

The effects of imperialism upon indonesia assignment



After studying the two cases of imperialism; one of India, and one of several countries in Africa, for my project I have decided to research the nineteenth century colony of Indonesia. I feel very motivated about researching this country, especially since I spend 3 years of my life living there.

Unfortunately, while I was living there, I was both unable and too young to pick up on the local history, and I only managed to get a grasp of what had happened to this great country that I was living in.

That is why for this investigation, I have decided to research the colonization of Indonesia, using the internet as my main resource, along with one class period spent in the school library. The Dutch control in Indonesia started as early as the 17th century. However, for a long time there was a fierce competition, and later with the Chinese, and it wasn't until the 19th, and part of the 20th, century when the Dutch were able to run the colony like they really wanted, and to make the immense profits that were originally expected.

The English started to focus their efforts elsewhere, and the Dutch now had almost free reign to take control, and run this colony like they intended too. Originally, during the period in which the British were still interfering with the plans of the Dutch, there were trading activities occurring under the control of a state-supported monopoly, which was the Dutch East Indies Company. Their original interest was in the trading of spices, which were abundant in this particular colony. Unfortunately, as they quickly started to realize, it was impossible to predict and calculate the supply and amount of spice available, which made it hard to assure the great profits which were expected. To compensate for this loss, the Dutch now started to focus their efforts on other

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valuable tropical spices, such as coffee, tea, and indigo. They started to concentrate their efforts on Java, which is an island very fortunately placed in between trade routes, and with a very fertile soil. CHANGE: As could probably be expected, the Dutch did barely any farming of themselves.

Instead, they had decided to take control over several areas, and force the people who lived there to grow whatever the Dutch ordered them to grow. However, the Dutch control over this area was almost always indirect, using Javanese nobles as middlemen. Instead, which resulted in the Javanese peasants rarely ever seeing the traders from the Dutch East Indies Company, despite the amount of control they had over their lives. Along with that, any remaining intermediary jobs still left over were given to Chinese merchants to appease to the Chinese competition that was still present.

This started the division between people in the Indonesian society. This created a situation where, in the controlled areas, there was a very clear division between groups of people, and the UN-controlled areas were unable to participate in the seas. In the parts under the Company's rule, natives were mostly left to live with their own laws and customs concerning things such as religion or education, however they had to abide the demands for donations and tribute towards the Company, usually in the form of crops and produce. This left native Indonesians to live their lives like they always did, just in increased poverty.

After what had seemed like an eternity of time, finally the Dutch East Indies Company went broke, due to internal corruption. For some time it seemed as though the British would take control over Indonesia, however, the Dutch

remained in control of these territories. This time around, however, the colony was to be run on behalf of the Netherlands, not any private investors. The returning Dutch abandoned the taxation system, and instead started something called the culture system. Instead of taxing peasants, all peasants were forced to set aside 20 percent of their land, and having to grow government specified crops on that 20 percent.

Unfortunately, this system was never implemented fairly, with most of the time peasants being pressured to commit way more than 20 percent of their land. Obviously, this system made less profit than the taxation system before it, so the Dutch started to cultivate larger and larger areas of Indonesia. At that current time the Dutch economy was in very poor shape, and by exporting the profits from Indonesia back to the Netherlands, the Dutch economy was being re-built, at the cost of the Indonesian economy.

This resulted in very large parts of Indonesia living in extreme poverty. However, it could have been worse, seeing as how the Dutch allowed the Indonesian to keep their original laws and costume, which made the Dutch oppression a lot more bearable than it sounds. Luckily, or unfortunately, depending on your point of view, the outside world soon started to put a stop to the damage being caused by this culture system. This response from external countries sparked another change in exploitation method of the Dutch.

The Dutch East Indies, as Indonesia was called at that time, was now under a liberal regime, meaning that private investors were now also allowed to buy and trade in Indonesia. Supposedly, this would decrease the poverty in

Indonesia, by now also allowing native Indonesian to profit from the trade occurring in Indonesia. Unfortunately, this change caused a flood of Dutch entrepreneurs to enter Indonesia, who established plantations, and bought up land, all over Indonesia, including places outside of Java. The final result of this change was that, by 1914, all of Indonesia was under direct Dutch control.

What first was supposed to be an effort to try and lessen poverty in Indonesia, had now turned into a catastrophic disaster, plunging nearly all native Indonesian into severe poverty. This complete exploitation continued all the way through the 1st World War, and it wasn't until the Japanese took over Indonesia in the 2nd World War, and afterwards being forced to return it, that the Dutch had no longer control over Indonesia, which finally brought an end to what seemed like an eternity of exploitation and colonization.

CONCLUSION: It is, however, very unfortunate for Indonesia that they have had to be footprint on Indonesia. It really is a shame that Indonesia was unable to profit from their own abundance of natural resources. If Indonesia had had the opportunity to exploit and trade their own resources to fill in their own needs, it is almost certain that Indonesia would be in a much better economical state then it currently is. This makes it easy to conclude, that colonization had a negative effect on the overall development of Indonesia, and it would have been better for Indonesia if the Netherlands had stayed away.