

Five Reasons for Imperialism

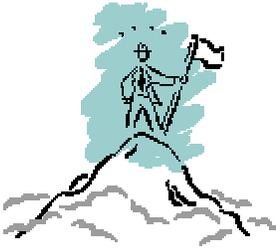
1. Economic

The Industrial Revolution stimulated the hunt for colonies. First, colonies provided raw materials. Second, colonies served as a market for surplus manufactured goods.



2. Political

Every country wanted national hegemony – that is, to be the No. 1 imperialist country in the world. To achieve this, they wanted to control as much of the world as possible. The nation's greatness is measured by the quality and quantity of its colonies. Folks wanted to plant the flag in as many places as possible. Every country wanted recognition as a world power. They wanted to improve their reputation among other European countries. They wanted to increase their political power and prestige. Every country was in competition with its rivals. You took territory – simply to prevent your rival from getting it!



3. Military

Every imperialist country was worried about its own national security: The competition among imperialist powers was vicious. One had to protect one's own country and its colonies. Every country wanted to gain military advantage over its rivals. A colony could serve as a fueling station for the Navy. A ship could stop and load up on supplies. Some spots in the world, especially waterways, were strategically important. The Navy was paramount: It must have freedom to travel to and from the colonies.



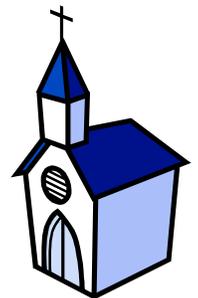
4. Cultural

Social Darwinism was the prevailing belief in Europe. It explained why some countries were rich and some were poor. People compete for survival. The strong survive. The rich were naturally superior. The weak were unfit. Poverty was a sign of being unfit. The poor were naturally inferior. The European colonizers were the Superior Races. The African and Asian colonized were Inferior Races. The Europeans regarded themselves as racially and culturally superior to the people of Africa and Asia. Humanitarians argued that it was Europe's noble duty to uplift and enlighten the backward peoples. Belief in Anglo-Saxon superiority was prevalent.



5. Religious

The “missionary impulse”: Christianity is superior to all other religions. We must spread Christianity to Asia and Africa. Religion encouraged imperialism. People felt they needed to acquire territory in order to Christianize people. A serious moral issue – Christianity is in direct conflict with Social Darwinism. Under Christianity, all people are equal in God's eyes. Under Social Darwinism, the Europeans are superior and the Africans and Asians are inferior. There was also a certain element of hypocrisy: While the Europeans spoke of uplifting people, they were actually motivated by profit and greed.



For each phrase or statement, choose which one of the five reasons for imperialism applies for each phrase or statement. You may write **E** for **economic**, **P** for **political**, **M** for **military**, **C** for **cultural**, or **R** for **religious** reasons in the space provided. Only one reason may be used for each fact.

- _____ 1. The missionary impulse.
- _____ 2. Social Darwinism
- _____ 3. The Industrial Revolution
- _____ 4. National security
- _____ 5. The hunt for natural resources
- _____ 6. National hegemony, i.e., to be the No. 1 imperialist country in the world
- _____ 7. A market for surplus goods
- _____ 8. Strategic advantage
- _____ 9. European countries were rich because they were fit
- _____ 10. You took territory to prevent your rival from getting it!
- _____ 11. The European colonizers were the Superior Race.
- _____ 12. People felt they needed to acquire territory in order to Christianize people.
- _____ 13. A colony could serve as a fueling station for the Navy.
- _____ 14. Asian and African countries were poor because they were unfit.
- _____ 15. Great Britain was the No. 1 imperialist country in the world
- _____ 16. The Navy was paramount.
- _____ 17. To control as much of the world as possible.
- _____ 18. The Africans and Asians were Inferior Races.
- _____ 19. The competition among imperialist powers was vicious.
- _____ 20. A nation's greatness was measured by the quality and quantity of its colonies.
- _____ 21. Humanitarians argued that it was Europe's noble duty to uplift and enlighten the backward peoples.
- _____ 22. Plant the British flag!
- _____ 23. One had to protect one's own country and its colonies.
- _____ 24. Every country wanted recognition as a world power.
- _____ 25. A ship could stop and load up on supplies.
- _____ 26. Some spots in the world, especially waterways, were strategically important.
- _____ 27. Every country wanted to gain military advantage over its rivals.
- _____ 28. They wanted to improve their reputation among other European countries.
- _____ 29. They wanted to increase they power and prestige.
- _____ 30. They regarded themselves as racially and cultural superior to the peoples of Africa and Asia.