# **European Imperialism**

Throughout the 1800-1900's, many nations wanted to expand their Empires beyond their own territories. This policy of expansion had social, economic, and political causes. Invading foreign lands meant new access to valuable resources for industrialized nations. Many nations looked to take new territory for strategic (military) reasons, giving their nation strength and security. Territories in Asia and Africa were drastically affected by this expansion of European nations, the United States, and Japan. This expansion led to increased competition and conflict and had a major impact on how these nations would develop in the years to come.



# Why did many nations seek to expand their Empires? What types of problems might this create?

#### **Social Darwinism**

Charles Darwin was an English biologist who worked on various groundbreaking theories such as evolution and Natural Selection. Darwin said that certain species of animals have traits that allow them to survive while other animals lack these important traits and will naturally die out as a result. Darwin's theories mostly focused on the <u>animal</u> kingdom.

1. In the mid 1800's, other thinkers (NOT DARWIN) tried to apply Darwin's theories on plants and animals <u>to human beings</u>. The leader in this movement was **Herbert Spencer**, an English philosopher. He believed that the competition of bussinesses in an economy was an example of natural selection in the human world. The best companies make a profit, while the inefficient companies go bankrupt. This "economic application" is only <u>one part</u> of what became known as <u>Social Darwinism</u>.

2. These thinkers also applied Darwin's theory to humans in another way. With a partner, examine the quotes below and try to explain the meaning

A) "Society advances when its fittest (smartest) members are given everything they need to succeed. The unfit (unintelligent) people should be allowed to die out." (Survival of the Fittest)
-Herbert Spencer Social Statistics (1851)

**B**) "History shows me that the greatest achievements have been produced by the physically and mentally fitter race."

-Karl Pearson

C) "Whites have clearly come out on top...in the struggle for existence...Within the white race, the Englishspeaking man has proved himself to be the most likely race to spread Justice, Liberty, and Peace over the widest possible area of the planet. Therefore I shall devote the rest of my life to God's purpose and help him to make the world English." -Cecil Rhodes

### Explain the views of the speakers above:

Social Darwinism-

<u>Notes</u>

## **DIRECTIONS:**

Each box below represents a different cause for Imperialism.

- First decide whether it was <u>Social Darwinism</u>, <u>economic causes (money, natural resources)</u>, or <u>political causes (government)</u> that led to Imperialism. (There can be more than one cause for each passage).
- Then describe the passage in your own words in the space provided.

1. <u>The makers of cotton and iron goods have been very much interested in imperialism</u>. This group of import interests has been strengthened by the demand of giant industries for raw materials... Ship owners demand coaling stations for their vessels and naval bases for their protection.

-Parke T. Moon, Imperialism and World Politics

Cause:\_\_\_\_

Description:\_\_\_\_\_

2. Factories are making more that the people can use; Soil is producing more than we can consume. Fate has written our policy for us; the trade of the world shall be ours... <u>We will establish trading posts throughout the world as distributing points for our products</u>. We will cover the ocean with our merchant marines (merchants); we will build a navy to the measure of our greatness.

-American Senator, 1898

Cause:\_

**Description:** 

3. None of the colonial undertakings was motivated by the quest for capitalist profits; they all originated in <u>political ambitions... the nations' will to power, glory, and</u> <u>national greatness</u>.

-Raymond Aron, *The Century of Total War* 

Cause:\_\_\_\_\_

Description:\_\_\_\_\_

4. <u>We Britons are the finest race in the world</u>, and the more of the world we inhabit; the better it is for the human race. It is our duty to seize every opportunity to acquire more territory. We should keep this one idea steadily before our eyes, that <u>more territory</u> <u>simply means more of the Anglo-Saxon race</u>, more of the best, the most human, most honorable race the world possesses.

-Cecil Rhodes, *Confessions of Faith, 1877* 

Cause:\_\_

**Description:** 

5. <u>We could not leave them to themselves. They were unfit for self-government</u>. There was nothing left for us to do but take over. Then we would be able to educate them. We could uplift and civilize and Christianize them. President William McKinley (speaking about the Philippines)

Cause:\_\_\_

Description:\_\_\_\_\_