



>> The Netherlands played a leading role in the first phase of imperialism, from 1500 to 1800. The Dutch East India Company protected Dutch trade in the Indian Ocean and even had the right to make treaties and maintain its own armed forces.

 **Interactive Flipped Video**

>> Objectives

Explain the political, economic, and social causes of European imperialism.

Understand how technology and other factors contributed to the spread of imperialism.

Describe the characteristics of imperial rule.

Summarize the cultural, political, and social effects of imperialism.

>> Key Terms

imperialism
protectorate
sphere of influence

technology, industry, transportation, and communication strengthened the West, making it more powerful than any society in history.

The New Imperialism

Motivations for the New Imperialism

Armed with new economic and political power, Western nations set out to expand their overseas empires. Between 1870 and 1914, European nations brought much of the world and its people under their control.

European Expansion During the Age of Discovery European imperialism did not begin in the 1800s. **Imperialism** is the policy of one country's political, economic, or cultural domination over other lands and territories. During the Age of Discovery from the 1400s to the 1600s, Spain, Portugal, Britain, and France set up colonies in the Americas. Spain also seized control of the Philippine Islands.

Elsewhere, European nations gained only small outposts overseas. Portugal, Spain, and the Netherlands won footholds in Southeast Asia. The British and French were fierce rivals for trading rights in India. Europeans built trading forts on the coasts of Africa and negotiated limited trade with China and Japan.

Between 1500 and 1800, Europe had relatively little influence on the lives of the peoples in China, India, or Africa. Europeans traded with merchants in these lands but did not control any large territories except in the Americas.

Expansion Turns into Empire Building By the 1800s, European nations with strong central governments had become more powerful. As the Industrial Revolution took off, some European nations grew rich. Spurred on by their new economic and military strength, these nations embarked on a path of aggressive expansion that modern historians call the "new imperialism." The new imperialism was a period in which industrial nations scrambled for territories that would provide them with raw materials and serve as markets for their manufactured goods.

In just a few decades, beginning in the 1870s, Europeans brought much of the world under their control. The new imperialism exploded out of a combination of causes. The main causes can be categorized as: economic, political, military, humanitarian, and religious.

Need for Resources Drives Further Expansion

The Industrial Revolution created needs and desires that spurred overseas expansion. Manufacturers wanted access to natural resources such as rubber, petroleum, manganese for steel, and palm oil for machinery. They also wanted to expand their global markets by increasing the number of consumers to whom they could sell their manufactured goods.

Bankers, too, backed overseas expansion, which would provide new opportunities for investments. For some countries, colonies offered a valuable outlet for rapidly growing populations.

Political and Military Motives Political and military issues were closely linked to economic motives. Steam-powered merchant ships and naval vessels needed bases around the world to take on coal and supplies. Industrial powers seized islands or harbors to satisfy these needs.

Nationalism, a driving force in Europe throughout the 1800s, played a major role too. As Europeans started seizing territories overseas, it set off a race among rival nations. When France moved into West Africa, rival nations like Britain and Germany seized nearby African lands to halt further French expansion.

Western leaders claimed that colonies were needed to protect their national security interests. Sometimes, Western nations acquired colonies for the prestige of ruling a global empire.

Humanitarian and Religious Goals Many Westerners felt a genuine concern for their "little brothers" beyond the seas. Missionaries, doctors, and colonial officials believed they had a duty to spread what they saw as the blessings of Western civilization, including its medicine, law, and the Christian religion.

Influence of Social Darwinism Behind the idea that the West had a civilizing mission was a growing sense of racial superiority in the West. Many Westerners had embraced the ideas of Social Darwinism. They applied Darwin's ideas about natural selection and survival of the fittest to human societies. European races, they argued, were superior to all others, and imperial conquest of weaker races was simply nature's way of improving the human species.

Although this reasoning was never part of Darwin's ideas, it became popular among many people in the West. As a result, the cultural heritage of millions of non-Westerners was destroyed because their societies were deemed inferior.


? SUMMARIZE What main factors contributed to European imperialism in the 1800s?

Western Imperialism Spreads Rapidly

Starting in the late 1800s, the great powers of Europe divided up almost all of Africa along with large chunks of Asia. The European powers included Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, and Italy. The



>> The growth of European industrial economies required raw materials to fuel its factories. New colonies provided both natural resources and new markets for European manufactured goods.

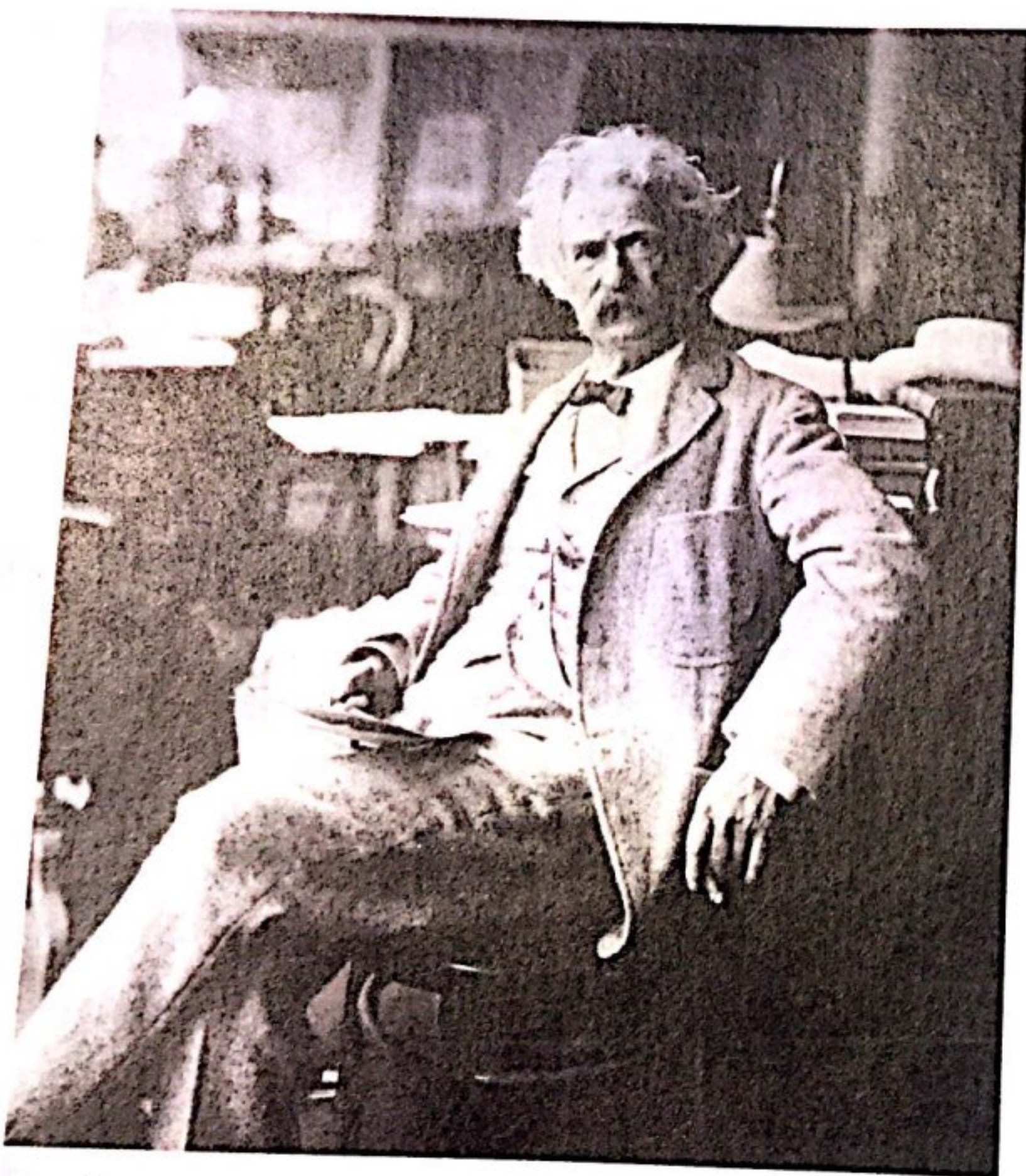
 **Interactive Map**

United States acquired the Philippines and gained influence in parts of Latin America.

Every corner of the globe was claimed by a Western power. Leading the way were explorers, missionaries, merchants, soldiers, and settlers. The reasons for the success of Western imperialism in the late 1800s and early 1900s varied and so did the kinds of governments imposed by Western powers on their newly acquired territories.

Vulnerable Non-Western States While European nations had grown stronger in the 1800s, several older civilizations were in decline. In the Middle East, the once powerful Ottomans faced many challenges from within their diverse empire. Weak rulers in Mughal (MOO gul) India triggered internal unrest with less tolerant policies toward Hindus. In China, Qing (ching) rulers resisted calls for modernization with disastrous consequences.

In West Africa, wars among African peoples and the damaging effects of the slave trade had undermined long-established kingdoms and city-states. Newer African states were not strong enough to resist the Western onslaught. Many Africans lived in small communities with no strong, centralized kingdom to protect them.



>> American author Mark Twain was an outspoken critic of both imperialism and the brutal Belgian rule in the Congo. In 1905, he published *King Leopold's Soliloquy*, which brought international attention to the situation.

 **Interactive Gallery**

Western Advantages European powers had the advantages of strong economies, well-organized governments, and powerful armies and navies. Superior technology, including riverboats and the telegraph, as well as improved medical knowledge also played a role. The discovery of quinine in 1817 and other new medicines helped Europeans survive deadly tropical diseases such as malaria that had prevented them from exploring tropical regions in Africa.

Equally important, new weaponry gave Westerners a huge advantage. Advances such as Maxim guns—the earliest machine guns—along with repeating rifles and steam-driven warships were very strong arguments in persuading Africans and Asians to accept Western control.

Finally, Europeans often played rival groups within a region against one another. In India, the British successfully used rivalries between Hindu and Muslim princes to their advantage. In Africa, Europeans encouraged divisions among local rulers to keep them from joining forces against the newcomers.

Some Resist Imperialism People in Africa and Asia strongly resisted Western expansion. Many people fought the invaders, even though they had no weapons to equal the Maxim gun. Rulers in some areas tried to strengthen their societies against outsiders by reforming their own Muslim, Hindu, or Confucian traditions.

Although European powers defeated almost all the armed resistance, the struggle against imperialism continued. European rule turned many native peoples into forced laborers with no freedom of movement. By the early 1900s, nationalist movements were emerging. Western-educated Africans and Asians used Enlightenment ideas about freedom and liberty to call for an end to colonial rule. Tens of thousands in colonies around the world joined national liberation movements.

Critics at Home In the West, a small group of anti-imperialists emerged. Some argued that colonialism was a tool of the rich. Others opposed imperialist expansion because they wanted to focus on improving conditions for people in the West rather than imposing change on other cultures. Still others called imperialism immoral. Westerners, they pointed out, were moving toward greater democracy at home but were imposing undemocratic rule on other peoples.

? EXPLAIN How did Western imperialism spread through Africa and Asia so quickly?