Arguments for Empire

Compare the claims behind U.S. annexation of the Philippines

USH.C.3.1.B "Compare the economic, religious, social, and political rationales for American imperialism, comparing the concept of Social Darwinism to arguments made by Anti-Imperialists and colonial responses."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline an economic claim, circle a religious claim, box a social or political claim, and write matching 1s and matching 2s beside two different pairs of conflicting claims so you can compare the arguments.

Who Should Govern the Philippines?

(1) In 1898, the United States defeated Spain in a war fought in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Spain then ceded the Philippines to the United States under the Treaty of Paris. For supporters of annexation, the islands offered a Pacific naval base and a foothold near trade routes to China. Merchants hoped for access to Asian markets, an economic argument. Officials who wanted a stronger navy made a political argument: control of the islands could extend American power and keep rival empires from taking them. These reasons overlapped, but selling goods was not the same goal as securing a naval base.

(2) Other supporters spoke of a duty to spread Protestant Christianity and American schooling. Most Filipinos were already Catholic, so this missionary argument did not mean that Christianity was new to the islands. Some Americans also claimed that white nations were more "advanced" and should rule others. They borrowed language from Social Darwinism, a mistaken application of ideas about biological competition to human societies. This social claim treated inequality as natural, not as a result of conquest. Religious and racial arguments could both present U.S. rule as helpful, but one focused on faith and education while the other asserted a hierarchy of peoples.

(3) Anti-imperialists in the United States rejected annexation. They argued that governing people without their consent contradicted the American ideal of self-government; some also warned that empire would bring war and expense. Filipinos were not simply waiting to be governed. Filipino leaders declared independence in 1898 and formed a republic in 1899. When the United States claimed sovereignty, Filipino forces fought to defend independence in the Philippine-American War. U.S. critics challenged annexation from within the United States; Filipino resistance challenged it from the place being ruled. Both opposed foreign control, but Filipino fighters also sought recognition of their own government.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the merchants' economic reason for annexation differ from officials' political reason?

2. How did the religious and Social Darwinist arguments each present U.S. rule as justified? What was different about their claims?

3. Why would the anti-imperialists' argument about consent challenge the Social Darwinist claim?

4. What did U.S. anti-imperialists and Filipino resisters oppose, and how did their positions differ?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a five-sentence museum label arguing which of two different pro-annexation rationales most directly clashed with Filipino independence. Compare the two rationales, then use an anti-imperialist argument and a Filipino action to support your judgment.

ANSWER KEY

Arguments for Empire

HIGH SCHOOL · USH.C.3.1.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline an economic claim, circle a religious claim, box a social or political claim, and write matching 1s and matching 2s beside two different pairs of conflicting claims so you can compare the arguments. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the merchants' economic reason for annexation differ from officials' political reason?	**Merchants wanted access to Asian markets, while officials wanted a naval base to extend U.S. power and deter rival empires.**
2	How did the religious and Social Darwinist arguments each present U.S. rule as justified? What was different about their claims?	**The religious argument emphasized spreading Protestant Christianity and schooling. The Social Darwinist argument claimed that a supposed racial hierarchy justified rule.**
3	Why would the anti-imperialists' argument about consent challenge the Social Darwinist claim?	**Social Darwinists claimed that supposedly more advanced nations should rule others. Anti-imperialists argued that people must consent to their government, regardless of such claims.**
4	What did U.S. anti-imperialists and Filipino resisters oppose, and how did their positions differ?	**Both opposed U.S. control of the Philippines. U.S. anti-imperialists criticized annexation, while Filipinos formed a republic and fought for recognition of their own government.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Supporters of annexation wanted both trade with Asia and a Pacific naval base, but these aims did not affect Filipino independence in exactly the same way. Merchants hoped to sell goods, while officials wanted the United States to control a strategic location. The political goal of control clashed most directly with the republic Filipino leaders formed in 1899. Anti-imperialists also argued that ruling people without their consent violated self-government. When Filipino forces fought to defend independence, they showed that the proposed naval base was part of a struggle over who would govern the islands.

Accept either rationale as the stronger conflict if the student supports the judgment with an accurate comparison, an anti-imperialist argument, and a Filipino action from the passage. For marking, each conflicting pair should have the same number beside both claims.