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Introduction

The development of human history forms the world today and, likewise, important concepts which shape the modern world such as democracy, revolution, nationalism, and the Cold War also have their historical origins. To help students see the world with a sharp mind and develop their global perspective, schools should provide them with the opportunity to acquire the basic knowledge and understanding of world history.

Building Global Perspectives — New resources for 23 major topics in World History is produced by the Personal, Social and Humanities Education Section, Curriculum Development Institute, EDB. Especially designed for junior secondary History, this resource package focuses on introducing the development of Western history and culture and its impact on the contemporary world. Using the approach of enquiry learning, each topic is designed to develop students’ spirit of exploration, as well as their self-learning ability and critical thinking skills.

It calls for the vision of historians to tease out some major historical trends in the vast ocean of world history, and select those essential historical concepts that can construct students’ global perspective. Commissioned by the EDB, a team led by Professor David Faure and Dr Ma Muk-chi (Department of History, The Chinese University of Hong Kong) collaborated with experienced History teachers and selected 23 major History topics which can help students build up their global perspectives. Including important historical concepts, these topics constitute fundamental knowledge on world history for all students, and provide a solid foundation for those who will select History in their senior secondary study. While designing the content, Professor Faure’s team added a variety of new resources, views and perspectives which not only enhance students’ learning interest, but also widen the horizon of world history education in Hong Kong.

To facilitate schools which adopt different subject modes to teach History, this resource package is organized in modules, allowing teachers to select flexibly for the needs of their students and school-based curriculum, supplementing the use of textbooks. It ensures that students obtain a holistic understanding of the development of world history and culture after their junior secondary education. The sample tasks in these resources are designed by a number of History teachers from different schools. We suggest teachers to make adaptation to these exemplars according to their own school contexts to cater for the diverse needs of their students. The content of this package has been uploaded to the website of the Education Bureau for teachers’ reference and adaptation: http://www.edb.gov.hk/index.aspx?nodeID=8796&langno=1

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# Topic 16  Old empires and new empires

## Objectives

| Knowledge | 1. To understand the breaking up of old empires  
| 2. To know how new empires expanded  
| 3. To understand the relationship between empire decline, empire building, imperialism, cultural superiority and globalization |
| Skills | 1. To analyse data  
| 2. To compare sources |
| Attitude | To have correct attitude towards the weak nations in our world. |

## Teaching Flow

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<th>Content</th>
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<td>A question</td>
<td>To arouse students’ interest and curiosity in this topic</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>To know more</td>
<td>Brief Introduction</td>
<td>To let students have some basic ideas of empires</td>
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<td>Map-reading and extended activity (1-2)</td>
<td>To let students find out how old empires and new empires were built.</td>
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<td>To help students understand the message of the poster</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>Summary chart</td>
<td>To consolidate what students have learnt in this topic</td>
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**Why did old empires decline and why were new empires built?**  
What are old empires and new empires?  
Different ways of building empires in different periods.  
The motives behind imperialism  
“White Man’s Burden”  
Effects of Imperialism  
Summary of this topic
Question to ponder

Why did old empires decline and why were new empires built?

To know more

What are old empires and new empires?

- An empire is a state that extends itself territorially, culturally, economically and politically.
- The more it conquers, the stronger it gets.
- It is hard to hold an empire together and any little problem can make it fall apart.
- The old empires built their empires by extending their boundaries.
- Most of the European countries participated in building empires through developing colonies.
- Underdeveloped areas became the area of conflict among European nations in the 19th century.

Task 1: Compare the size of the Austrian Empire with that of Austria today.

Study Sources A and B and then answer the following questions.

Source A

This is a map of the Austrian Empire
(excluding land held in Italy).

Source B

This is a map of Europe today.

Source: Department of History, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Notes for Source A

1. The Austrian Empire
2. The German Confederation controlled by Austria in 1815-1866
1. Refer to Sources A and B, on the map of Europe today, draw the old Austrian Empire.

Suggested answer: refer to books

2. Which countries today have been parts of the old Austrian Empire?

Suggested answer: Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Croatia.

3. Compare the size of Austrian Empire in Source A with Austria today in Source B? What can you conclude from the above comparison?

Suggested answer:
The Austrian Empire was much bigger in size than Austria today.
The Austrian Empire was broken up into many individual states.
The Austrian Empire no longer existed.

**Extended activity (1)**

From Internet or library,

(i) find information about the Ottoman Empire before WWI,

(ii) draw the outline of the Ottoman Empire on maps of Sources A and B, and

(iii) compare the two maps and list out your findings in complete sentences.

Hints: The Ottoman Empire and the Austrian Empire were both now broken up into many small individual nations.

**Source C**

This is a map of colonial empires in 1914.

Source: Department of History, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
1. Identify the major colonial powers illustrated in Source C. You can also refer to books and find out the answer.

Suggested answer: Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Denmark, Netherlands, Japan, Russia, United States and Belgium

2. Where were most of the colonies of Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Japan located in Source C? Complete the table by choosing names of places from the box below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Places</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Britain</td>
<td>Canada, Africa, Australia and Malaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>Southeast Asia and Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggested answer:

Extended activity (2)

Which area was the main area of conflict according to the above table? List two possible reasons behind the struggle over that area.

Hint: Was that area a developed/underdeveloped/developing place?

Suggested answer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main area of conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible reasons behind the struggle over the main areas of conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reason 1: Those areas were weak in economic and military aspects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason 2: Those areas had so many raw materials which had not been tapped.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Task 2: What were the motives behind imperialism?

**Source D** is about the reasons for colonial expansion.

The Industrial Revolution provided more reason for colonial expansion. While in earlier centuries, the colonial effort had been focused on the control of trade routes and limited migration of Europeans overseas, by the 19th century, colonisation was looked upon as a means of economic expansion. Industrialised European nations required resources (cotton, metals) and markets for their industrial goods. They were interested in the rights to mine and to build railways. Moreover, by the second half of the 19th century, European nations competed for colonies, each nation fearing that if its claims had not been established, the territory to be claimed would have been taken by another nation.

1. Why did the writer in source D say “colonization was looked upon as a means of economic expansion by the 19th century”?

**Suggested answer:**

Industrialised nations were competing for resources, markets, mining rights, and railway rights. All these were a kind of economic expansion. Therefore, the writer believes that colonization was a means of economic expansion.

**Source E** is about another motive for colonial expansion.

There was also religious backing for the enthusiasm to extend western knowledge of science and medicine in that missionaries sought to preach Christianity to peoples who had not previously been exposed to the religion.

2. What was the reason behind the extension of western knowledge? Explain your answer with reference to Source E.

**Suggested answer:**

According to Source E, missionaries wanted to preach Christianity through the activities of extending knowledge of science and medicine to other peoples who had no ideas about Christianity.
Task 3: Was imperialism a kind of cultural superiority?

The empire builders were very conscious of their technological and military superiority. These ideas of superiority appeared in many ways, especially in the fields of medicine and education.

In the nineteenth century, under the influence of the theory of evolution, it was thought that white people were superior to other races.

Source F

“The white man's burden” appearing in an advertisement.

Source: Department of History, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

1. What kind of product did the advertisement in Source F promote?

   Suggested answer: It promoted Pears' Soap.

2. According to Source F, write down the main title and subtitle of the source.

   Suggested answer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main title</th>
<th>Subtitle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pear's Soap</td>
<td>The White Man’s Burden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. What can you tell about the image of the white people from Source F? Support your answer with examples.

Suggested answer:

In Source F, the image of the white people was good and they were considered culturally superior to peoples of other places. The main title and subtitle expressed this idea clearly.

4. Why did it say “The first step towards lightening the white man’s burden is through teaching the virtues of cleanliness”?

Hints:

• The quality of soap somewhere over Asia and Africa was believed to be much lower than the products of Pear.

• Pay attention to the value judgment behind those adjectives/words of lightening, brightening, highest, ideal and dark corners.

Suggested answer:

Pear’s was a very well-known brand of soap in the nineteenth century and it must have sold very well in the British Empire. Obviously, the manufacturers of Pear’s soap believed its product was much more effective as a cleaning agent than anything colonial natives might have.

Extended activity (3)

Try to answer more questions about the “White Man’s Burden”.

1. What did “White Man” in “White Man’s Burden” refer to?

Suggested answer: It usually refers to the people of the west/developed countries e.g. Britain, Germany and France etc.

2. Why did European countries have the “White Man’s Burden” at that period of time?

Suggested answer: They might have a sense of cultural superiority. They might use this as an excuse to expand overseas.
3. What are shown in the pictures in the four corners of Source F?

   Suggested answer: In Source F, the two pictures at the top corners were probably meant to indicate a long period of time (from the sailing boat to the steam boat). On the bottom left, goods were being unloaded from a steamer. On the bottom right, a white man was handling out a piece of soap to a native. The white man standing up and the native sitting on the ground probably indicated their relative social positions and power.

4. What is the message behind the story?

   Suggested answer: The white people had a sense of racial superiority with regards to other races.

5. Refer to Sources D, E and F, identify three motives behind imperialism.

   Suggested answer: Economic expansion, religious factor, and the White Man’s Burden/cultural superiority.

Task 4: Do you agree that imperialism brought much more negative effects than positive effects?

Source G is about the positive effects of imperialism.

The interest in building empires, however, promoted explorations and led to an explosion in knowledge about the world. The development of transport, especially steamships and the railway, opened many parts of the world to substantially increased trade. World trade increased many times. The economy of the world was gradually becoming global.

Source H is about the negative effects of imperialism.

Imperial expansion led to conflict, but these conflicts were of two sorts. Firstly, as the old empires declined, some of their territories were fought over by the newly growing empires. Secondly, the new empires also competed for land and influence overseas. To maintain their influence away from home, it was necessary for these governments to build a navy, and they competed to build more and stronger ships. As a result, a competition of naval armaments among various country thus began (see Topic 18).
1. Refer to Sources G and H and using your own knowledge, list out the positive and negatives effects of imperialism by using a table.

**Suggested answer:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effects of Imperialism</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative</strong></td>
<td><strong>Positive</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Led to international conflicts</td>
<td>Promoted explorations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naval race</td>
<td>Explosion in knowledge about the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Led to war</td>
<td>Increased trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic expansion</td>
<td>Economy of the world become global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural expansion</td>
<td>Preaching of different religion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Pair up and discuss with your classmates and discuss:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you agree that Imperialism brought much more negative effects than positive effects?</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I agree because</td>
<td>I disagree because</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suggested answer:** Free answer

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**Conclusion**

- Under this topic, you saw how the old empires were breaking up and new empires were being formed in the second half of the nineteenth century.
- These changes in empire decline and empire building led to competition among countries.
- The expansion of Europe overseas also promoted a sense of cultural superiority.
- Yet, through this process, different parts of the world were becoming more intricately connected, and globalisation was taken forward another step.
Summary Chart

Old empires and New empires

A. Old empires declined
B. Motives behind imperialism
  - economic expansion
  - religious reason

C. New empires built
D. Effects/results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Economic development</td>
<td>Economic exploitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>Explosion in knowledge</td>
<td>e.g. a kind of cultural superiority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>