

19th century europe: imperialism and industrial revolution

[History](#), [Revolution](#)



19TH CENTURY EUROPE

Imperialism was a policy that got formulated by the Europeans. Their main intention was an extension of their control over foreign nations as a means of acquisition of empires. They either did this through direct conquest or imposing their power on the economy or politics of other countries. European countries maintained dominance on distant lands in Africa or South Asia regardless of whether the country called itself an empire or not. Imperialism and conquest seemed to heighten in the period between 1870 and 1890. The initial plan of imperialism was to reorganize Africa and south Asia which were dependent regions, to bring them into the world economy. This would become possible by ensuring they supplied raw materials and food stuff in exchange for industrial products.

When the conquest began, different European countries had different motives as to why they wished to acquire so much territory outside of their home territory. Some of the European nations had political motives². They simply had the desire to gain national prestige in Europe. Colonial governors also acquired personal colonial possessions before informing their home governments. This got done for power and prestige. Imperialism was attractive for young men who found the opportunity for adventure. By 1890, it was the most popular cause in Europe. It was the overseas extension of nationalism.

The key reason why Europeans nations needed so much territory out of their home territory was the industrial revolution. The industrialization in Europe stimulated the demand for industrial crops and minerals. This led to the

explosion of imperialism between 1870 and 1890 because this was the period of the economic depression in Europe. This gave the industrialized countries the incentive to seek raw materials and market for their industrial products in Africa and South Asia. From the territories that they conquered, the Europeans looked to profit from plantations and mines (Duker & Spielvogel 2006, 34).

Imperialism was a good thing for the people and societies of Europe. They were able to acquire resources for their factories, which meant that they got to support and maintain the industrial revolution that took place in Europe then. Since the raw materials were available, the industries produced more than Europe could consume. They used the extra territories they had acquired to sell their manufactured goods and had a good economy. This was positive for the people and societies of Europe because there was a significant decline in poverty as they could work in the busy industries and earn a wage. Imperialism led to a lot of disintegration of families within the society because many men left their nations to go out to the conquered territories. Some never came back, while some stayed years away from home.

Europeans took away the African and Asian lands and this meant that thousands of Africans became homeless and turned into squatters on settlements. Crop cultivation that the Europeans concentrated on eventually led to malnutrition among the people and societies of the conquered territories. Any profits that the people within the conquered territories earned went back to their survival and not advancement². The lives of the people in the conquered territories deteriorated. On the other hand,

imperialism had some positive impacts for the people and societies of the conquered territories. Europeans built railways, bridges and dams. They introduced telegraphs and telephones and gave the people medicine when they were sick which prolonged their lives.

The industrial revolution between 1870 and 1890 was the main cause of the escalation of imperialism and conquest. This was the principal reason why European nations needed to acquire so much territory out of their own territory. The impacts were mostly positive for the Europeans and negative for the conquered territories. Imperialism assisted in the advancement of both Europe and conquered territories.

Bibliography

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