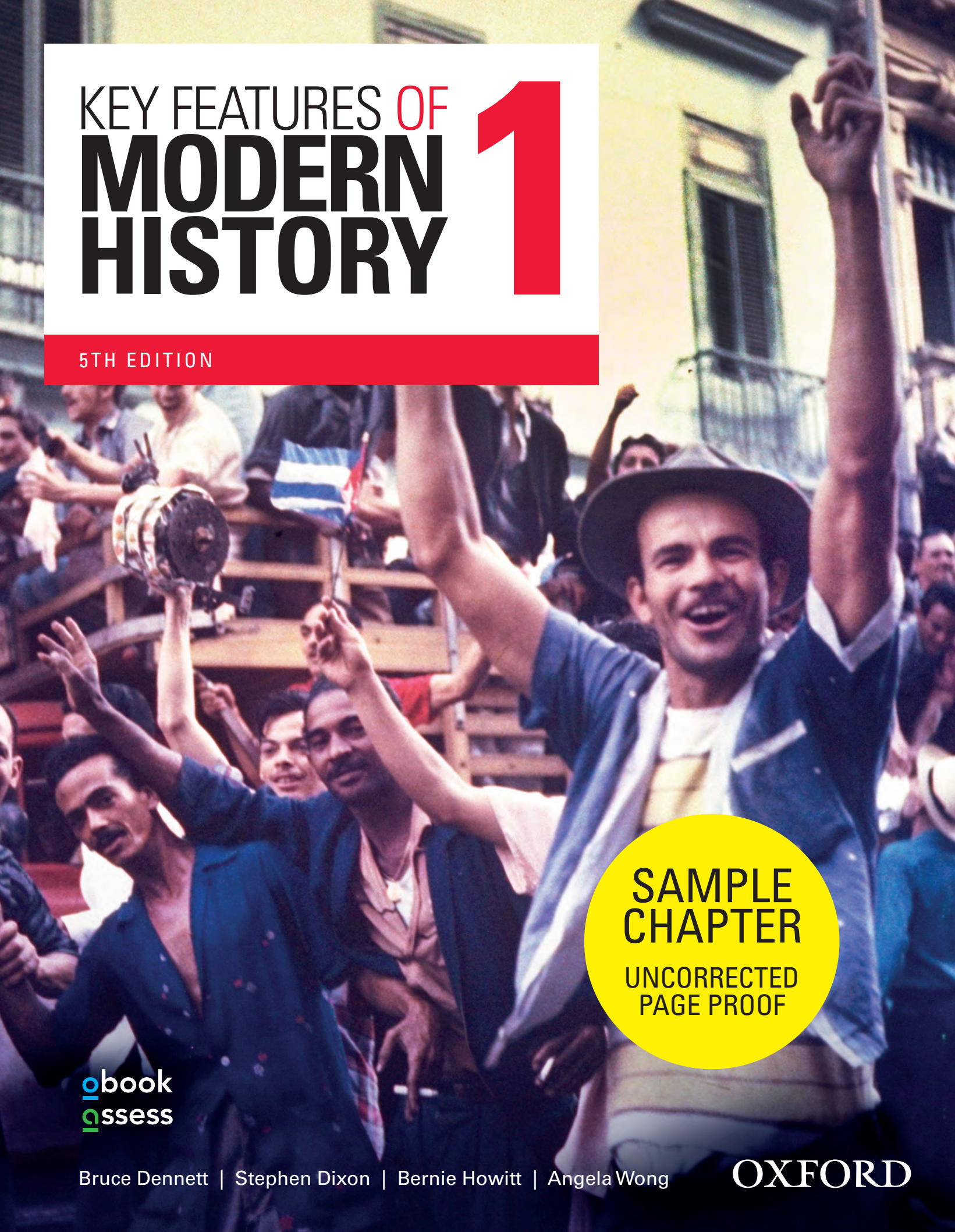
KEY FEATURES OF MODERN HISTORY 1

5TH EDITION



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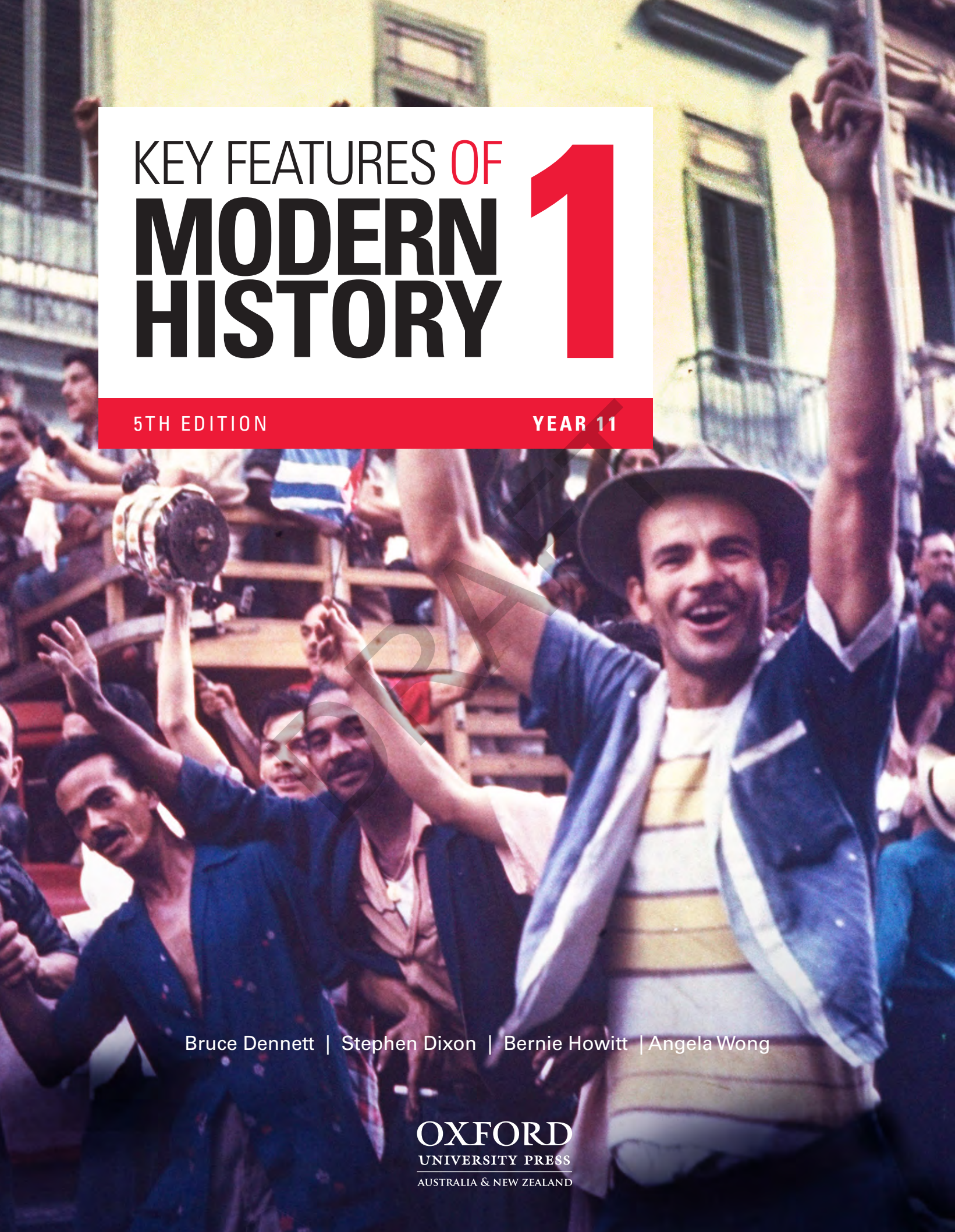

KEY FEATURES OF MODERN HISTORY 1

5TH EDITION

YEAR 11

Bruce Dennett | Stephen Dixon | Bernie Howitt | Angela Wong

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PART B INVESTIGATING MODERN HISTORY – CASE STUDIES

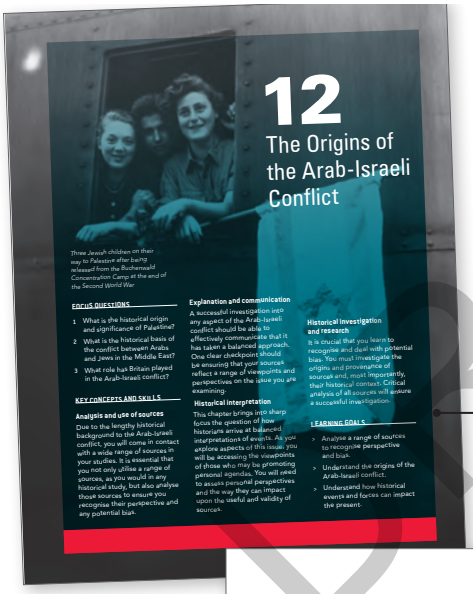
PART C THE SHAPING OF THE MODERN WORLD

USING KEY FEATURES OF MODERN HISTORY 1

New South Wales' most trusted modern history series has been updated for the new Stage 6 Modern History syllabus. The first of a two-volume series, Key Features of Modern History 1 offers complete support for Year 11 teachers and their students, providing unparalleled depth and coverage and a range of new chapter features that will give students of all abilities the best chance of achieving success in Modern History.

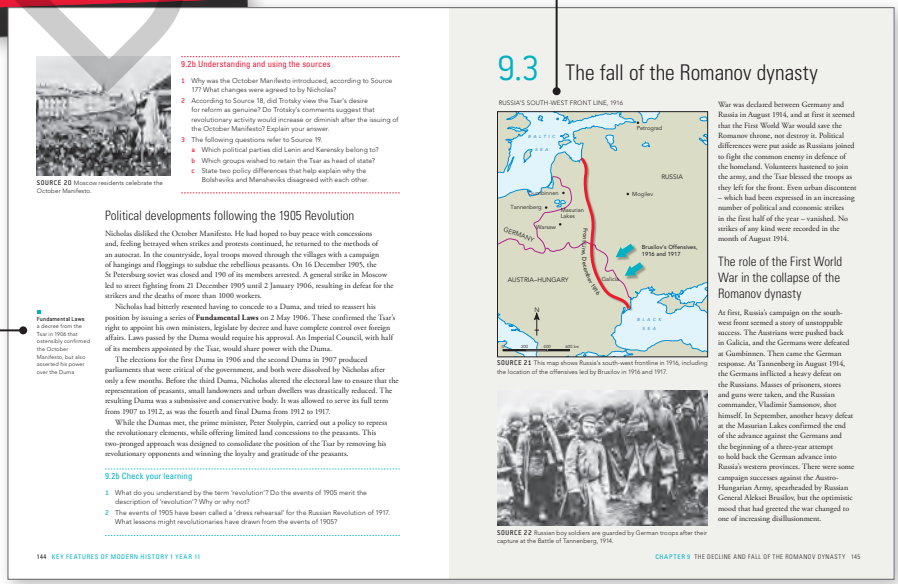
Key enhancements:

- All content has been explicitly aligned to the new Modern History Stage 6 syllabus (Year 11).
- Subject experts Bruce Dennett, Stephen Dixon, Bernie Howitt and Angela Wong have developed comprehensive, engaging and appropriately levelled content.
- Unambiguous language is used throughout the book, with plenty of visuals to engage students and support learning.
- obook assess provides comprehensive student and teacher digital support including answers to every question in the book, class tests, videos and more.



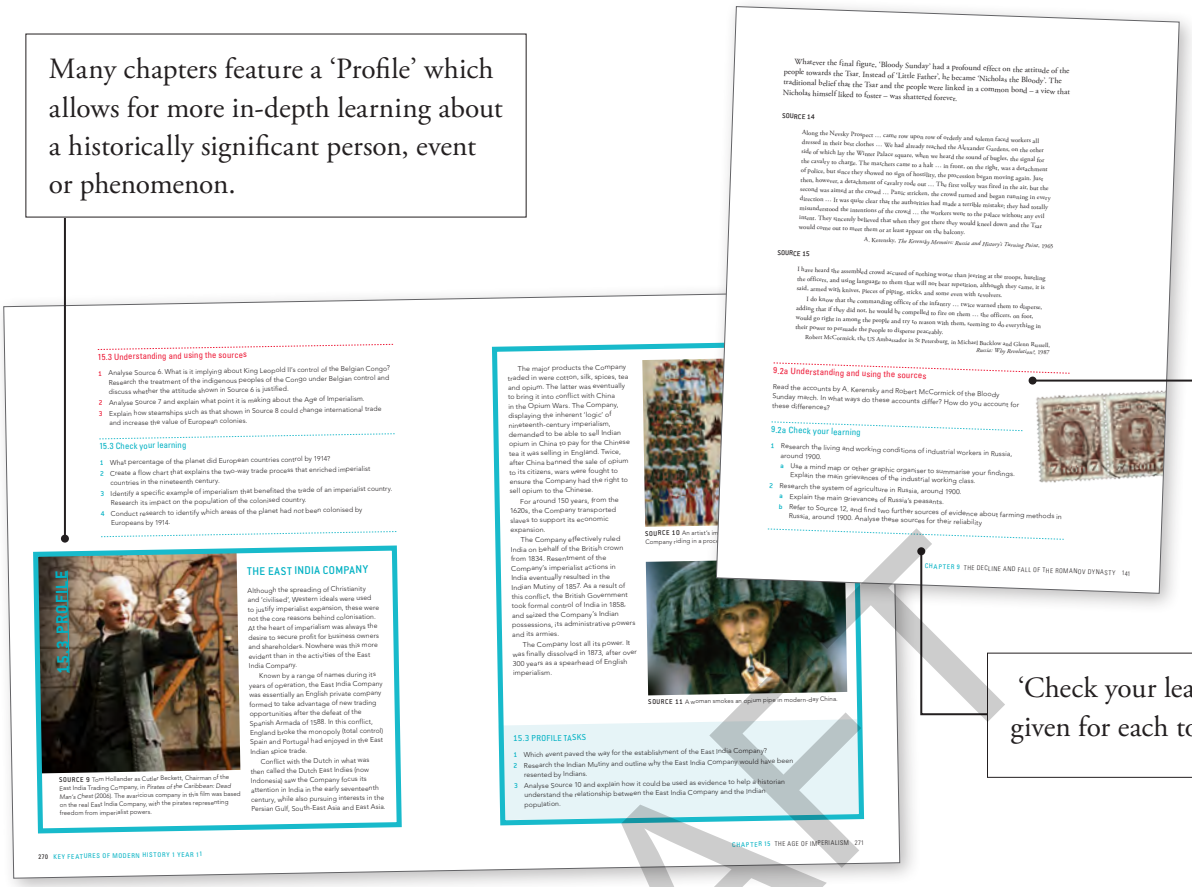
'Focus questions', 'Key concepts and skills', and 'Learning goals' are clearly stated at the beginning of each chapter to guide teachers and students through the content.

Content includes up-to-date case studies, maps and rich visual and written source material



Margin glossary definitions help students to quickly and easily find the meaning of unfamiliar terms, to aid understanding

Many chapters feature a 'Profile' which allows for more in-depth learning about a historically significant person, event or phenomenon.



'Understanding and using the sources' questions throughout each chapter enhance student understanding of how to use and critically analyse historical sources

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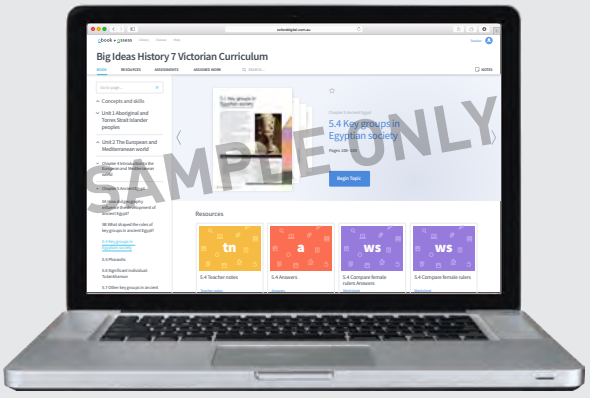


In addition to the student resources, teachers also receive:

- detailed course planners and teacher notes
- answers to every question in the Student book
- printable (and editable) class tests with answers
- the ability to set up classes, set assignments, monitor progress and graph results, and to view all available content and resources in one place.

15

The Age of Imperialism

A local driver tows a Western man on a pousse-pousse or rickshaw, in French Indochina, c. 1900. French Indochina was a group of French colonial territories in what is now Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

1. What is imperialism and how did it shape the modern world?
2. Which were the imperialist countries and what areas did they control?
3. What is the legacy of the Age of Imperialism?

KEY CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

Analysis and use of sources

Two very clear perspectives emerge in any study of imperialism: that of the imperialist country and that of the peoples they conquered. It is vital for any valid historical interpretation to consider both perspectives.

Historical interpretation

Any interpretation relating to the Age of Imperialism will engage with the concepts of cause and effect. You will need to consider what factors enabled imperialism to develop, and examine the effects of imperialism on the conquerors and the conquered.

Explanation and communication

The emergence of newspapers and magazines enabled illustrations from this time period to be widely circulated in the imperialist countries. Such illustrations created a sense of a 'grand adventure' in foreign lands, and can effectively offer one perspective of imperialism.

Historical investigation and research

It is important that you access a range of sources and perspectives as you investigate various aspects of imperialism. This will help ensure that your investigation is balanced and valid.

LEARNING GOALS

- Identify the causes and effects of imperialism.
- Understand the impact of the Age of Imperialism on the modern world.

15.1 Introduction

The nineteenth century is often described as the Age of Imperialism, but imperialism is, of course, much older than that. As far back as ancient Rome, stronger, more militarily and technologically advanced powers were exploiting their weaker neighbours; in order for their expansion to be successful, imperialist nations have always relied on military strength to impose control over other countries.

SOURCE 1 Imperialism in action: the French Resident-General of Madagascar being carried by native porters. Madagascar was invaded by the French in 1883.

imperialism the practice of extending the power of a nation, especially by acquiring territory of another nation

colonisation the practice of settling among and establishing control over the indigenous people of an area

In simple terms, **imperialism** is where a powerful country establishes political and economic control over another country or area, for the benefit of the stronger power. **Colonisation** is the process of a group of peoples establishing their own system of government and law over another group of peoples. The two processes are closely linked. For example it was their belief in imperialism that saw the British establish colonies in areas as far apart as Kenya, Australia and Jamaica.

This chapter will give you the opportunity to investigate the roots of the imperialist expansion in Africa, Asia and the Pacific that characterised the nineteenth century. You will confront the ugliness of the exploitation of many people and resources for the betterment of the few; deal with the ethical dilemma of analysing sources that convey a sense of racial and moral superiority; and arguably see the roots of much of the discord inherent in the modern world. While doing this, you will learn to recognise that all historical sources were created in a unique context that must be considered. You may reject perspectives and points of view, but it is vital that you place your sources in their historical context in order for your conclusions to be fair, balanced and insightful.

15.2 The historical context of nineteenth-century imperialism

From the fifteenth century, European explorers travelled to previously unexplored areas of the world with the intention of enriching themselves and their governments. As these explorers broke free of the Mediterranean Sea to reach areas previously unknown to Europe, settlers and armies from their countries followed in order to secure control, and exploit the natives and the resources of the new conquests. The European nations' belief in their right to do this was an imperialist approach, and the control they established over conquered areas led to colonisation.

At the time of their invasion of other countries, many imperialist states claimed that their forceful takeover of developing nations was done with good will, to spread Christianity or to 'help' these less fortunate peoples become more 'civilised'. All such arguments aside, imperialism was, first and foremost, the conquest of non-European communities for the benefit of European countries.

The capture of Seringapatam (Source 2) is one classic example. Here, troops representing the British East India Company (see Section 15.3) **besieged** and eventually colonised Seringapatam, India, to guarantee trade routes for the company, which in turn would bring wealth to the British Government.

besiege
the act of surrounding an area with armed forces in order to capture it or force its surrender

outpost
a place that represents the authority of a far-away imperial country

SOURCE 2 An artist's impression of the capture of Seringapatam, India, in 1799

The history of European imperialism

The foundation for the European imperialism of the nineteenth century was laid centuries earlier, starting with advances in shipbuilding and navigation from the 1400s onwards. The original leaders in European imperialism were the Spanish and Portuguese, who ventured to the Americas in search of gold. They were quickly followed by the Netherlands (the Dutch), who established **outposts** in Asia. It was not long before a rivalry grew between Britain, France, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands, all of which wanted to acquire colonies during the 1600s and 1700s to supply their populations with raw materials and luxury items – such as cotton, tea, coffee, cocoa, sugar, tobacco, silk and spices – that were not available in Europe. Soon, each of these countries had acquired colonies and trading posts in Africa, Asia and the Americas.

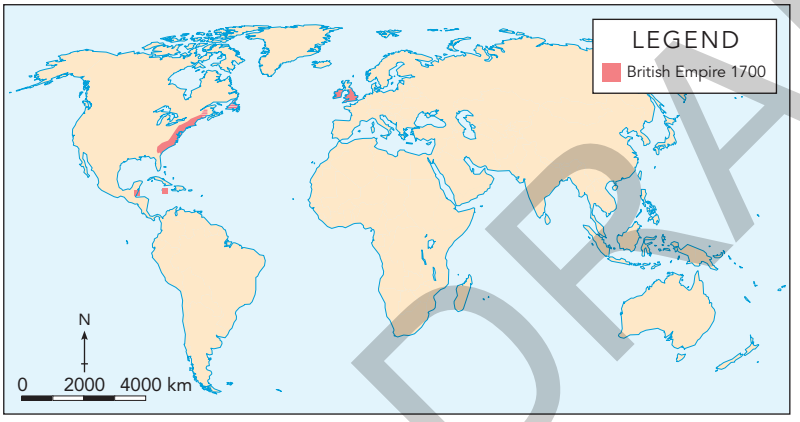
The Seven Years' War and the British Empire

A key turning point in this early phase of imperialism was the Seven Years' War, a global conflict that ranged from Europe to Africa, India, the Philippines and the Americas, 1754–63. The principal result of this conflict was the emergence of Britain as the world's dominant maritime power. The Seven Years' War also saw Britain gain control of Canada at the expense of France, take Florida from the Spanish, and reinforce the British hold on the east coast of what is now the United States.

In the decades that followed, Britain continued to build its empire, and by the nineteenth century it controlled the largest empire the world has ever seen. The British Empire covered almost a quarter of the earth's surface and governed approximately the same percentage of the world's population.

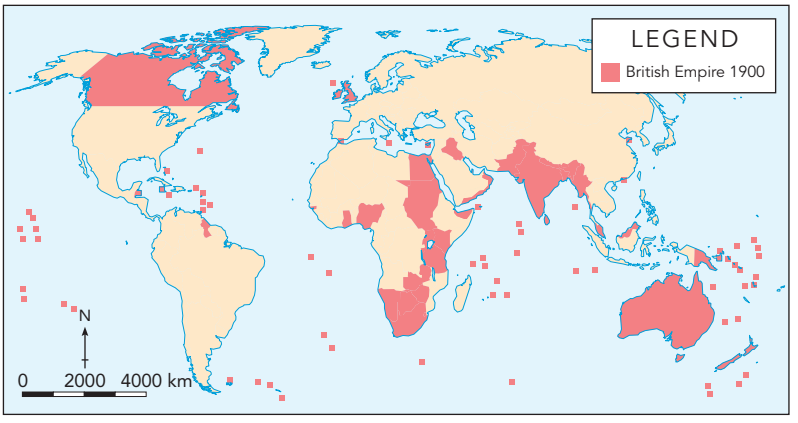
The American Revolution (1765–83) briefly interrupted this dominance. The American colonists, with the support of the French (who sought revenge on Britain for their defeat in the Seven Years' War), gained their independence from British rule. It was not long, however, before Britain renewed its acquisition of new territories. Australia and New Zealand became part of the British Empire at the end of the eighteenth century, in the aftermath of the American Revolution.

THE BRITISH EMPIRE, c.1700



SOURCE 3 Text to come

THE BRITISH EMPIRE, c.1900



SOURCE 4 By 1900 Britain controlled the largest empire the world has ever seen.

15.2 Understanding and using the sources

Compare Sources 3 and 4. How can you account for the dramatic expansion in Britain's colonies between the start of the eighteenth and twentieth centuries?

15.2 Check your learning

1. Identify the main European imperialist countries in the period between the fifteenth and twentieth centuries.
2. Which country emerged as the strongest imperial power? Identify five different countries it controlled.

15.3 The nature of the Age of Imperialism

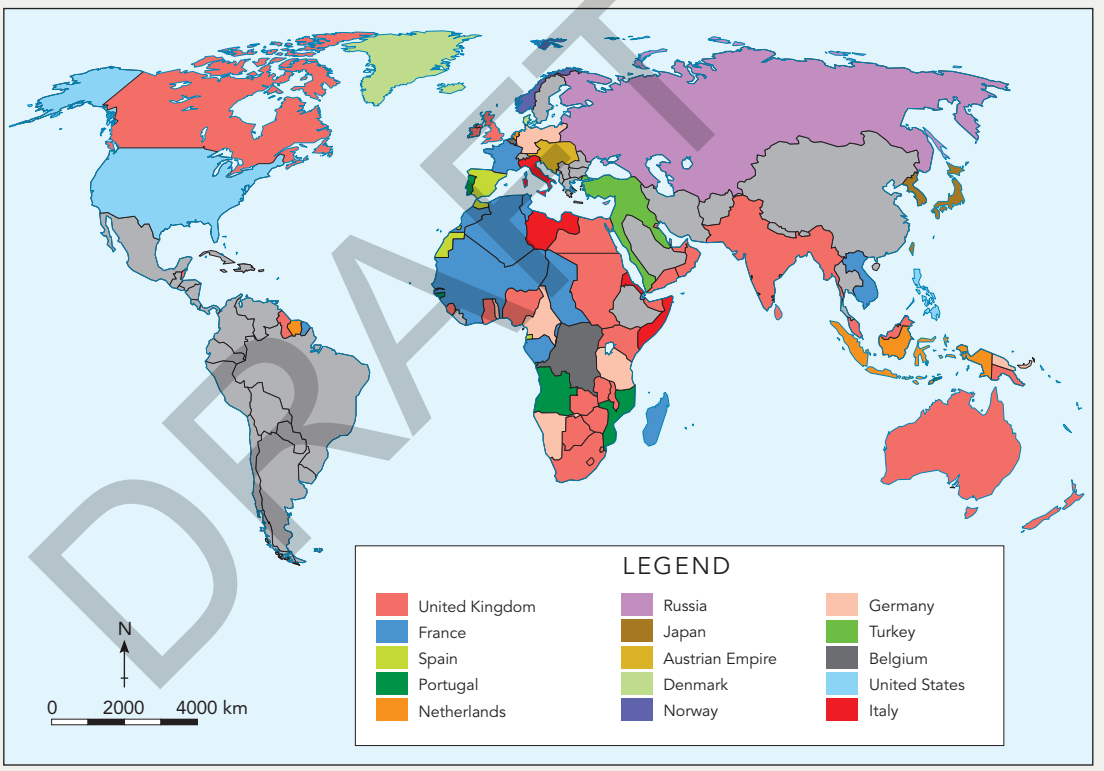
Industrial Revolution the rapid development of industry, beginning in Britain in the mid-eighteenth century, in which advances in technology fundamentally changed the agricultural and manufacturing industries, as well as transport and communications

metallurgy the science of separating metals from their ores

As a result of the **Industrial Revolution** in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the development of machinery, factories and **metallurgy** had made Europe more scientifically and technologically advanced than any other area on earth. The Europeans exploited this advantage to continue to plunder the rest of the world for luxury goods and raw materials to make them even richer and more powerful.

By 1800, Europeans occupied or controlled 35 per cent of the earth's land surface. By 1878, that figure had risen to 67 per cent and by 1914, at the beginning of the First World War, Europe controlled 84 per cent of the world. The empires were built on a combination of commercial, patriotic, religious, humanitarian, racist, strategic and exploitative motivations.

EUROPEAN EMPIRES, c.1914



SOURCE 5 European empires controlled 84 per cent of the earth's surface by 1914.

The Scramble for Africa (1881–1914)

The most dramatic phase of late-nineteenth-century period of imperial expansion was the rapid invasion, occupation and colonisation of Africa by different European countries, which raced to carve the continent up and divide it between themselves. The Portuguese had established colonies along the east coast of Africa in the fifteenth century, but European involvement in the continent exploded in the late nineteenth century, when France, Italy, Portugal, Germany and Belgium each dominated sections of it. In 1870, only 10 per cent of Africa was under European control. By 1914, just 44 years later, it was 90 per cent.

SOURCE 6 A 1906 cartoon depicting King Leopold II of Belgium's stranglehold on the Belgian Congo

The most successful imperial expansion of the period was, however, Britain's. The British dominance of Africa was able to establish a line of control from the 'Cape to Cairo'. In other words, at one stage or another, Britain had African colonies that ran from Cairo in Egypt, on the Mediterranean coast, down to the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, where the Atlantic and Indian Oceans join.

Slave labour in the Belgian Congo

The European powers traded not only in goods, but also in people and labour; for centuries they used African peoples as slaves. The British abolished slavery in 1807, but African peoples continued to be exploited in this way by other European imperial powers well into the nineteenth century, both in their native countries and overseas.

One of the more ruthless examples of this kind of imperial exploitation took place in the Belgian Congo. King Leopold II of Belgium gained control of a colony that became known as the Belgian Free State in 1885. The Congo was rich in raw materials and minerals, especially copper, and the native peoples of the Congo were brutalised as members of a cheap workforce, with all of the profits going back to Leopold in Belgium. This period saw many atrocities, murders and mutilations.

Historians have suggested that Leopold's exploitation of the Congo, with its brutality and mass murder, can be compared with the terrors associated with Hitler and Stalin in the twentieth century – a link between ruthless nineteenth-century imperialism and the **totalitarian** regimes that emerged in the twentieth century. The key difference is that Leopold acted mostly out of a desire for profit, while Hitler and Stalin were motivated by ideology and power.

totalitarian a form of government where a single party controls the country's administration and most other areas of life, requiring complete subservience and suppressing opposition

The role of trade

Trade was a key motive for, and form of, imperialism. It was a two-sided element of imperialism, in that raw materials were ripped from the colonies as cheaply as possible, and then the finished products were sold back to the colonies, reaping still further profits.

India is perhaps the best example of this aspect of trade. British India provided most of the raw cotton for Britain's textile factories, as well as jute fibre (which is similar to cotton) and indigo (deep blue) dye. Once processed, the British sold the finished products back to millions of their Indian subjects.

Trade made the European powers richer, which in turn provided surplus capital for investment. By the end of the nineteenth century, European business people were looking for more opportunities to invest and they turned their eyes towards Asia and Africa. The risks were high, but so were the potential profits. Sometimes investors asked their governments to support trade by providing armies, in order to help minimise risks and maximise profits.

In China, European powers had established trading bases as early as the 1600s. In the middle of the nineteenth century, when China tried to limit European trade and exploitation, the British answered by declaring war on the Chinese. The result was the First and Second Opium Wars, fought between 1839 and 1860. These led to several European powers occupying territory in China, including Britain, which took possession of Hong Kong.

Trade was also the main driving force between Britain's move to take control of the Malayan peninsula and the island of Singapore. Malaya was rich in rubber and tin, while Singapore was an important naval base that was vital to Britain's imperial defence and trade network. These expansions were all examples of strategic, resource- and trade-based forms of imperialism.

SOURCE 7 A caricature from 1898 depicting the division of China between imperial powers

The 'eclipse of the non-European world'

The British economic historian Paul Kennedy, in his study *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, argued that the nineteenth century saw the '**eclipse** of the non-European world'. This is clearly demonstrated in statistics regarding **global economic output** during that period. A comparison of Europe with China and India illustrates how swift and dramatic Europe's economic rise was:

- In 1800, Europe as a whole was responsible for 28 per cent of global economic output, and China and India 57 per cent.
- Within 60 years, by 1860, the percentage for Europe was 53 per cent, while China and India had dropped to 28 per cent.
- By 1880, the European dominance was a striking 61 per cent, to China and India's 15 per cent.

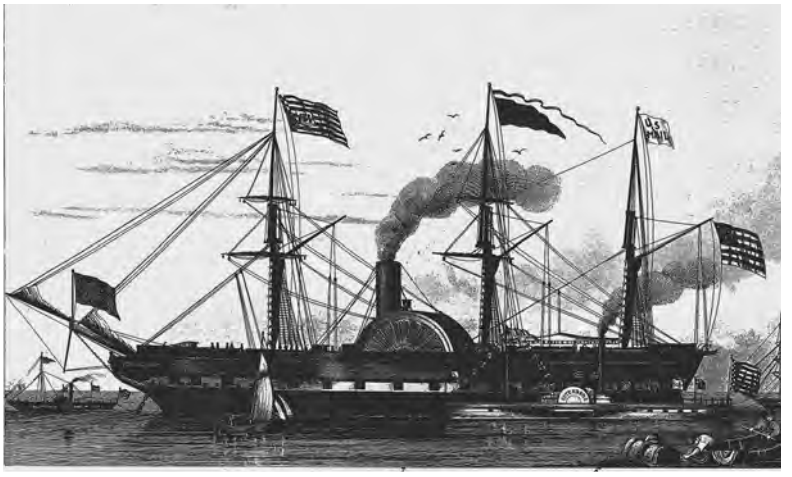
This shift in economic power accompanied a comparable shift in political and military power.

eclipse
to pass from a position of power

global economic output
the total value of goods produced and services provided across the entire world in a year

Technology as an agent of imperialism

One of the keys to understanding any overview of imperial expansion is to take into consideration the huge changes that took place in transportation and communication technology during the nineteenth century. Steamships replaced sail ships, railway construction reduced overland travel times and, above all, the development of the electric telegraph brought the entire world closer together. Telegraph lines linked London and India in 1870, and London and Australia in 1872. Thus people, products, ideas and information were all able to move around the world at a speed that would have been regarded as impossible only a century earlier.



SOURCE 8 The American steamship *Washington*, in 1851, as sail was giving way to steam and revolutionising ocean transport

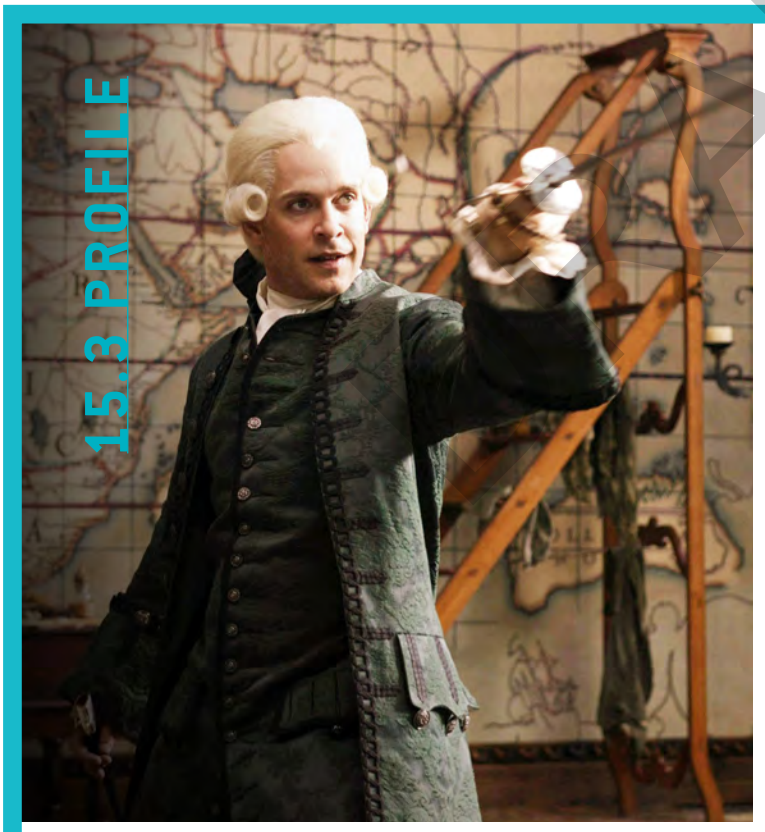
15.3 Understanding and using the sources

1 Analyse Source 6. What is it implying about King Leopold II's control of the Belgian Congo? Research the treatment of the indigenous peoples of the Congo under Belgian control and discuss whether the attitude shown in Source 6 is justified.
2 Analyse Source 7 and explain what point it is making about the Age of Imperialism.
3 Explain how steamships such as that shown in Source 8 could change international trade and increase the value of European colonies.

15.3 Check your learning

1 What percentage of the planet did European countries control by 1914?
2 Create a flow chart that explains the two-way trade process that enriched imperialist countries in the nineteenth century.
3 Identify a specific example of imperialism that benefited the trade of an imperialist country. Research its impact on the population of the colonised country.
4 Conduct research to identify which areas of the planet had *not* been colonised by Europeans by 1914.

15.3 PROFILE



SOURCE 9 Tom Hollander as Cutler Beckett, Chairman of the East India Trading Company, in *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest* (2006). The avaricious company in this film was based on the real East India Company, with the pirates representing freedom from imperialist powers.

THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

Although the spreading of Christianity and 'civilised', Western ideals were used to justify imperialist expansion, these were not the core reasons behind colonisation. At the heart of imperialism was always the desire to secure profit for business owners and shareholders. Nowhere was this more evident than in the activities of the East India Company.

Known by a range of names during its years of operation, the East India Company was essentially an English private company formed to take advantage of new trading opportunities after the defeat of the Spanish Armada of 1588. In this conflict, England broke the monopoly (total control) Spain and Portugal had enjoyed in the East Indian spice trade.

Conflict with the Dutch in what was then called the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) saw the Company focus its attention in India in the early seventeenth century, while also pursuing interests in the Persian Gulf, South-East Asia and East Asia.

The major products the Company traded in were cotton, silk, spices, tea and opium. The latter was eventually to bring it into conflict with China in the Opium Wars. The Company, displaying the inherent 'logic' of nineteenth-century imperialism, demanded to be able to sell Indian opium in China to pay for the Chinese tea it was selling in England. Twice, after China banned the sale of opium to its citizens, wars were fought to ensure the Company had the right to sell opium to the Chinese.

For around 150 years, from the 1620s, the Company transported slaves to support its economic expansion.

The Company effectively ruled India on behalf of the British crown from 1834. Resentment of the Company's imperialist actions in India eventually resulted in the Indian Mutiny of 1857. As a result of this conflict, the British Government took formal control of India in 1858, and seized the Company's Indian possessions, its administrative powers and its armies.

The Company lost all its power. It was finally dissolved in 1873, after over 300 years as a spearhead of English imperialism.

SOURCE 10 An artist's impression of an official of the East India Company riding in a procession in India

SOURCE 11 A woman smokes an opium pipe in modern-day China.

15.3 PROFILE TASKS

1 Which event paved the way for the establishment of the East India Company?
2 Research the Indian Mutiny and outline why the East India Company would have been resented by Indians.
3 Analyse Source 10 and explain how it could be used as evidence to help a historian understand the relationship between the East India Company and the Indian population.

15.4 Ideas driving imperialism: nationalism, Christianity and the idea of a superior race

Nineteenth-century European imperialism was driven to some extent by ideas, as well as the desire for profit and power. Among the most influential key ideas in this period were **nationalism**, social Darwinism and the spread of Christianity.

nationalism a sense of pride in, and love of, one's country; advocacy of political independence for a particular country

Nationalism

The famous American scholar Benedict Anderson argued that nationalism was inseparable from the idea of the nation. He called this the creation of 'imagined communities', or the idea that a community is 'imagined' by the people who see themselves as part of that community.

The drive for communities to establish themselves as nations bound by a common culture and sense of identity and aspiration became a feature of nineteenth-century Europe. For a number of European countries, their national idea of themselves was linked to their international standing. The easiest way to measure that international standing was the size of their armed forces and the size of their empire.

Germany only became a unified nation in 1871, and so was a latecomer to the nineteenth-century race for colonies. It was prompted to enter that race by nationalism and a desire to be seen as the equal of the other great European powers, Britain and France.

Many believe that the desire of European powers to compete with each other to create empires ultimately led to the First World War.

SOURCE 12 A statue of Queen Victoria, who ruled England throughout the Age of Imperialism

Glorification of empire

Celebrating the empire became central to life and culture in many European countries, none more prominently than Britain. In their classrooms, Britain's youngest citizens were told stories about national success, power and conquest. Generations of school children across the empire read books such as *Deeds That Won the Empire* (1896) by British-born Australian writer William Henry Fitchett, and the famous poems of Rudyard Kipling.

After the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, Empire Day was instituted across the British Empire (including Australia), where events such as community bonfires and fireworks gave people a chance to show their pride in being part of the empire. It was celebrated on 24 May, Victoria's birthday. In 1958, this day was replaced by British Commonwealth Day, which celebrated the achievements and unifying power of the British Commonwealth.

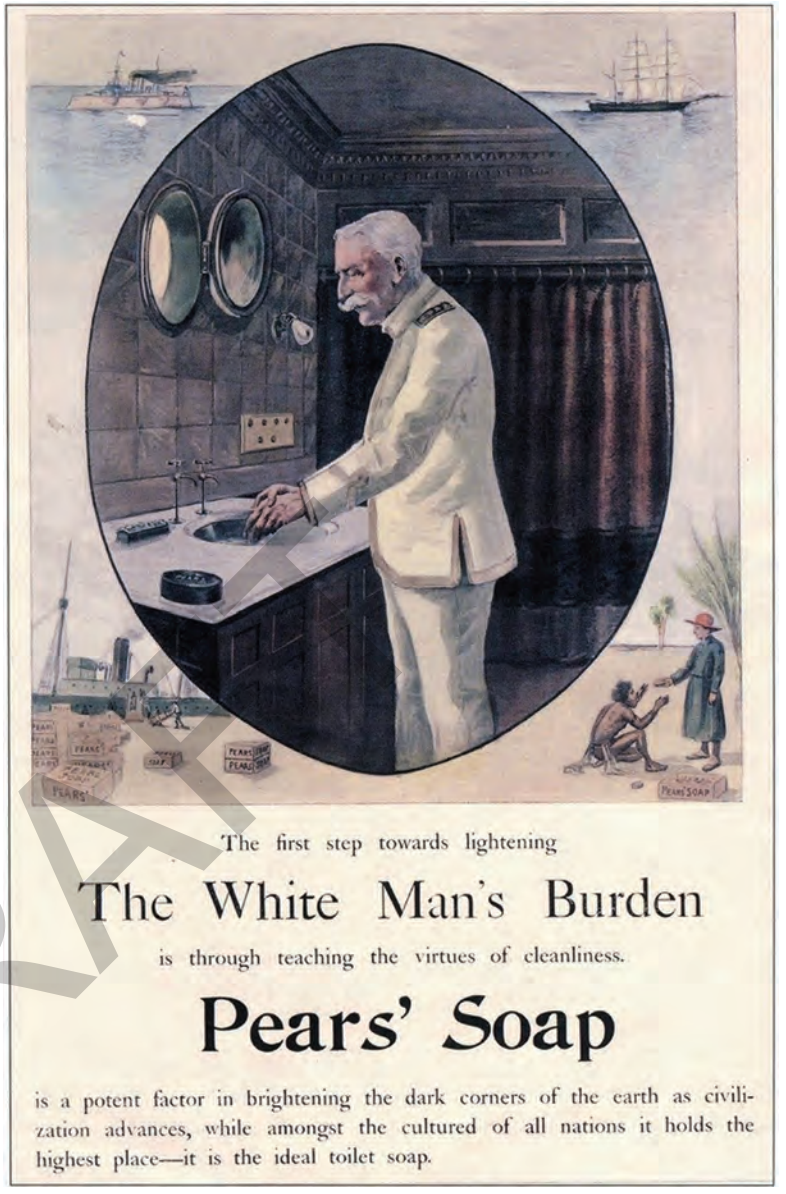
In ways such as these, the empire was glorified and celebrated.

Social Darwinism

Social Darwinism was a perversion of a central theory in *On the Origin of the Species*, the ground-breaking 1859 book by British naturalist Charles Darwin. Darwin had argued that when some species failed to adapt to change, they died out and were replaced by other species that were fitter or better adapted to change. This led to the evolutionary concept of 'natural selection', or 'survival of the fittest'. The European imperialists chose to apply this concept to human society, and found it to be a convenient justification for their abuse and subjugation of indigenous peoples in the areas they conquered. They argued that European superiority justified the exploitation of 'less civilised' races, whose main role was to serve the superior race. It was this idea that informed much of the treatment and policy directed towards Indigenous Australians under British colonisation and beyond.

Spreading Christianity

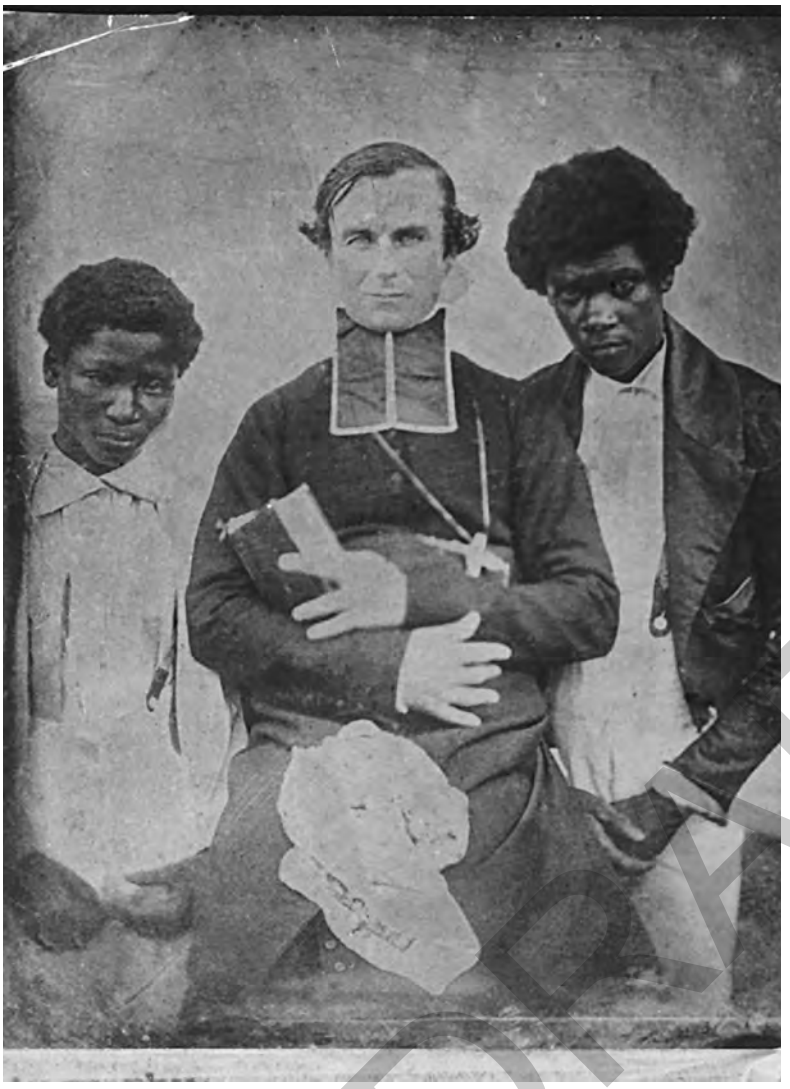
In 1837, a committee of the British Parliament declared that Britain had a special mission to 'carry civilization and humanity, peace and good government, and above all the knowledge of the true God to the uttermost ends of the earth'. This quote clearly reflected another characteristic of nineteenth-century imperialism – Christianity.



SOURCE 13 The 'White Man's Burden' is to teach cleanliness, according to a Pears' Soap advertisement from the 1890s

SOURCE 14

> The essential point in dealing with Africans is to establish a respect for the European. Upon this – the prestige of the white man – depends his influence, often his very existence, in Africa. If he shows by his surroundings, by his assumption of superiority, that he is far above the native, he will be respected, and his influence will be proportionate to the superiority he assumes and bears out by his higher accomplishments and mode of life.
>
> Sir Frederick Lugard, Governor of Hong Kong and Nigeria, *The Rise of Our East African Empire*, 1893



SOURCE 15 One of the earliest photographs taken in the tropics, this image shows a missionary with two Tahitian converts to Christianity.

In 1792, British Christian missionary William Carey published a **treatise** called *Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens.* Carey called for the Christianisation of all parts of the world that had been deprived of the message of the Gospels. His call was heeded by Christians from a range of churches, who formed '**missions**' to bring the word of God to the natives of the British Empire. This drive to destroy native culture and beliefs and replace them with Christianity had a destructive effect on many indigenous populations. When accompanied by social Darwinism, the result was devastating.

Throughout history both great good and great evil has been done in the name of religion, including Christianity. In Africa, Australia, Asia, the Pacific and the Americas, Christianity brought peace and hope to many, but it also destroyed lives and broke up families. While some missionaries cared deeply about the welfare of their new congregations, there were others who counted converts as if they were keeping a scorecard.

Christianity challenged old ways of thinking and traditional modes of behaviour; therefore, it amounted to a revolution. Aside from the spiritual side, however, Christianity was a tool of Western imperialism and it therefore cannot be separated from the processes of Westernisation.

treatise
a formal piece of writing that examines a specific subject

mission
a group of people sent by a religious organisation to teach their religion to conquered peoples

15.4 Understanding and using the sources

1 Analyse Source 13. What attitude towards indigenous people does it convey? Discuss how advertisements such as this help explain imperialism.
2 Explain how Source 14 provides evidence for the acceptance of social Darwinism as a philosophy of imperialism.

15.4 Check your learning

1 Discuss how the idea of empire became a part of British culture.
2 Explain how social Darwinism and Christianity contributed to imperialism.

15.5 Australia: a 'settler colony'

Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa have been classified as 'settler colonies'. In other words, it is suggested that one of the reasons these countries became part of Britain's extensive imperial web of colonies was to provide places to resettle the growing European population, and the people who had been forced off their agricultural land by urbanisation and industrialisation. In each case, the settlers dispossessed the original inhabitants.

Australia has always struggled with acknowledgment of its treatment of Indigenous Australians. What anthropologist W.E.H. Stanner called 'the great Australian silence' surrounding this issue was challenged by historian Henry Reynolds in his ground-breaking book *The Other Side of the Frontier*, published in 1981. With this publication, Reynolds became one of the first historians to publicly question the traditional viewpoint that the settlement of Australia had been largely peaceful, with little or no resistance from Indigenous Australian tribes. However, it was not until the Mabo Decision in 1992 that the Australian Government was willing to admit that Australia had been occupied by other peoples before the arrival of the Europeans.

Because of its recent history of colonisation, Australia offers a special case study that highlights a number of important themes in the story of nineteenth-century European imperialism.

The myth of the convict settlement

Generations of Australians were taught – and many still believe – that the primary reason for the British occupation of Australia was to use it to dispose of Britain's unwanted convicts. Like all great myths, this version of Australian history does have an element of truth. The First Fleet that arrived in New South Wales in 1788 was largely made up of convicts sentenced to transportation (banishment) for their crimes, and Britain did have a problem with overcrowded jails. However, few major events in history ever have such simple and straightforward explanations. The real reasons for the occupation of Australia are more complicated, interesting and challenging.

In the 1950s, the Australian economic historian Ken Dallas argued that it just did not make financial sense for the British Government to try and solve the problem of overcrowded jails by shipping batches of convicts halfway around the world. This represented a huge cost when there were much cheaper solutions and alternative sites for a convict settlement closer to home. Dallas instead linked the decision to send Arthur Phillip and the First Fleet to Australia to other imperialist factors.

The settlement of Australia offered the British a potential site for a trading base in the Pacific. This, Dallas pointed out, offered the British a range of economic opportunities, such as the rich tea and spice trade with China, possible links to the fur trade in the North Pacific, and access to whaling. In addition to these economic and trade incentives, Dallas also suggests that Britain wanted to prevent its imperial rivals, specifically France, from establishing a foothold in the region.

This debate was rekindled in the 1960s, when two of Australia's most gifted researchers and historians, Geoffrey Blainey and Geoffrey Bolton, engaged in a long academic discourse about the reasons why the British decided to occupy Australia.

Bolton acknowledged that the decision to send the First Fleet to Australia was expensive and that the strategic placement of Australia in the Pacific might have played a role, but maintained that the most important factor was the overcrowded jails.

By contrast, Blainey – in a 1966 book entitled The Tyranny of Distance – said that Dallas had been right about the economic forces behind the decision to colonise, and then added some strategic reasons of his own. Blainey argued that aside from trade, Britain was attracted to Australia because of the existence of flax plants and impressive pine trees on Norfolk Island, close to Australia. According to Blainey, both of these raw materials were vital to the Royal Navy, and securing them was an important part of Britain's global naval strategy. The flax was used for ropes and the pine for masts and spars of sailing ships. Therefore Australia was not just intended as a place to dump convicts; rather, it was to become a plantation for these important strategic commodities.

As is the case with most historical debates, many still argue over the reasons for the settlement of Australia.

SOURCE 16 The famous Norfolk Island pines that Geoffrey Blainey argued were an important reason for settlement in Australia

The colonisation of Australia's first peoples

Indigenous Australians are part of the oldest surviving continuous culture on the planet. It is now generally acknowledged that their cultures can be traced back at least 60 000 years, but they are likely to be much older. Some Indigenous communities argue that they have been here forever, and that they were born from this land.

The treatment of the first Australians is not a proud part of Australia's national story – and in some ways is made still worse by a long history of denial. A close examination of the nineteenth-century records indicates an acknowledgment of **frontier** violence, amounting in some cases to war. For example, on the Western plains of New South Wales, the Wiradjuri people actually drove back the advances of the Europeans into their country, for a time. By the twentieth century, however, in the wake of **Federation**, the records of the frontier became sanitised, and modern 'White Australia' invented itself without acknowledging that the British settlers took the land and homes of other people.

frontier
the outer limit of settled land

Federation
the process by which the separate self-governing colonies came together to form the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901

In Australia, as in other parts of the world, European diseases and weapons combined with lethal force to overcome opposition. Sometimes, the European treatment of the first Australians was deliberately brutal. The infamous Myall Creek Massacre in 1838 and the activities of the Queensland Native Police in the 1840s and 50s are clearly documented examples of a level of violence that amounted to mass murder. These actions were on occasion disguised with government terms, such as 'dispersal'. This sounded harmless enough, but in 1861, when the Queensland Attorney-General was questioned in parliament, he explained that 'dispersal' meant 'shooting Aborigines'. There are also stories from the Queensland frontier of poisoned flour being handed to small Aboriginal bands, as though they were pests to be exterminated.

It has been argued that Europeans did not understand that they were taking land that belonged to someone else. The famous Australian historian Henry Reynolds rejects this view and points to a number of people – including Watkin Tench and William Dawes of the First Fleet, and Philip Gidley King, third Governor of New South Wales – who were troubled by the processes of invasion and dispossession. These men all publicly expressed their objections at the time and for the record. Reynolds described them and others that followed as men and women of conscience.

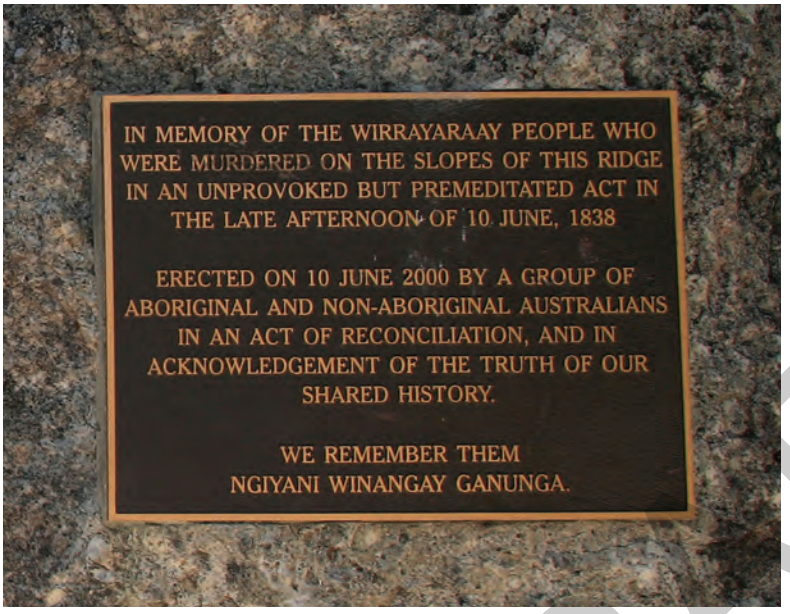
SOURCE 17 Aboriginal Australians, c. 1880

assimilation
the absorption and integration of people, ideas or culture into a wider society or culture

SOURCE 18

I look on the blacks (said this enlightened and philanthropic juror) as a set of monkies, and the earlier they are exterminated from the face of the earth the better. I would never consent to hang a white man for a black one. I knew well they were guilty of the murder, but I, for one, would never see a white man suffer for shooting a black.

A quote ascribed to a juror who had acquitted those accused of murdering Indigenous Australians at Myall Creek; this appeared in a letter to the editor of *The Australian* newspaper, 8 December 1838



SOURCE 19 A plaque at the Myall Creek Massacre and Memorial Site, New South Wales

Once resistance was subdued, the imperial impulse was to either eliminate the original owners or to make them like the newcomers. This **assimilation** process included a plan to turn the Indigenous population of New South Wales into European-style farmers in the 1800s. It also involved an 'education' program, which was dominated by the drive to turn Indigenous Australians into Christians and servants. By 1880, this philosophy was reflected in the three guiding principles of the New South Wales education policy for Aboriginal Australians: that they be 'clean, clothed and courteous'.

For much of the nineteenth century, the Europeans expected the Indigenous Australian population to simply die out. Government policies of dispossession and removal, and the establishment of missions and reserves for Indigenous Australians, were all predicated on the idea that it was only a matter of time before all Indigenous peoples would disappear. It would take until the first two decades of the twentieth century for government policies around the treatment of Indigenous Australians to begin to change.

15.5 Understanding and using the sources

1 To what extent does Source 17 reflect ideas of social Darwinism?
2 Examine Sources 17, 18 and 19, and explain how they display continuities and changes in the recognition of the rights and freedoms of Indigenous Australians since the days of British imperialism.

15.5a Check your learning

1 What are settler colonies? Give three examples of such colonies.
2 Discuss the different arguments about why Australia was established as a British colony. Which evidence do you find most compelling?
3 Briefly discuss the impact of British imperialism on Indigenous Australians.
4 To what extent do ideas of nationalism, social Darwinism and the spreading of Christianity help you understand the treatment of Indigenous Australians in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries?

Case study: Australian imperialism

Once Australia had been established as a British colony, it went on to colonise its own territories. Claimed areas included Macquarie Island (roughly halfway between New Zealand and Antarctica), which became the sole responsibility of Tasmania late in the nineteenth century, and the eastern portion of Papua New Guinea, which became an Australian territory in 1902. A decade later, in 1914, Australia was given control of Norfolk Island, and it would go on to seize control of the northern portion of Papua New Guinea from Germany during the First World War.

The **League of Nations** granted Australia a **mandate** to control the island of Nauru (a rich source of phosphate) in 1923, and Britain granted Australia control of the Ashmore and Carter Islands in the Indian Ocean in 1931. Australia's biggest geographical claim was made in 1933, when Britain gave it authority over the Australian Antarctic Territory, an area of the Antarctic continent over 5 896 500 km^2 in size.

League of Nations
an international organisation established at the end of the First World War to maintain world peace and prevent the outbreak of future wars by encouraging nations to negotiate with each other

mandate
a commission given to one nation by others (for example through the League of Nations) to control a country or geographical area

SOURCE 20 This 1959 postcard marks the opening of the Wilkes post office in the Australian Antarctic Territory

Australia continued to expand its territories in the 1950s and 1960s, acquiring the Heard and McDonald Islands in the Southern Ocean; Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands in the Indian Ocean; and the Coral Sea Islands in the Coral Sea.

Many of these territories provided Australia with valuable resources, such as phosphate, guano (a fertiliser made from manure) and whale oil. Even in the twenty-first century, decades after countries such as Papua New Guinea and Nauru gained independence from Australia, the Commonwealth still controls seven external territories, spanning from just 10 degrees south of the equator, all the way to the South Pole.

15.5b Check your learning

1 What evidence is there that Australia was also an imperialist country?
2 Research the territories Australia still controls from '10 degrees south of the equator, all the way to the South Pole'. What does Australia gain from this control?

15.6 Global resistance and the resilience of Indigenous groups

Despite the best intentions of missionaries spreading the word of a 'loving Christian God', indigenous groups around the world resisted European imperialism. It is important to recognise that although the responses of indigenous groups to imperialism were generally not recorded, there are records of their resistance.

In Africa, where tribal groups such as the Zulu were large and well organised, armed resistance could be formidable. The Zulu Wars (1879–96) – which included the Battle of Isandlwana in 1879, where a Zulu Army of 20 000 warriors wiped out a British Army of more than 2000 men equipped with modern weapons – is a classic example. In New Zealand, where the Indigenous Maori people were similarly numerous, unified and organised, the resistance known as the Maori Wars (between 1845 and 1875) forms a key feature of national history.

In Australia, there was lengthy and determined resistance by Indigenous Australians, albeit more localised. Unlike the Zulu and the Maori, Indigenous Australians did not share a common language; nor did they have the kind of social organisation that allowed for the creation of large armies. In 2017, work done by Professor Lyndall Ryan at the University of Newcastle produced a map of Indigenous massacre sites on the east coast of Australia. It was based largely on settler accounts, newspaper reports, and Indigenous evidence that had previously been largely disregarded. This ongoing project has so far documented 150 massacres, resulting in at least 6000 deaths.

SOURCE 21 'Incident at the Battle of Isandlwana', depicting the Anglo-Zulu War in 1879

Ultimately, the courage, spears and clubs of indigenous peoples were no match for European technology and weapons. As the nineteenth century progressed, European armies had at their disposal modern artillery, repeating rifles and early forms of the modern machine gun. This was the age of the 'firepower revolution', with weapons that could fire hundreds of rounds a minute. They turned a single man into an army, and practically eliminated all chance of a successful resistance.

Despite the fact that indigenous resistance was consistently crushed, with varying degrees of ruthlessness, indigenous peoples around the world displayed remarkable resilience and capacity to recover.

15.6 Understanding and using the sources

1 Analyse Sources 21–23. What perspective does each convey? Create a list of similarities and differences between these three sources.
2 Select one source from Sources 21–23, and explain how it helps you understand British imperialism in the nineteenth century.

15.6 Check your learning

1 Explain why the Zulu and Maori had more success in resisting British imperialism than Indigenous Australians.
2 Research the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Why did Indians revolt against the control of the East India Company? How successful were they?
3 Investigate and analyse one example of indigenous resistance to British imperialism in the nineteenth century.

SOURCE 22 'The relief of Lucknow' depicts an event in the Indian Mutiny of 1857. Indian historians still often refer to this as the 'First War of Indian Independence'.

SOURCE 23 A poster for a Barnum and Bailey Circus production, showing not only how British troops dealt with local resistance, but also the role popular culture played in spreading the idea of the glory of empire

15.7 The legacy of imperialism

Imperialism in the nineteenth century transformed the global economic, political and social landscape. It reflected the emergence of Europe, and spread Western modes of thinking worldwide. It led directly to the first phase of what we refer to today as 'globalisation' – the interconnectedness of economies all over the world. Due to Britain's pre-eminent position as an imperial power, it also made English the universal language of trade and communication.

In addition to Christianity, which spread dramatically in the wake of imperialism, the European expansion also brought with it the other great Western article of faith: **capitalism**. The concepts of the **free market**, banking systems and investment were spread globally, along with a culture of respect for the elites of business and the corporate sector.

Imperialism and colonial rivalry between the great European powers have also long been considered among the causes of the First World War. In order to protect and maintain order in their colonies, European powers needed armies and navies. Imperialism therefore encouraged aspects of **militarism**.

Imperialism and modernity

The concept of modernity could be interpreted as an example of twenty-first-century cultural imperialism. This is primarily a Western idea that assumes the superiority of the Western, modern way of living, thinking and knowing. It privileges Western or European ways of understanding, teaching and recording aspects of society and the past, at the expense of other ways of doing so.

SOURCE 24 Perhaps the most famous of the British Christian missionaries was David Livingstone (1813–73), a doctor and minister who travelled widely through Africa and preached that Christianity, civilisation and European trade and commerce should all go 'hand in hand'.

One legacy

globalisation and the spread of Western thought, beliefs and ideas. These ideas took hold in relation to economics, as well as areas such as infrastructure and technology.

Ultimately, any judgments made about the legacy of European imperialism will depend on who you ask. Imperialism, like any other historical event, had winners and losers. The irony is that if imperialism and colonial rivalry did indeed help trigger the First World War, then ultimately imperialism carried within it the seeds of European global decline. After the First World War, the balance of global economic and political power began to shift away from Europe towards the United States, and a new style of imperialism.

SOURCE 25 French machine gunners take position during the Battle of the Aisne during the First World War in 1917. Was this war the end result of the Age of Imperialism?

15.7 Understanding and using the sources

1 Explain how Source 25 could be regarded as the culmination of the Age of Imperialism. What would you choose as the final image in a book chapter on the Age of Imperialism?

15.7 Check your learning

1 Discuss the significance of imperialism, both as an idea, and as the actions of European nations.
2 To what extent do you think imperialism was a contributing cause of the First World War?
3 In your own words, explain the concept of modernity.
4 Discuss the legacy of imperialism for the modern world. To what extent do you think the world is still dealing with the effects of the Age of Imperialism?

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that the Age of Imperialism had a profound effect on the world we live in. The nineteenth century saw Europe dominate the global landscape. Colonies were established across the planet to increase the wealth and power of Europe at the expense of those who became the conquered. Huge profits were made, and the First World War erupted among those wealthy and privileged nations as they strove for even more wealth and privilege.

To some extent, in the twenty-first century we are still dealing with the effects of the Age of Imperialism. Global wealth continues to be largely concentrated in the countries that were the beneficiaries of imperialism, including the United States, which began as a product of European imperialism and then went on to become an imperial power in its own right.

Clashes over ideas and global inequalities are also still part of our daily life today. Indeed, Britain's decision in 2016 to exit the European Union – 'Brexit' – and US President Donald Trump's campaign call to 'make America great again' echo a nationalist desire to return to a period where imperial powers exerted greater control of world affairs.

As a history student, it is your responsibility to develop a well-researched and -supported interpretation of imperialism, supported by evidence and sources. You will be confronted by a range of opinions, many revealing bias, and it is critical that you think for yourself, and rely on the sources to guide you to your conclusion.

SOURCE 26 Queen Victoria receives a gift from an African diplomat.

FOR THE TEACHER

Check your obook assess for the following additional resources for this chapter:

Answers
Answers to each *Check your learning*, *Understanding and using the sources* and *Profile task* in this chapter

Teacher notes
Useful notes and advice for teaching this chapter, including syllabus connections and relevant weblinks

Class test
Comprehensive test to review students' skills and knowledge

assess quiz
Interactive auto-correcting multiple-choice quiz to test student comprehension