Empire's Unequal Exchange

Read how industrial power changed life under imperial rule.

MWH.C.5.3 "Evaluate the impact of industrialization on global imperialism. Explain the economic, political, and social justifications supporting imperialist ideology and colonialism ' (e.g., Social Darwinism, economic gain and resources..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one way industry helped imperial powers, circle two claims used to justify empire, and number two consequences in different regions. Use your marks to connect causes and effects.

Power, Promises, and Control

1. By the late 1800s, factories in Europe needed cotton, rubber, and new buyers. Steamships and railways helped industrial powers seize and move resources, while improved weapons strengthened their armies. Leaders claimed colonies would bring wealth and strategic ports; national pride made rivals race for territory. Some missionaries sought converts, and supporters of Social Darwinism falsely claimed that powerful nations had a right to rule others. These claims justified exploitation, not equal exchange.

2. At the Berlin Conference of 1884 to 1885, European powers set rules for claiming African territory without African representatives. Borders later drawn by colonial powers split some communities and forced others into the same colony, disrupting local political life. Colonial governments redirected farming and mining toward exports such as rubber and minerals, while Africans resisted forced labor and foreign rule. In India, the British Raj built railways and schools, but these also served colonial administration and the export of raw materials. Indians lost political self-rule.

3. In China, Western powers won trading privileges after the Opium Wars, weakening the Qing dynasty's authority. Internal rebellions also drained its resources. In 1899, the Boxer movement attacked foreign influence and Chinese Christians; foreign armies crushed the uprising in 1900. Across Asia and Africa, imperial rule brought new schools, languages, and religious practices, but people also defended their own traditions. In the Americas, settler expansion displaced Indigenous peoples and took their land, showing that empire could reshape communities as well as economies.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did industrial technology help powers take resources, and what claim did supporters use to justify imperial rule?

2. How did the Berlin Conference and later colonial borders affect African communities?

3. Why might the Raj's railways and schools be seen as both investments and tools of British control?

4. How did Western influence and internal unrest weaken the Qing dynasty, and what happened when the Boxers resisted?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label comparing imperialism's effects in two regions from the passage. Include one claim used to justify empire, and explain why an investment or claim did not erase a cost.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.C.5.3

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one way industry helped imperial powers, circle two claims used to justify empire, and number two consequences in different regions. Use your marks to connect causes and effects. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did industrial technology help powers take resources, and what claim did supporters use to justify imperial rule?	**Steamships and railways moved resources, while improved weapons strengthened armies. Supporters claimed, for example, that powerful nations had a right to rule others.**
2	How did the Berlin Conference and later colonial borders affect African communities?	**European powers set rules for claiming territory without African representatives. Later borders split some communities and forced others into the same colony.**
3	Why might the Raj's railways and schools be seen as both investments and tools of British control?	**Britain built railways and schools, but they also served colonial administration and the export of raw materials while Indians lacked self-rule.**
4	How did Western influence and internal unrest weaken the Qing dynasty, and what happened when the Boxers resisted?	**Western trading privileges weakened Qing authority, and internal rebellions drained its resources. Foreign armies crushed the Boxer uprising in 1900.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

European leaders claimed national pride justified overseas rule. In Africa, colonial borders disrupted communities, and colonial governments redirected farming and mining toward exports. In India, British railways connected places, but they also helped move raw materials for imperial trade. Both regions show that changes made under imperial rule came at the cost of local control.

Accept any passage-supported justification and accurate comparison of two regions. The label should explain a cost rather than merely list changes.