalist movements, notably those in China and the Ottoman Empire, saw the indigenous regime that had allowed European encroachment as the primary enemy. Under the leadership of Sun Yat-sen, Chinese nationalists attacked and, in 1911, ultimately overthrew the declining Qing Dynasty, which they condemned as both inefficient and illegitimate. Likewise, a group of nationalist reformers known as the Young Turks revolted against Ottoman rule in 1908, blaming both Sultan Abdul Hamid's authoritarian regime and European intervention for the decline of Ot-

toman power. Seeking to introduce Western-style political and administrative reforms independent of European interference, the Young Turks succeeded, for a brief period, in establishing a constitutional government with secular institutions.

Non-Western nationalist movements at the turn of the century differed sharply from other forms of anticolonial insurgence. The latter tended to be local in character and aimed against the direct oppressor, rather than at colonial rule. The Indian Rebellion of 1857, for example, targeted local Indian landholders and moneylenders and local colonial magistrates and police, rather than the British government in India. Similarly, in the Maji Rebellion of 1906–1907 in German East Africa, traditional religious leaders led angry peasants in fighting the imposition of cotton cultivation by the Germans, targeting African as well as German overseers. Non-Western nationalist movements, by contrast,

clearly articulated their struggle as one against foreign rule, with the long-range political goal of introducing modern constitutional forms of government. The fact that anticolonial insurgence persisted in the late nineteenth century reveals that African and Asian nationalisms of the period remained largely elitist movements that often failed to address the more immediate, acute grievances of the colonial masses.

Causes of Colonial Nationalism   Ironically, the colonial state itself in many ways facilitated the rise of colonial nationalism. First, colonial educational institutions, courts of law, and railways that crisscrossed vast countries like India brought people from faraway regions together in ways that had simply not been feasible in the past. Furthermore, as European colonists drew disparate regions together into a common, exploitative economic system, nationalists could appeal to a sense of shared fate.

Second, most leaders of nationalist movements in Asia and Africa received liberal educations in Western-style institutions and often became professionals, such as doctors and lawyers. This made them well-equipped to lead efforts to modernize their administrations and economies along Western lines, as was the case in Egypt and Turkey. Hence, the colonial rulers' efforts to produce a local elite through the promotion of Western education often backfired, as some of these intended allies used European concepts of universalism and democracy to question their own subjection to foreign rule.

The emergence of the mass press and, with that, the growth of a politically informed civic public also contributed to the growth of colonial nationalisms. Print media, including newspapers, journals, books, and pamphlets, that addressed nationalist issues now circulated among a much larger literate audience. This literature appeared not just in the languages of the colonizer but in local languages that had become systematized and standardized with their own formal grammars in this period, both by educated natives and by colonial administrators and missionaries seeking to modernize and master languages unfamiliar to them. The formation of a broad range of indigenous voluntary associations also created a new arena in which the educated public came together to discuss the pertinent issues of the day. Nationalist organizations, such as the Indian National Congress (founded in 1885), often took shape in this setting.

Debating Empire: Imperial Politics in the Metropole

While a common cultural framework informed European attitudes toward empire in the nineteenth century, a range of different views and voices nevertheless existed. In fact, in the late nineteenth century, with Western global domination at its peak and European racism and cultural arrogance on the rise, more Europeans debated the nature and scope of empire than ever before. There were several reasons for this. In part, the efforts of nineteenth-century nation-states to engage the masses in issues of empire explain the reach of the debate. Better educated, more literate Europeans now learned about empire in state-supported primary schools and from reading the mass press. With the broadening of the electorate, moreover, many more Europeans had voting rights and, thus, a stake in the nation's imperial politics than ever before. The vast scale of empire in this period also drew many more Europeans directly into the empire, whether as soldiers fighting in colonial wars, as civil servants sent to govern the empire, as emigrants to the settlement colonies, or as relatives of Europeans abroad.

Imperialist Politicians and Parties   No one political party, but rather groups within all parties, waved the imperial banner. Nonetheless, almost everywhere in Europe, imperialism aided the political resurgence of the right, especially in Great Britain and Germany. Indeed, imperialism allowed conservative groups with their traditional base in the army, the Church, and the aristocracy to ally themselves with commercial interests in a program of popular appeal that promised prosperity and national glory. In Britain, for example, the Conservative party, led by Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli (1868; 1874–1880), embraced empire in principle as well as in practice. In 1875 Disraeli snatched up shares in the Suez Canal in 1875 from the indebted Khedive in a successful attempt to outmaneuver the French and secure British control over Egypt. In 1876 he conferred the title Empress of India on Queen Victoria, a gesture that captured the popular imagination.

Liberals and centrists took the imperial initiative elsewhere. In France, republicans like Jules Ferry and Leon Gambetta, backed by a group of former colonial administrators and military men in the parliament, promoted expansionism in an effort to bolster national prestige after the demoralizing defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871. Likewise, Italian liberals such as Francesco Crispi and Giovanni Giolitti pursued imperial ventures in the hope of fostering Italian nationalist sentiment.

Critics of Empire   Outspoken critics of empire could be found, however, in almost all political camps. In Belgium, the king's sponsorship of empire met with political opposition from the entire Belgian parliament. Some on the political right also disapproved of empire as a dangerous distraction from domestic issues. According to French rightists, for example, empire diverted attention from the nation's mission to take back Alsace-Lorraine, seized by the Germans in 1871. In

HOBSON'S INTERPRETATION OF IMPERIALISM

Debate on the interpretation of imperialism has not ceased since the publication of J. A. Hobson's Imperialism: A Study *in 1902. The work went through many editions and remains worth reading today. Hobson was a highly respected British economist and social scientist, and his study is filled with statistics and careful argument. His conclusions capture some of the essence and polemic tone of the case he made.*

"If Imperialism may no longer be regarded as a blind inevitable destiny, is it certain that imperial expansion as a deliberately chosen line of public policy can be stopped?

"We have seen that it is motivated, not by the interests of the nation as a whole, but by those of certain classes, who impose the policy upon the nation for their own advantage. . . . The essentially illicit nature of this use of the public resources of the nation to safeguard and improve private investments should be clearly recognized.

". . . Analysis of Imperialism, with its nature supports, militarism, oligarchy, bureaucracy, protection, concentration of capital and violent trade fluctuations, has marked it out as the supreme danger of modern national States. The power of the imperialist forces within the nation to use the national resources for their private gain, by operating the instrument of the States, can only be overthrown by the establishment of a genuine democracy."

Britain, the liberals largely opposed further imperial expansion, particularly after the Indian Rebellion of 1857. Liberals also rejected many of the techniques of imperial expansion, including the use of ambiguous treaties and the hasty reliance on force. The liberal leader William Gladstone (1868–1874; 1880–1885; 1886; 1892–1894) won the election of 1880 after campaigning against the immoral and un-Christian imperialist policies of the Conservatives and only supported imperial rule in the most lukewarm fashion. Even so, many liberal imperialists joined the conservative Tories because of Gladstone's "betrayal" and, ultimately, the Liberal party hatched its own imperial wing.

Across Europe, the radical left, especially socialists, presented the most consistent and vocal opposition to imperialism. Anatole France, one of France's most popular authors, told a protest meeting in 1906, "Whites do not communicate with blacks or yellow people except to enserf or massacre them. The people whom we call barbarians know us only through our own crimes." Socialists, radicals, and labor leaders likened the suppression of strikers and radical agitators to the brutality of imperial repression and protested the living conditions of European workers and peasants by comparing their subordination to that of colonial subjects.

The opposition of leftists to empire emerged not only out of feelings of solidarity with oppressed peoples but also out of their fundamental ideological antagonism toward capitalism, which they saw as inextricably entwined with imperialism. Leftist thinkers, in fact, wrote some of the first and most influential (if inaccurate) analyses of the causes and consequences of empire at the turn of the nineteenth century. In *Imperialism: A Study* (1902), the British left liberal economist J. A. Hobson argued that imperialism emerged out of the inherent logic of industrial capitalism and its fundamentally unequal distribution of wealth (see "Hobson's Interpretation of Imperialism," above). Underconsumption caused by the low wages of industrial workers and the excess savings of the wealthy created insufficient aggregate demand in the domestic economy, and profit-seeking capitalists therefore turned to new markets overseas as a more profitable setting in which to invest their surplus capital. Imperialism thus stemmed from capitalist exploitation of the European working classes and fostered still greater injustice in its exploitation of the colonial masses.

Hobson inspired the even more scathing critique of imperialism's exploitation of the global masses of the Russian Marxist leader V. I. Lenin. In *Imperialism: The Last Stage of Capitalism* (1916), Lenin elaborated on Hobson's analysis, linking imperialism specifically to the advent of monopoly capitalism, a new and more advanced phase of capitalist development in which financial, rather than industrial, capital propelled the European economy. In his view, the new imperialism was fomented by competition between an ever-smaller number of monopoly capitalists—large firms—for domination of global investment and raw material markets. For Lenin, imperialism represented capitalism in its highest and most parasitic stage.

Popular Attitudes toward Imperialism   While imperial support cut across class divisions, certain social groups nevertheless tended to identify more with the imperial mission than others.

Imperial rule had particular meaning, for example, for members of the aristocracy, especially in Britain
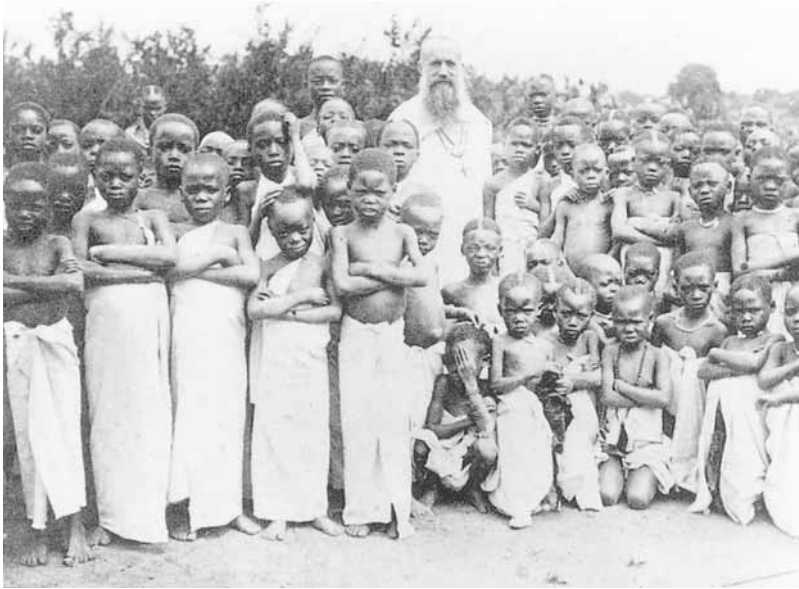
Although missionaries confronted great obstacles—including little success in converting Africans and colonial administrators who regarded Christian conversion as a potential threat to the status quo—they continued to come to Africa in large numbers. In this photograph, from late-nineteenth-century French Equatorial Africa, the missionary's evident satisfaction in his paternalistic role provides a stark contrast to the sullenness of his flock.

and France. Aristocrats, after all, expected to feel distant from the people they ruled and were comfortable with a language of subordination applicable to both European and colonial societies. In Britain, the younger sons of aristocratic families had a long tradition of government and military service. With democratization and the rise of a civil service, their best chances for the experience of governing or of military command were in the empire. In France, where the Republic turned anticlerical after 1875, Catholic and monarchist nobles were largely excluded from public positions at home but could still find them in the colonies.

The European working classes were divided on the issue. In Britain and Germany, they tended to support empire more often than not. In Britain, the popularity of proimperialists skits and songs in music halls and pubs attests to the **jingoism** of working-class audiences. In Germany, the government's dedication to militarism and nationalism promoted popular support of the German Empire. By contrast, large segments of the French and Italian masses opposed colonialism, even during the zenith of expansion in the late nineteenth century, and protested conscription to fight in colonial wars. Ill-fated imperial ventures, in fact, swept both the French leader Jules Ferry (1885) and the Italian leader Francesco Crispi (1896) from office.

The Effects of Imperialism on European Society

Although empire did not necessarily constitute the central political or social issue of the late nineteenth century, it nevertheless touched the lives of ordinary Europeans more than ever before. This new reach reflected the scope of empire itself, which attracted in-

creasing numbers of Europeans overseas. Growing awareness of and involvement in empire may also be traced to the rise of a new commercial culture, exposing Europeans to a flood of imperial imagery and goods. Finally, as empire became closely identified with new European gender roles, it became further integrated into the mainstream of European culture.

Europeans in the Empire   Although European manpower was scarce almost everywhere outside the few colonies where Europeans had settled, European soldiers, administrators, and missionaries came to the empire in growing numbers. European conscripts fought not only in wars of conquest but in the ongoing repression of anticolonial insurgence as well. For officials at every level of the expanding colonial administration, employment in the colonial service conferred a degree of prestige and power that an analogous position in Europe simply could not bring. Peasants and villagers revered the District Collector (tax collector) in India, for example, as a minor *raja* or deity. Missionaries also continued to flock to the empire, where they confronted new challenges, including the advance of Islam and the erosion of their authority in the form of breakaway "Africanized" Christian churches. They also faced the obstructionism of colonial administrators who feared that conversion efforts would spark indigenous unrest.

With the opening of the Suez Canal (which cut the distance by boat from England to India almost in half), the introduction of faster steamships, and the expansion of colonial railway networks, European women also appeared on the imperial scene in new numbers. In addition to married women who joined their husbands in the army or the colonial administration, a substantial

number of single women emigrated to the colonies during the late nineteenth century in search of employment or marriage opportunities unavailable at home. Many of them failed to find suitable jobs, suffering downward economic mobility and a loss of social status.

In addition, European migration to the settlement colonies peaked in this period, although it never approached the numbers of Europeans emigrating to the United States. The French emigrated primarily to Algeria in the late nineteenth century, where they ultimately constituted 10 percent of the Algerian population. British emigration to Canada, Australia, and New Zealand also increased substantially. Between 1896 and 1914, for example, 150,000 British citizens resettled in Canada. By the end of the century, many French and British citizens had friends or relatives who lived in or had completed a stint in the colonies.

Representing the Empire In the late nineteenth century, Europeans absorbed information about and images of the empire in myriad new ways. To begin with, a more literate European public, educated in state-supported primary schools, now could read about empire in a variety of print venues. The most important of these was the mass press. European governments were quick to recognize the political potential of the press and to use it to mobilize public opinion in favor of empire at key moments. When British metropolitan support for the Boer War was at low ebb, for example, the *London Times* played a critical role in drumming up anti-Afrikaner sentiment. Europeans also avidly read the memoirs of explorers and missionaries and devoured imperial adventure novels during this period. H. Rider Haggard's best-selling novel, *King Solomon's Mines* (1885), detailing the exploits of British heroes as they penetrate a remote African region, encounter savages, and discover the riches of a vanished civilization, exemplifies the genre.

Beyond the world of print media, the empire was on visual display, often in spectacular form, at the turn of the century. Unlike earlier periods, when elite boutiques sold luxury goods from the empire to the rich, the emergence of the department store meant that middle-class consumers could purchase an array of moderately priced imperial exotica, ranging from Persian rugs to shawls from India. From the 1880s on, department stores catered to the middle-class European taste for Japanese and Chinese ornaments—screens, fans, and porcelain, for example—in household decor. By the 1890s, some department stores featured fashions designated specifically for the colonies, often with a rugged or military look, to outfit the fashionable European elite overseas.

This advertisement from the *Illustrated London News* in 1897 depicts a group of Sudanese warriors dumbfounded at the sight of the Pears' soap slogan carved into a cliff-side. Pears had no intention of selling soap to the Sudanese. Instead, its product was being presented to British consumers as a symbol of the superiority of British civilization and its imperative to dominate others. The Mary Evans Picture Libarary

The budding advertising industry also exploited imperial imagery in magazines, on city billboards and posters, and in product brochures. Advertisers exploited the appeal of empire to market products with no imperial connection, plastering likenesses of the popular explorer of Africa, Henry Stanley, for example, on advertisements for Bovril bouillon and Congo Soap. Some advertisements seemed to serve as much as imperial propaganda as they did marketing tools. In a striking example, an advertisement for Pears' Soap linked themes of cleanliness, civilization, and hygiene by depicting awed Sudanese "savages" genuflecting before a cliff etched with the words "Pears' Soap is the Best" (see above).

From the 1860s on, Europeans began to exhibit their empires in the setting of world's fairs. Mounted in dif-

ferent European and American cities about once every decade, the fairs displayed the industrial prowess of participating nations to vast audiences. By the 1890s, no world's fair was complete without its own ethnographic displays of colonial peoples, often located, significantly, next to the animal displays. Grouped in reconstructed colonial villages, between fifty and two hundred men, women, and children lived for months at a time on the fairgrounds. There they carried out "exotic" rituals, such as indigenous dancing, along with the mundane activities of daily life, in effect performing the role of "primitive" before rapt European audiences. The most popular exhibits were often those of peoples deemed to be most "savage," such as villagers from Dahomey (Benin).

In addition to the imaginary travel enabled by the world's fairs, middle- and upper-class Europeans began to visit parts of the empire as tourists in the late nineteenth century. While the tourist industry itself was new and still developing largely around seaside and spa resorts within Europe, improved steamships and the development of railway networks in many parts of the world made it possible to travel farther afield. Starting in the 1850s, the British entrepreneur Thomas Cook organized the first commercial tours to North Africa and the Middle East. Algeria and Egypt quickly emerged as popular destinations. Relying on Baedeker and other guidebooks to provide insight into the exotic, British, German, French, and American tourists admired indigenous architecture, purchased "native" handicrafts, and gawked at the local populations.

Empire also influenced the development of high art in the late nineteenth century, in particular the birth of artistic modernism. Imperial expansion fueled new interest in the "primitive" as a subject of art, as in the case of the French artist Paul Gauguin, who left Europe to relocate to Oceania, where he took a series of indigenous wives and embarked on a career of painting unspoiled and sensual "noble savages." By the turn of the century, "primitive" art itself soon came to influence the artistic vanguard in Europe. As invading Europeans conquered new terrain, plundered art and artifacts from Africa and Oceania began to surface as curios in European flea markets and as parts of ethnographic exhibits in natural history museums. Avant-garde artists in Dresden, Berlin, and Paris (including Wassily Kandinsky, Henri Matisse, and Pablo Picasso) quickly "discovered" them and sought to incorporate "primitive" elements into their own art. For Picasso, for example, the simple geometric abstractions of African masks could convey powerful emotions with an immediacy and directness lacking in European representational art. His efforts to reproduce this effect by fusing features of African art with elements of ancient Iberian

This illustration of 1900 shows French tourists in Biskra, Algeria, visiting the Ouled Nails, a nomadic tribe well known for its dancing women. The man consults his Baedeker guide while the woman inspects the Ouled Nails women through her lorgnette, almost as if the women were animals or inanimate objects.

sculpture gave rise to **Cubism,** one of the first European forays into abstraction.

Gender and Empire   With a European population comprising mainly male colonial administrators, soldiers, and missionaries, empire emerged as a male-dominated sphere early in the nineteenth century. This male ethos became even more pronounced in the latter part of the century, as the empire became closely associated with a new model of masculinity. Under the influence of Darwinian theory, a substantial number of Europeans came to fear that "overcivilization"—the loss of instinct and physical fitness due to urbanization and industrialization—was promoting the "degeneration" of the white race. They targeted modern men, in particular, as the passive, enfeebled, unmanly products of the machine age, urging participation in the competitive arenas of

nature, war, and empire as the cure. In effect, the new masculinity cast off what were seen as the "soft" female characteristics of midcentury manhood, such as sensitivity and dependency, and embraced "hard" masculine values of instinct, aggression, virility, and self-reliance. In European primary schools, in popular books and magazines, and in a slew of new scouting, hiking, gymnastics, and hunting organizations designed to toughen boys and young men, a whole generation learned to celebrate empire as a proving ground for masculinity. Enthusiasts applied the same formula to the nation: Just as competition and the struggle for domination could make men out of boys, so would imperial conquest empower weak and degenerate nations.

The imperial experience also shaped feminine gender ideals, both in the metropole and abroad. Earlier in the century, Victorian domestic ideology had established women's special mission to be that of safeguarding civilized values and morally and spiritually elevating those around them. For British women, this mission found particular expression in their intense involvement in the antislavery movement. Europeans still assigned this moralizing role to women in the late nineteenth century but imbued it, in the aftermath of Darwin, with new racial significance. As women took their place in the empire, their charge was not merely to protect European standards of morality but to defend the biological purity of the white race.

European women were to fulfill these responsibilities in several ways. They were expected both to produce white offspring and to deter European men from having sexual relations with indigenous women, thereby preventing interbreeding between "natives" and Europeans, said to contaminate whiteness and lead to the degeneration of the race. They were also in-tended to police the cultural and social boundaries between Europeans and subject peoples, in large part by implementing the rules of European etiquette. By insisting that Indian subjects appear before the British without shoes, for example, British women clearly demarcated the social distance between ruler and ruled. After the arrival of women, the British club also became a much more exclusive institution, where the social rituals of British life—dances, card-playing, teas—were meticulously reproduced. Because women's presence in the empire exposed them to the supposed lechery of barbarous natives, moreover, the lines between white and nonwhite societies furthered hardened, as European males felt that the virtue of their women had to be protected at all costs. Acting out of those beliefs, colonial administrators subjected colonized men to new surveillance and, if suspected of any infraction, to draconian punishments.

The presence of women in the colonies thus tended to exacerbate tensions between Europeans and indigenous populations. The most extreme example of this was the role played by the British woman in India, the detested **memsahib,** in part a caricature, in part a real social type. Pampered and spoiled, blatantly racist and contemptuous of all things Indian, the *memsahib* quickly earned the hatred of her colonial subjects. British men, as well, often blamed her for deteriorating relations between Indians and British, conveniently ignoring the fact that economic changes—including the intensified expropriation of peasant lands, political mobilization by Indian nationalists, and the more general rise in European racism—were clearly at fault. Moreover, while the *memsahib* did indeed accentuate the boundaries between the colonizer and the colonized, in doing so she merely carried out the imperial duty that had been assigned to her.

Summary

Europeans conquered much of the world during the nineteenth century. During the first two-thirds of the century, Europeans built their empire gradually and implicitly, as governments intervened politically and militarily to protect commercial interests overseas. They legitimized their growing global presence through the liberal mission of "civilizing" the non-European world. In the last quarter of the century, all this changed. European nation-states now took the imperial lead, competing with one another in an intense race for colonial territory. Influenced by Darwinian biological determinism and disillusioned by anticolonial insurgency, moreover, Europeans increasingly scaled back their civilizing ambitions, often exchanging the exercise of paternalistic authority for that of unapologetic domination.

The European conquest fundamentally altered life both in the colonies and in Europe itself. For colonial subjects, European intervention meant the destruction of indigenous economic, political, and cultural arrangements. The fierce resentment provoked by European rule manifested itself in

anticolonial violence and in nationalist movements to end colonial rule. European colonial domination also profoundly influenced European society and culture in this period, affecting everything from gender roles and national identity to popular culture and art.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

1. European colonial rule changed the face of much of the non-Western world during the nineteenth century. How did the imperial experience affect European identity?

2. European colonialism caused immense suffering among subject peoples. Did any segments of colonized societies benefit from colonial rule?
3. In what ways did Europeans themselves contribute to the eventual downfall of their empires?

RECOMMENDED READING

Studies

*Adas, Michael. *Machines as a Measure of Man: Science, Technology, and the Ideology of Western Dominance.* 1989. Argues that the formation of imperial ideology in Africa and Asia was linked to notions of scientific progress prevalent in Europe.

*Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* 1983. Classic on the creation and global spread of national identity in the nineteenth century.

*Bayly, C. A. *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780–1830.* 1989. Comprehensive analysis of the expansion of the British Empire in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.

*Betts, Raymond, ed. *Scramble for Africa: Causes and Dimensions of Empire.* 1966. Early, seminal work on European expansion in Africa.

*———. *Assimilation and Integration in French Colonial Theory.* 1961. The now classic study of the shift in the governing ideology of French colonialism from the conversion of the colonized into French citizens to a rejection of this universalism in the years after the First World War.

*Boahen, Adu. *African Perspectives on Colonialism.* 1989. Views on the colonial encounter in Africa by a well-known historian from Ghana.

*Brantlinger, Patrick. *Rule of Darkness: British Literature and Imperialism, 1830–1914.* 1988. Important exploration of the ways in which imperialist assumptions pervaded Victorian literature.

*Brion Davis, David. *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution.* 1999. A classic on the different factors that influenced opinions on slavery in late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century England and America.

*Burton, Antoinette. *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865–1915.* 1994. Analysis of the role of imperial ideology in shaping British feminism in the late nineteenth century.

*Chaudhuri, Nupur, and Margaret Strobel (eds.). *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance.* 1992. Important collection of essays that analyzes the complex and sometimes contradictory relationship between European women in the colonies and imperial ideology and practice.

*Cohn, Bernard. *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India.* 1996. Landmark book that argues that imperialism was a project of cultural and not merely military or diplomatic control.

*Conklin, Alice. *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895–1930.* 1997. Argues that the democratic assimilationist ideology of the French Third Republic in its colonies was deeply hierarchical and racist.

*Coombs, Annie. *Reinventing Africa: Museums, Material Culture, and Popular Culture in Late Victorian and Edwardian England.* 1994. Discusses how the representation of Africa in exhibits and displays in nineteenth-century Europe served to shape notions of African "otherness" and European superiority.

*Cooper, Frederick. *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present.* 2002. History of decolonization and independence in Africa that links developments in the processes of nation and state building by contemporary African leaders to its colonial history.

*Cooper, Frederick, and Ann Laura Stoler. *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World.* 1997. Important collection of essays on the ways in which imperialism shaped both metropolitan and colonial cultures.

*Curtin, Philip D. *The World and the West: The European Challenge and the Overseas Response in

the Age of Empire. 2000. An overview of the response of the colonized parts of the world to European expansion.

*Duus, Peter. *The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895–1910.* 1995. Discusses the Japanese expansion into Korea in the heyday of Meiji-era imperialism.

*Fieldhouse, David Kenneth. *The Colonial Empires: A Comparative Survey from the Eighteenth Century.* 1982. Classic on the subject from a comparative perspective.

*Hall, Catherine. *Civilising Subjects: Colony and Metropole in the English Imagination, 1830–1867.* 1992. Using the example of Jamaica, this seminal work argues that the idea of empire was at the heart of the self-imagining of Britain by the middle of the nineteenth century.

*Headrick, Daniel R. *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century.* 1981. Argues convincingly for the importance of technology for various aspects of European imperialism.

*Hobsbawm, E. J. *Age of Empire: 1875–1914.* 1987. Discusses the role of imperialism in shaping political and social life in the metropole.

*Hochschild, Adam. *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa.* 1998. The story of the ruthless plundering of the Belgian Congo by King Leopold II of Belgium in the early nineteenth century and the battles against him both by African rebel leaders and by other Europeans.

*Mamdani, Mahmood. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism.* 1996. Bold, insightful analysis of how British indirect rule in colonial Africa reproduced racial and ethnic divisions that have stood in the way of democratic reforms in contemporary times.

*Metcalf, Thomas. *Ideologies of the Raj.* 1995. Examines the transformation in British rule in India after the Rebellion of 1857.

*Owen, Roger, and Bob Sutcliffe. (eds.). *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism.* 1972. Seminal collection of Marxist and non-Marxist essays on theories of imperialism.

Pitts, Jennifer. *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France.* 2005. Looks at the changes in nineteenth-century liberal thought from a critique of empire to its justification by men like John Stuart Mill and Alexis de Tocqueville.

*Richards, Thomas. *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising Spectacle 1851–1914.* 1990. Examines how capitalism and empire influenced consumerism in Victorian England.

*Said, Edward. *Culture and Imperialism.* 1993. This landmark books draws connections between imperialism and Western literature in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

*Stocking, George. *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays on the History of Anthropology.* 1968. Classic on the history of the discipline of anthropology, focusing on the shifts in the approach to the issue of race.

*Stokes, Eric. *English Utilitarians in India.* 1959. Classic study of liberal thinkers and British administrators in India.

*Available in paperback.