

## DBQ 16: New Imperialism: Causes

### **Historical Context:**

Between 1870 and 1920, European imperialism accelerated due to economic, political, and social forces. The Industrial Revolution stirred the ambitions of European nations, and with the advances in technology, these nations were able to spread their control over the less-developed areas of the world. This empire-building frenzy has been studied by historians who offer a variety of perspectives on its causes.

- ◆ **Directions:** The following question is based on the accompanying documents in Part A. As you analyze the documents, take into account both the source of the document and the author's point of view. Be sure to:
1. Carefully read the document-based question. Consider what you already know about this topic. How would you answer the question if you had no documents to examine?
  2. Now, read each document carefully, underlining key phrases and words that address the document-based question. You may also wish to use the margin to make brief notes. Answer the questions which follow each document.
  3. Based on your own knowledge and on the information found in the documents, formulate a thesis that directly answers the question.
  4. Organize supportive and relevant information into a brief outline.
  5. Write a well-organized essay proving your thesis. The essay should be logically presented and should include information both from the documents and from your own knowledge outside of the documents.

**Question:** *Which economic, political, and social forces were most responsible for the new imperialism that began in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries?*

- ◆ **Part A:** The following documents provide information about the causes for the new imperialism. Examine the documents carefully, and answer the questions that follow.

### Document 1

This excerpt is from *Imperialism and World Politics*, written by Parker T. Moon. He points out which groups were most interested in imperialism.

The makers of cotton and iron goods have been very much interested in imperialism. This group of import interests has been greatly strengthened by the demand of giant industries for colonial raw materials. . . . Shipowners demand coaling stations for their vessels and naval bases for protection. To these interests may be added the makers of armaments and of uniforms. The producers of telegraph and railway material and other supplies used by the government in its colony may also be included. . . . Finally the most powerful business groups are the bankers. Banks make loans to colonies and backward countries for building railways and steamship lines. . . .

*(continued)*

**DBQ 16: New Imperialism: Causes** *(continued)*

Which groups are seeking colonies according to this author? Explain each group's reason.

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**Document 2**

This excerpt was written by the American Senator A. J. Beveridge in 1898.

American factories are making more than the American people can use; American soil is producing more than they can consume. Fate has written our policy for us; the trade of the world must and shall be ours. . . . We will establish trading posts throughout the world as distributing points for American products. We will cover the ocean with our merchant marines. We will build a navy to the measure of our greatness. . . .

According to Senator Beveridge, why should America become imperialistic? \_\_\_\_\_

**Document 3**

This excerpt, from Raymond Aron's book *The Century of Total War*, suggests another cause for imperialism.

. . . none of the colonial undertakings was motivated by the quest for capitalist profits; they all originated in political ambitions . . . the nations' will to power . . . glory or national greatness.

What does this author say was the cause for imperialism? \_\_\_\_\_

**Document 4**

Cecil Rhodes, a successful British imperialist in Africa, expresses his position in *Confession of Faith*, written in 1877.

I contend that we [Britons] are the finest race in the world, and the more of the world we inhabit, the better it is for the human race. . . . It is our duty to seize every opportunity of acquiring more territory and we should keep this one idea steadily before our eyes that more territory simply means more of the Anglo-Saxon race, more of the best, the most human, most honourable race the world possesses.

What does Cecil Rhodes believe is the reason for imperialism? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Document 5

In the excerpt from William L. Langer's book, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism*, another reason is suggested.

But the economic side . . . must not be allowed to obscure [hide] the other factors. Psychologically speaking . . . evolutionary teaching [about the "survival of the fittest"] was perhaps most crucial. It not only justified competition and struggle but introduced an element of ruthlessness. . . .

According to Langer, what was the reason for the new imperialism? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

### Document 6

In this excerpt from Rudyard Kipling's *The White Man's Burden*, there is another explanation for imperialism.

Take up the white man's burden  
send forth the best ye breed  
Go bind your sons to exile  
To serve your captives' need,  
To wait, in heavy harness,  
On fluttered folk and wild  
Your new caught, sullen peoples,  
Half-devil and half-child.

According to the poem, what is the "white man's burden"? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

### Document 7

In this excerpt, President William McKinley explains why the United States took over the Philippines.

We could not leave them to themselves. They were unfit for self-government. There was nothing left for us to do but to take them over. Then we would be able to educate the Filipinos. We could uplift and civilize and Christianize them. . . .

How does President McKinley explain the U.S. takeover of the Philippines? \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

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