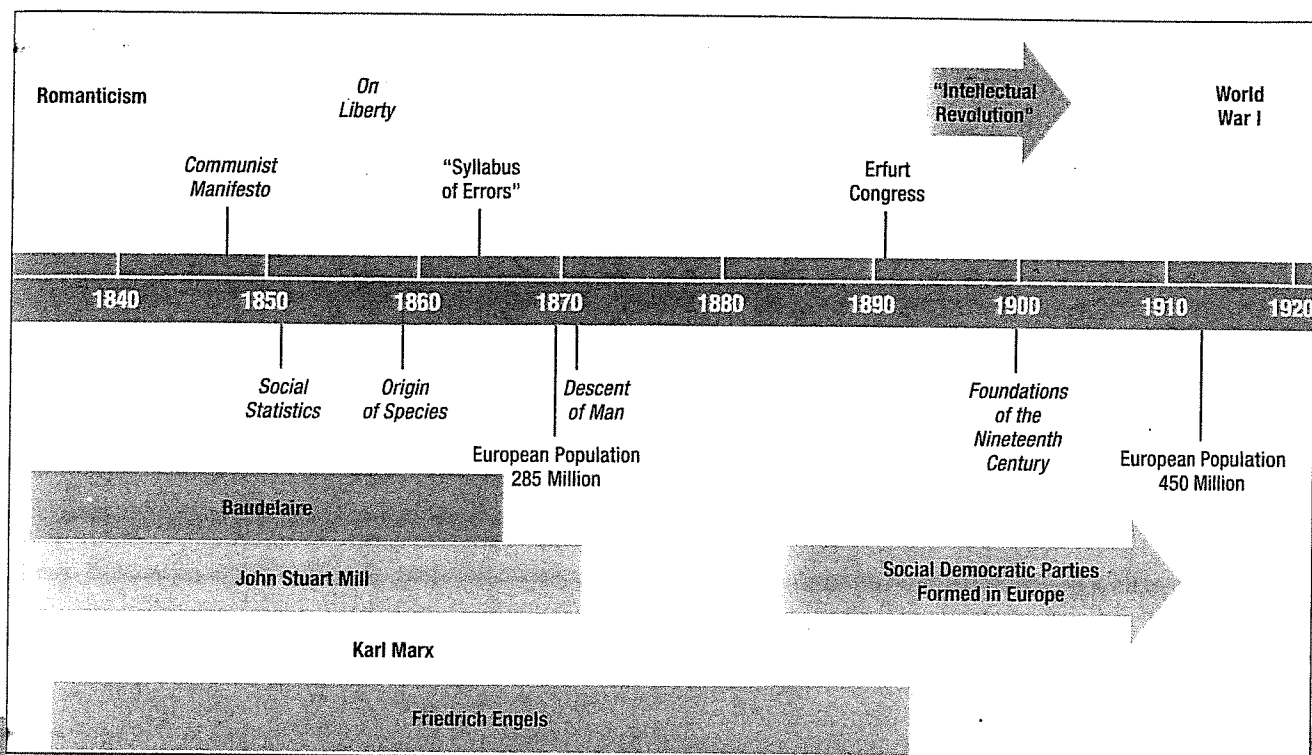


**CHAPTER 24 READINGS**  
**AN AGE OF MODERNITY, ANXIETY, AND IMPERIALISM: 1894-1914**

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# 14 Culture, Thought, and Society: 1850–1914

From the mid-nineteenth century to 1914 the urban middle class dominated Europe socially and culturally. It was this class that was benefiting most from the continuing industrialization of the period. As the urban middle class grew in numbers and wealth, it asserted its own values and assumptions. Increasingly this class set the standards of lifestyle, thought, and culture. At the same time, these standards were attacked from all sides, particularly by those sensitive to the problems of the working class. The contrast between the standards being established by the middle class and the challenges to those standards marks this period as one of great social, cultural, and intellectual ferment.

The selections in this chapter exemplify some of the main social, cultural, and intellectual developments of this period. Three broad questions are addressed. First, what

were some of the main elements of the middle-class style of life? Some of the materials show how this lifestyle was reflected in the physical setting of the middle class; others concentrate on the role women and the family played in this style of life. Second, what were some of the dominant intellectual currents favored by the middle class? Here liberalism as it was evolving toward the end of the century and ideas generally referred to as Social Darwinism are examined. Third, what were some of the main challenges to middle-class ideas and institutions? The most pervasive of these were Marxism and related social doctrines, but there were also conservative challenges, such as those from the Catholic Church and the challenges of racism.

What emerges from these sources is a picture of a dynamic society with a vast array of cultural and intellectual developments. In the decades following the outbreak of

within its scope. A succession of strongly-marked variations of a similar nature is by no means requisite; slight fluctuating differences in the individual suffice for the work of natural selection. . . .

[M]an with all his noble qualities, with sympathy which feels for the most debased, with benevolence which extends not only to other men but to the humblest living creature, with his god-like intellect which has penetrated into the movements and constitution of the solar system—with all these exalted powers—Man still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origin.

## Social Statics: Liberalism and Social Darwinism

Herbert Spencer

The works of Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) epitomize the assertive liberal philosophy favored by successful mid-nineteenth-century industrialists. This was a period in which capitalism was relatively unrestrained and social legislation was only in its infancy. It was also the beginning of thinking from a biological and evolutionary perspective, as best evidenced by the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859. Spencer reflected all this in his massive writings. He rose from being a railroad engineer to become editor of the *London Economist*—which espoused the views of industrial capitalism—and an independent author. Always a supporter of *laissez-faire*, he was best known for his advocacy of social evolution and acceptance of Darwinian ideas applied to society (Social Darwinism). Modern scholars consider him a founder of sociology. The following is an excerpt from *Social Statics* first published in 1851.

CONSIDER: Why Spencer's views would be so appealing to the industrial middle class; on what grounds certain groups might oppose these views; the social policies that would flow from these ideas; ways these views reflect Darwin's ideas.

Pervading all Nature we may see at work a stern discipline which is a little cruel that it may be very kind. . . . It seems hard that an unskillfulness which with all his efforts he cannot overcome, should entail hunger upon the artizan. It seems hard that a labourer incapacitated by sickness from competing with his stronger fellows, should have to bear the resulting privations. It seems hard that widows and orphans should be left to struggle for life or death. Nevertheless, when regarded not separately but in connexion with the interests of universal humanity, these harsh fatalities are seen to be full of beneficence—the same beneficence which brings to

early graves the children of diseased parents, and singles out the intemperate and the debilitated as the victims of an epidemic.

There are many very amiable people who have not the nerve to look this matter fairly in the face. Disabled as they are by their sympathies with present suffering, from duly regarding ultimate consequences, they pursue a course which is injudicious, and in the end even cruel. We do not consider it true kindness in a mother to gratify her child with sweetmeats that are likely to make it ill. We should think it a very foolish sort of benevolence which led a surgeon to let his patient's disease progress to a fatal issue, rather than inflict pain by an operation. Similarly, we must call those spurious philanthropists who, to prevent present misery, would entail greater misery on future generations. That rigorous necessity which, when allowed to operate, becomes so sharp a spur to the lazy and so strong a bridle to the random, these paupers' friends would repeal, because of the wailings it here and there produces. Blind to the fact that under the natural order of things society is constantly excreting its unhealthy, imbecile, slow, vacillating, faithless members, these unthinking, though well-meaning, men advocate an interference which not only stops the purifying process, but even increases the vitiation—absolutely encourages the multiplication of the reckless and incompetent by offering them an unfailing provision, and discourages the multiplication of the competent and provident by heightening the difficulty of maintaining a family. And thus, in their eagerness to prevent the salutary sufferings that surround us, these sigh-wise and groan-foolish people bequeath to posterity a continually increasing curse.

## On Liberty

John Stuart Mill

During the second half of the nineteenth century, liberalism in theory and practice started to change. In general, it became less wedded to *laissez-faire* policies and less optimistic than it was during the first half of the nineteenth century. This change is reflected in the thought of John Stuart Mill (1806–1873). He was the most influential British thinker of the mid-nineteenth century and probably the leading liberal theorist of the period. When he was young he favored the early liberalism of his father, James Mill, a well-known philosopher, and Jeremy Bentham, the author of utilitarianism. Over time he perceived difficulties with this early liberalism and new dangers. He modified his liberal ideas, a change that would later be reflected in liberal political policies of the late

SOURCE: John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism, Liberty, and Representative Government* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd., Everyman Library, 1910), pp. 66–68.

SOURCE: Herbert Spencer, *Social Statics* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1896), pp. 149–151.

9. Combination of agriculture with manufacturing industries: gradual abolition of the distinction between town and country, by a more equable distribution of the population over the country.
10. Free education for all children in public schools. Abolition of children's factory labor in its present form. Combination of education with industrial production, etc., etc.

When, in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character. Political power, properly so called, is merely the organized power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat during its contest with the bourgeoisie is compelled, by the force of circumstances, to organize itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class, and, as such, sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will, along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms, and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class.

In place of the old bourgeois society with its classes and class antagonisms we shall have an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.

## Socialist Women: Becoming a Socialist

Anna Maier

*Between 1850 and 1914 numerous working-class women joined unions and various working-class political organizations. As socialism became more popular in the last decades of the nineteenth century, more and more working-class women were attracted to socialist organizations. At first, most socialist leaders took little account of the specific needs of women workers, but over time more attention was paid to women's issues and women gained leadership roles within socialist organizations. In the following selection Anna Maier describes how she became a socialist by joining the Social Democrats in Austria during the 1890s.*

CONSIDER: *What experiences led Anna Maier to become a socialist; the consequences of her becoming a socialist.*

SOURCE: Adelheid Popp, ed., *A Commemorative Book: Twenty Years of the Austrian Women Workers' Movement* (Vienna, 1912), pp. 107–109, in Eleanor S. Riemer and John C. Fout, eds., *European Women: A Documentary History, 1789–1945* (New York: Schocken Books, 1980), pp. 94–95.

When I turned thirteen my mother took me by the hand and we went to see the manager of a tobacco factory to get me a job. The manager refused to hire me but my mother begged him to change his mind, since she explained, my father had died. I was hired. When I was getting ready to go to work the next day, my mother told me that I was to keep quiet and do what I was told. That was easier said than done. The treatment you received in this factory was really brutal. Young girls were often abused or even beaten by the older women. I rebelled strongly against that. I tried anything that might help improve things for me. As a child I was very pious and used to listen enthusiastically to the priests telling stories from the Bible. So, when things were going badly for me [at work], I would go to church on Sundays where I prayed so intently that I saw or heard nothing going on around me. When I went back to work on Monday, things were not any better and sometimes they were worse. I asked myself: Can there be a higher power that rewards good and punishes evil? I said to myself, no, that cannot be.

Several years went by. The *Women Workers' Newspaper* [*Arbeiterinnen-Zeitung*] began to appear and a few issues were smuggled into the factory by one of the older women. The more I was warned to stay away from this woman, the more I went to her to ask her if she would lend me a copy of the newspaper, since I didn't have enough money to buy my own. At that time work hours were very long and the pay was very low. When my friend lent me a copy of the newspaper, I had to keep it hidden and I couldn't even let my mother see it if I took it home. I came to understand many things, my circle of acquaintances grew and when a political organization was founded in Sternberg, the workers were urged to join—only the men, the women were left out. A party representative came to us since I was already married by then. When he came by for the third time I asked him if I wasn't mature enough to become a member of the organization. He was embarrassed but replied: "When do you want to?" So I joined and I am a member of the party to this day.

I attended all the meetings, took part in all the demonstrations and it was not long before I was punished by the manager of the factory. I was taken off a good job and put in a poorer one just because I had become a Social Democrat. Nothing stopped me though; I said to myself, if this official is against it, out of fear to be sure, then it can't be all bad. When the tobacco workers' union was founded in November 1899, I joined and we had some big battles before we were able to make progress. Through these two organizations I have matured into a class-conscious fighter and I am now trying to win over mothers to the cause so that future children of the proletariat will have a happier youth than I had.

## Why We Are Militant

Emmeline Pankhurst

*The movement for female suffrage had deep roots in the nineteenth century, but gained force toward the end of the century. Various women's organizations in the West circulated petitions, led marches, and held demonstrations to support their demands for the right to vote. In the years before World War I, women's groups became more militant in the face of refusals by governmental officials to act. In Britain, Emmeline Pankhurst (1858–1928) helped organize the Women's Social and Political Union, which conducted assaults on private property and hunger strikes to promote the cause of women's suffrage. In the following excerpt from a 1913 speech, Pankhurst explains why her group is so militant.*

CONSIDER: *The problems facing women who wanted to gain the right to vote; how Pankhurst explains why it became necessary for women to revolt; what arguments government officials might use to oppose Pankhurst.*

I know that in your minds there are questions like these; you are saying, "Woman Suffrage is sure to come; the emancipation of humanity is an evolutionary process, and how is it that some women, instead of trusting to that evolution, instead of educating the masses of people of their country, instead of educating their own sex to prepare them for citizenship, how is it that these militant women are using violence and upsetting the business arrangements of the country in their undue impatience to attain their end?" . . .

Meanwhile, during the '80's, women, like men, were asking for the franchise. Appeals, larger and more numerous than for any other reform, were presented in support of Woman's Suffrage. Meetings of the great corporations, great town councils, and city councils, passed resolutions asking that women should have the vote. More meetings were held, and larger, for Woman Suffrage than were held for votes for men, and yet the women did not get it. Men got the vote because they were and would be violent. The women did not get it because they were constitutional and law-abiding. Why, is it not evident to everyone that people who are patient where mis-government is concerned may go on being patient! Why should anyone trouble to help them? I take to myself some shame that through all those years, at any rate from the early '80's, when I first came into the Suffrage movement, I did not learn my political lessons.

I believed, as many women still in England believe, that women could get their way in some mysterious manner, by purely peaceful methods. We have been so accustomed, we women, to accept one standard for men and another standard for women, that we have even applied that variation of standard to the injury of our political welfare.

Having had better opportunities of education, and having had some training in politics, having in political life come so near to the "superior" being as to see that he was not altogether such a fount of wisdom as they had supposed, that he had his human weaknesses as we had, the twentieth century women began to say to themselves. "Is it not time, since our methods have failed and the men's have succeeded, that we should take a leaf out of their political book?" . . .

Well, I say the time is long past when it became necessary for women to revolt in order to maintain their self-respect in Great Britain. The women who are waging this war are women who would fight, if it were only for the idea of liberty—if it were only that they might be free citizens of a free country—I myself would fight for that idea alone. But we have, in addition to this love of freedom, intolerable grievances to redress. . . .

Well, in Great Britain, we have tried persuasion, we have tried the plan of showing (by going upon public bodies, where they allowed us to do work they hadn't much time to do themselves) that we are capable people. We did it in the hope that we should convince them and persuade them to do the right and proper thing. But we had all our labour for our pains, and now we are fighting for our rights, and we are growing stronger and better women in the process. We are getting more fit to use our rights because we have such difficulty in getting them.

## Syllabus of Errors

Pope Pius IX

*Critics of middle-class liberalism were not limited to those demanding more rapid, radical changes such as the Marxists. From the time of the French Revolution, the conservative Catholic Church was usually hostile to most of the changes favored by the middle class and by doctrines of liberalism. Indeed, in the decades just after mid-century, when it had become apparent that traditional society was on the wane, the Church became more intransigent than ever. In 1864 Pius IX, who served as pope from 1846 to 1878, issued the famous "Syllabus of Errors," in which most of the major forces of the*

SOURCE: Jane Marcus, ed., *Suffrage and the Pankhursts* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987), pp. 153–156.

SOURCE: From William E. Gladstone, *The Vatican Decrees in Their Bearing on Civil Allegiance: A Political Expostulation* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1875), pp. 109–129.

nineteenth century were formally rejected. The following excerpts from that document should be read with care; they present views the Church specifically rejected as errors, not views accepted by the Church.

CONSIDER: Why Pius IX took this stand; the dilemma faced by Catholics who were also middle class and liberal; the groups that might favor the Church's view as expressed here.

15. Every man is free to embrace and profess the religion he shall believe true, guided by the light of reason.

16. Men may in any religion find the way of eternal salvation, and obtain eternal salvation.

39. The commonwealth is the origin and source of all rights, and possesses rights which are not circumscribed by any limits.

45. The entire direction of public schools, in which the youth of Christian states are educated, except (to a certain extent) in the case of episcopal seminaries, may and must appertain to the civil power, and belong to it so far that no other authority whatsoever shall be recognized as having any right to interfere in the discipline of the schools, the arrangement of the studies, the taking of degrees, or the choice and approval of the teachers.

47. The best theory of civil society requires that popular schools open to the children of all classes, and, generally, all public institutes intended for instruction in letters and philosophy, and for conducting the education of the young, should be freed from all ecclesiastical authority, government, and interference, and should be fully subject to the civil and political power, in conformity with the will of rulers and the prevalent opinions of the age.

56. Moral laws do not stand in need of the divine sanction, and there is no necessity that human laws should be conformable to the laws of nature, and receive their sanction from God.

57. Knowledge of philosophical things and morals, and also civil laws, may and must depart from divine and ecclesiastical authority.

78. In the present day, it is no longer expedient that the Catholic religion shall be held as the only religion of the State, to the exclusion of all other modes of worship.

80. The Roman Pontiff can and ought to reconcile himself to, and agree with, progress, liberalism, and civilization as lately introduced.

## Foundations of the Nineteenth Century: Racism

### Houston Stewart Chamberlain

During the second half of the nineteenth century, elements of nationalism, Darwinism, and Romanticism were combined by various writers to produce racist theories and provide justification for the growth of racist views. One of the most famous of these writers was Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855–1927), an Englishman who moved to Germany and became a naturalized German. There he wrote *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* (1900), which soon became a popular success. In it he stressed the importance of racism for the development of civilization. The following selection from that book deals with the "German race."

CONSIDER: The characteristics of the "German race"; the ways in which this selection reflects racist thought; how this might relate to German nationalism.

Let us attempt a glance into the depths of the soul. What are the specific intellectual and moral characteristics of this Germanic race? Certain anthropologists would fain teach us that all races are equally gifted; we point to history and answer: that is a lie! The races of mankind are markedly different in the nature and also in the extent of their gift, and the Germanic races belong to the most highly gifted group, the group usually termed Aryan. Is this human family united and uniform by bonds of blood? Do these stems really all spring from the same root? I do not know and I do not much care; no affinity binds more closely than elective affinity, and in this sense the Indo-European Aryans certainly form a family. . . .

Physically and mentally the Aryans are pre-eminent among all peoples; for that reason they are by right, as the Stagirite expresses it, the lords of the world. Aristotle puts the matter still more concisely when he says, "Some men are by nature free, others slaves"; this perfectly expresses the moral aspect. For freedom is by no means an

abstract thing, to which every human being has fundamentally a claim; a right to freedom must evidently depend upon capacity for it, and this again presupposes physical and intellectual power. One may make the assertion, that even the mere conception of freedom is quite unknown to most men. Do we not see the *homo syriacus* develop just as well and as happily in the position of slave as of master? Do the Chinese not show us another example of the same nature? Do not all historians tell us that the Semites and half-Semites, in spite of their great intelligence, never succeeded in founding a State that lasted, and that because every one always endeavoured to grasp all power for himself, thus showing that their capabilities were limited to despotism and anarchy, the two opposites of freedom?

## Judaism in Music: Anti-Semitism

Richard Wagner

*One of the darkest aspects of racist thought during the second half of the nineteenth century was its growing stress on anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism has a long history, but it welled up with new strength after mid-century, particularly in Germany, where it became an important social and political force. An example of this bitter anti-Semitism comes from the pen of the great German composer, Richard Wagner (1813–1883). The following is an excerpt from "Judaism in Music," an article he published in a German journal in 1850.*

CONSIDER: *The elements of Wagner's anti-Semitism; the support he uses for his arguments against the Jew; how this relates to the ideas of Houston Stewart Chamberlain.*

SOURCE: Louis L. Snyder, ed., *Documents of German History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1958), pp. 192–193.

It is necessary for us to explain the *involuntary repugnance* we possess for the nature and personality of the Jews. . . . According to the present constitution of the world, the Jew in truth is already more than emancipate: He rules, and will rule, as long as Money remains the power before which all our doings and our dealings lose their force. . . . The public art taste has been brought between the busy fingers of the Jews, who reside over an art bazaar. . . . The Jew's outward appearance always has something disagreeably foreign about it. . . .

The Jew speaks the language of the nation in whose midst he dwells from generation to generation, but he always speaks it as an alien. Our whole European art and civilization have remained to the Jew a foreign tongue. In this speech, this art, the Jew can only after-speak and after-patch—cannot truly make a poem of his words, an artwork of his doings. In the peculiarities of Semitic pronunciation the first thing that strikes our ear as quite outlandish and unpleasant, in the Jew's production of the voice sounds, is a creaking, squeaking, buzzing snuffle. . . . The Jew who is innately incapable of enouncing himself to us artistically through either his outward appearance or his speech, and least of all through his singing, has, nevertheless, been able in the widest-spread of modern art varieties, to wit, in Music, to reach the rulership of public taste. . . . Control of money through usury has led the Jews to power, for modern culture is accessible to none but the well-to-do. . . .

The Jews have never produced a true poet. [Heinrich Heine] reached the point where he duped himself into a poet, and was rewarded by his versified lies being set to music by our own composers. He was the conscience of Judaism, just as Judaism is the evil conscience of our modern civilization.



## Visual Sources

### The Hatch Family: The Upper Middle Class

Eastman Johnson

The following 1871 portrait of the Hatch family by the American artist Eastman Johnson (figure 14.1) shows a number of elements of the condition, style of life, and values of the upper middle class. Both the quality and quantity of the furnishings and the clothes indicate how materially well to do this family is. The clothes and demeanor convey the strong sense of propriety; yet the activities of the children

and the position of their toys denote how child-centered this family is. The appropriate gender roles are suggested: the father at center right in an authoritative pose, with pen in hand sitting at his desk, the grandfather on the left, keeping up on the news by reading a paper, the mother on the right, generally surveying her children, and the grandmother on the left, knitting. The large painting on the left as well as the sculptures on the right show this family to be properly supportive and appreciative of the arts. The large bookcase on the right indicates a respect for literature and learning. Heavy curtains largely block out the outside world; values



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## 81 A SUFFRAGETTE GOES TO PRISON

*Although the drive for woman suffrage in Great Britain began during the 1800s, it did not become organized until the formation of the Women's Social and Political Union in 1903. The W.S.P.U.'s initial strategy was to use demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience to make its case. After Parliament rejected a franchise bill in 1910, however, the W.S.P.U.'s activities became more and more militant. In 1913 two suffragettes blew up the house of David Lloyd George, the chancellor of the exchequer. Emmeline Pankhurst, the leader of the W.S.P.U., was soon arrested for inciting this act. In the excerpt below from My Own Story, Pankhurst describes her trial. As you read the excerpt, consider whether using militant acts to promote freedom and democracy is ever justified.*

**W**hen I entered Old Bailey on that memorable Wednesday, April 2nd, 1913, to be tried for inciting to commit a felony, the court was packed with women. A great crowd of women who could not obtain the necessary tickets remained in the streets below for hours waiting news of the trial. A large number of detectives from Scotland Yard, and a still larger number of uniformed police were on duty both inside and outside the court. I could not imagine why it was considered necessary to have such a regiment of police on hand, for I had not, at that time, realised the state of terror into which the militant movement, in its new development, had thrown the authorities.

Mr. Bodkin and Mr. Travers Humphreys appeared to prosecute on behalf of the Crown, and I conducted my own case, in consultation with my solicitor, Mr. Marshall. The Judge, Mr. Justice Lush, having taken his seat I entered the dock and listened to the reading of the indictment. I pled "not guilty," not because I wished to evade responsibility for the explosion,—I had already assumed that responsibility—but because the indictment accused me of having wickedly and maliciously incited women to crime. What I had done was not wicked of purpose, but quite the opposite of wicked. I could not therefore truthfully plead guilty. The trial having opened the Judge courteously asked me if I would like to sit down. I thanked him, and asked if I might also have a small table on which to place my papers. By orders of the Judge a table was brought me.

Mr. Bodkin opened the case by explaining the "Malicious Damages to Property Act" of 1861, under which I was charged, and after describing the explosion which had damaged the Lloyd-George house at Walton, said that I was accused of being in the affair an accessory before the fact. It was not suggested, he said, that I was present when the crime was committed, but it was charged that I had moved and incited, counselled and procured women whose names were unknown to carry out that crime. It would be for the jury to decide, after the evidence had been



presented, whether the facts did not point most clearly to the conclusion that women, probably two in number, who committed the crime were members of the Women's Social and Political Union, which had its office at Kingsway in London, and of which the defendant was the head, moving spirit and recognised leader. . . .

[In response, I said]: "Over one thousand women have gone to prison in the course of this agitation, have suffered their imprisonment, have come out of prison injured in health, weakened in body, but not in spirit. I come to stand my trial from the bedside of one of my daughters, who has come out of Holloway Prison, sent there for two months' hard labour for participating with four other people in breaking a small pane of glass. She has hunger-struck in prison. She submitted herself for more than five weeks, to the horrible ordeal of feeding by force, and she has come out of prison having lost nearly two stone [28 pounds] in weight. She is so weak that she cannot get out of her bed. And I say to you, gentlemen, that is the kind of punishment you are inflicting upon me or any other woman who may be brought before you. I ask you if you are prepared to send an incalculable number of women to prison—I speak to you as representing others in the same position—if you are prepared to go on doing that kind of thing indefinitely, because that is what is going to happen. There is absolutely no doubt about it. I think you have seen enough even in this present case to convince you that we are not women who are notoriety hunters. We could do that, heaven knows, much more cheaply if we sought it. We are women, rightly or wrongly, convinced that this is the only way in which we can win power to alter what for us are intolerable conditions, absolutely intolerable conditions. . . .



*Suffragettes in  
New York*

READINGS IN WORLD HISTORY

And if you convict me, gentlemen, if you find me guilty, I tell you quite honestly and quite frankly, that whether the sentence is a long sentence, whether the sentence is a short sentence, I shall not submit to it. I shall, the moment I leave this court, if I am sent to prison, whether to penal servitude or to the lighter form of imprisonment . . . whatever my sentence is, from the moment I leave this court I shall quite deliberately refuse to eat food—I shall join the women who are already in Holloway on the hunger strike. I shall come out of prison, dead or alive, at the earliest possible moment; and once out again, as soon as I am physically fit I shall enter into this fight again. Life is very dear to us all. I am not seeking . . . to commit suicide. I do not want to commit suicide. I want to see the women of this country enfranchised, and I want to live until that is done. . . .

There is only one way to put a stop to this agitation; there is only one way to break down this agitation. It is not by deporting us, it is not by locking us up in gaol; it is by doing us justice. And so I appeal to you gentlemen, in this case of mine, to give a verdict, not only on my case, but upon the whole of this agitation. I ask you to find me not guilty of malicious incitement to a breach of the law. . . .”

The jury retired, and soon after the afternoon session of the court opened they filed in, and in reply to the usual question asked by the clerk of arraigns, said that they had agreed upon a verdict. Said the clerk:

“Do you find Mrs. Pankhurst guilty or not guilty?”

“Guilty,” said the foreman, “with a strong recommendation to mercy.” . . .

Mr. Justice Lush, in passing sentence, said: “. . . I cannot, and I will not, regard your crime as a merely trivial one. It is not. It is a most serious one, and, whatever you may think, it is a wicked one. I have paid regard to the recommendation of the jury. . . . The least sentence I can pass upon you is a sentence of three years’ penal servitude.”

As soon as the sentence was pronounced the intense silence which had reigned throughout the trial was broken, and an absolute pandemonium broke out among the spectators. At first it was merely a confused and angry murmur of “Shame!” “Shame!” The murmurs quickly swelled into loud and indignant cries, and then from the gallery of the court there arose a great chorus uttered with the utmost intensity and passion. “Shame!” “Shame!” The women sprang to their feet, in many instances stood on their seats, shouting “Shame!” “Shame!” as I was conducted out of the dock. . . . “Keep the flag flying!” shouted a woman’s voice, and the response came in a chorus: “We will!” “Bravo!” “Three cheers for Mrs. Pankhurst!” That was the last I heard of the courtroom protest.

Afterwards I heard that the noise and confusion was kept up for several minutes longer, the Judge and the police being quite powerless to obtain order. Then the women filed out singing the Women’s Marseillaise—

“March on, march on,  
Face to the dawn,  
The dawn of liberty.” . . .

At three o’clock, when I left the court by a side entrance in Newgate Street, I found a crowd of women waiting to cheer me. . . . I entered a four

wheeler and was driven to Holloway to begin my hunger strike. Scores of women followed in taxicabs, and when I arrived at the prison gates there was another protest of cheers for the cause and boos for the law. In the midst of all this intense excitement I passed through the grim gates into the twilight of prison, now become a battleground.

### READING REVIEW

1. Why did Mrs. Pankhurst plead not guilty to the charge of inciting to commit a felony?
2. What did Mrs. Pankhurst say she would do if she was found guilty and sent to prison?
3. (a) Do you think the statement "The end justifies the means" is true with reference to the militant suffragettes' actions?  
(b) Are violent actions justified if they are committed in the name of a good cause? Why or why not?

## 23-5 | An Indictment of France's Military Elite

## ÉMILE ZOLA, "J'Accuse" the French Army (1898)

In 1898 and 1899 the case of Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish captain in the French army who was falsely accused and convicted of treason on the basis of falsified evidence, split France apart. On one side was the army, joined by anti-Semites and most of the Catholic establishment. On the other side stood civil libertarians and most of the more radical republicans. The support offered to Dreyfus by prominent republicans and intellectuals, including novelist Émile Zola, proved critical to securing the reopening of his case and his eventual exoneration. In this excerpt from Zola's famous letter entitled "J'Accuse," Zola accused the French military high command of conspiracy to subvert justice, an action that opened Zola up to a retaliatory prosecution for libel.

Dreyfus knows several languages: a crime. No compromising papers were found in his possession: a crime. He sometimes visited his native country:<sup>1</sup> a crime. He is industrious and likes to find out about everything: a crime. He is calm: a crime. He is worried: a crime. . . .

I accuse Lieutenant-Colonel du Paty de Clam<sup>2</sup> of having been the diabolical, but I would fain believe the unwitting, artisan of the miscarriage of justice, and thereafter of having defended his unhallowed work for three years by the most clumsy and culpable machinations.

I accuse General Mercier<sup>3</sup> of having become, at all events through weakness, an accomplice in one of the greatest iniquities of the age.

From Émile Zola, "J'Accuse" in Armand Charpentier, *The Dreyfus Case*, trans. Lewis May (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1935), pp. 142-144.

<sup>1</sup>His native country: Dreyfus was from Alsace (Alsacia in German), a French province at the time of his birth, but taken by Germany in 1871. For Dreyfus to visit his childhood home, he had to cross the new national border.

<sup>2</sup>Lieutenant-Colonel du Paty de Clam: Armand Mercier Paty de Clam was the French counterintelligence officer who conducted the first accusation against Dreyfus, and who remained convinced of Dreyfus's guilt long after the actual author of the document that began the case was revealed.

<sup>3</sup>General Mercier: Mercier was the war minister who originated the case against Dreyfus and continued it to avoid political embarrassment after making public pronouncements of his certainty of Dreyfus's guilt.

I accuse General Billot<sup>4</sup> of having had in his hands sure proofs of the innocence of Dreyfus and of having hushed them up, of having incurred the guilt of crimes against humanity and justice, for political ends and to save the face of the General Staff.

I accuse General de Boisdeffre and General Gonse<sup>5</sup> of having been participants in the same crime, actuated, the one no doubt by clerical partisanship, the other, it may be, by that esprit de corps which would make the Army and the War Office the sacred Ark of the Covenant.

I accuse General de Pellieux and Major Ravary<sup>6</sup> of conducting a disgraceful inquiry, by which I mean an inquiry characterized by the most monstrous partiality, of which we have, in the report of the latter of these two men, an imperishable monument of stupid audacity.

I accuse the three handwriting experts, MM. Belhomme, Varinard, and Couard, of drawing up misleading and lying reports, unless, indeed, a medical examination should reveal them to be suffering from some pathological abnormality of sight and judgment.

I accuse the War Office of conducting an abominable campaign in the Press, and particularly in the newspapers *l'Éclair* and *l'Écho de Paris*, in order to mislead public opinion and to conceal their own misdeeds.

I accuse the first Court-Martial of acting contrary to law by condemning an accused man on the strength of a secret document; and I accuse the second Court-Martial of having, in obedience to orders, concealed that illegality, and of committing in its turn the crime of knowingly acquitting a guilty man.

In bringing these charges, I am not unaware that I render myself liable to prosecution under Clauses 30 and 31 of the Act of the 29th of July, which deals with defamation of character in the public Press. But I do so of my own free will and with my eyes open.

As for those whom I accuse, I do not know them, I have never seen them. I entertain for them neither hatred nor ill-will. They are so far as I am concerned mere entities, spirits of social maleficence, and the action to which I have here committed myself is but a revolutionary means of hastening the explosion of Truth and Justice.

I have but one passion, and that is for light, and I plead in the name of that humanity which has so greatly suffered and has a right to happiness. My fiery

<sup>4</sup>General Billot Jean-Baptiste Billot was a French general and war minister during the later stages of the Dreyfus affair, 1896-1898.

<sup>5</sup>General de Boisdeffre and General Gonse: Boisdeffre was the chief of staff of the French Army—its highest-ranking soldier—at the time of the initial accusation, and according to Zola, a strong supporter of the Catholic clergy in France. General Gonse was the general to whom the counterintelligence division (called for secrecy purposes the Statistical Section) reported.

<sup>6</sup>General de Pellieux and Major Ravary: Pellieux was the general who investigated the accusations against Esterhazy—the man later proved to have committed the crime of which Dreyfus was accused—and found him innocent. Ravary oversaw the handwriting analysis, and reported on their findings, which turned out to be inaccurate.

protest is but the outcry of my soul. Let them drag me, then, into a Court of Justice and let the matter be thrashed out in broad daylight. I am ready.

#### READING QUESTIONS

1. What risks did Zola take by publishing this letter? What might explain his willingness to take those risks?
2. Based on this document, what was the relationship between the needs of the accused and the needs of the state in nineteenth-century France? How did Zola oppose this conception of justice?
3. Although the actions of the court that convicted Dreyfus were popular, were they compatible with the idea of government by the consent of the governed, which the French Third Republic claimed to embody?

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## 88 AN OFFICIAL REPORT ON "BLOODY SUNDAY" IN ST. PETERSBURG

*On Sunday, January 22, 1905, a group of St. Petersburg workers—under the leadership of Father Gapon, an Orthodox priest—went to the Palace to petition the Czar on their grievances. Army units, however, blocked their way, and when the workers refused to disperse,*

*the troops opened fire, killing and wounding hundreds. This violent clash on "Bloody Sunday" sparked the Revolution of 1905. The excerpt below from *Octobrists to Bolshviks: Imperial Russia 1905–1917* by Martin McCauley contains the official report of the incident by the chief of the St. Petersburg secret police. As you read the excerpt, consider whether the action of the troops was justified.*

Today, at about 10 A.M., workers began to gather at the Narva Gates, in the Vyborg and Petersburg districts, and also on Vasilievsky Island at the premises of the Assembly of Factory Workers, with the aim, as announced by Father Georgy Gapon, of marching to Palace Square to present a petition to the Emperor. When a crowd of several thousand had assembled in the Narva district, Father Gapon said prayers and then together with the crowd, which had at its head banners and icons stolen from the Narva chapel as well as portraits of Their Majesties, moved off towards the Narva Gates where they were confronted by troops. Despite pleas by local police officers and cavalry charges, the crowd did not disperse but continued to advance. . . . Two companies then opened fire, killing ten and wounding twenty. . . .

A little later about 4,000 workers who had come from the Petersburg and Vyborg districts approached the Trinity Bridge: Father Gapon was also with them. A volley was fired into the crowd, killing five and seriously injuring ten. . . .

Towards 1 P.M. people began to gather in the Alexander Garden, overflowing out of the garden itself into the adjoining part of Palace Square. The cavalry made a series of charges to disperse the crowd, but as this had no effect a number of volleys were fired into the crowd. The numbers of dead and wounded from these volleys is not known as the crowd carried off the victims.

The crowd then engulfed Nevsky Prospect and refused to disperse: a number of shots were fired, killing sixteen people, including one woman. . . .

In the evening a large crowd assembled on Vasilievsky Island and began to build barricades in the streets. . . . It was fired on. . . and two people were killed. . . .

In all some seventy-five people were killed and 200 wounded. It appears that among the dead are numbered women and children.

### READING REVIEW

1. How did the workers indicate that they were not challenging the authority of the church and the czar?
2. Who do you think the head of the St. Petersburg secret police held responsible for the bloodshed? Explain your answer.
3. Do you think the troops were justified in opening fire on the crowd? Why or why not?

(13) (18)

These governments did not, and do not, recognise any country save their own families or dynasty, the egoism of caste. But the Divine design will infallibly be realized. Natural divisions, and the spontaneous, innate tendencies of the peoples, will take the place of the arbitrary divisions sanctioned by evil governments. The map of Europe will be redrawn. The countries of the Peoples, defined by the vote of free men, will arise upon the ruins of the countries of kings and privileged castes, and between these countries harmony and fraternity will exist. And the common work of Humanity, of general amelioration and the gradual discovery and application of its Law of life, being distributed according to local and general capacities, will be wrought out in peaceful and progressive development and advance. Then may each one of you, fortified by the power and the affection of many millions, all speaking the same language, gifted with the same tendencies, and educated by the same historical tradition, hope, even by your own single effort, to be able to benefit all Humanity.

O my brothers, love your Country! Our country is our Home, the house that God has given us, placing therein a numerous family that loves us, and whom we love; a family with whom we sympathise more readily, and whom we understand more quickly than we do others; and which, from its being centred round a given spot, and from the homogeneous nature of its elements, is adapted to a special branch of activity. Our country is our common workshop, whence the products of our activity are sent forth for the benefit of the whole world; wherein the tools and implements of labour we can most usefully employ are gathered together: nor may we reject them without disobeying the plan of the Almighty, and diminishing our own strength.

## Militant Nationalism

Heinrich von Treitschke

*The idea of nationalism and nationalistic movements gained great power throughout the nineteenth century. While favored by a variety of liberal and conservative thinkers and groups during the first half of the century, nationalism became more militant, extreme, and racist in the second half of the century, particularly in central Europe. One of the most influential proponents of this militant nationalism in Germany was Heinrich von Treitschke (1834–1896), a historian at the University of Berlin. In*

the following selections from his works, Treitschke puts forth his views on national character, the state, war, and Jews.

CONSIDER: What might be appealing about these views; possible reasons for Treitschke's views of the English and Jews; what policies might logically flow from these ideas.

### ON THE GERMAN CHARACTER

Depth of thought, idealism, cosmopolitan views; a transcendent philosophy which boldly oversteps (or freely looks over) the separating barriers of finite existence; familiarity with every human thought and feeling, the desire to traverse the worldwide realm of ideas in common with the foremost intellects of all nations and all times. All that has at all times been held to be characteristic of the Germans and has always been praised as the essence of German character and breeding. . . .

### ON THE STATE

The state is a moral community, which is called upon to educate the human race by positive achievement. Its ultimate object is that a nation should develop in it, a nation distinguished by a real national character. To achieve this state is the highest moral duty for nation and individual alike. All private quarrels must be forgotten when the state is in danger.

At the moment when the state cries out that its very life is at stake, social selfishness must cease and party hatred be hushed. The individual must forget his egoism, and feel that he is a member of the whole body.

The most important possession of a state, its be-all and end-all, is power. He who is not man enough to look this truth in the face should not meddle in politics. The state is not physical power as an end in itself, it is power to protect and promote the higher interests. Power must justify itself by being applied for the greatest good of mankind. It is the highest moral duty of the state to increase its power.

The true greatness of the state is that it links the past with the present and future; consequently, the individual has no right to regard the state as a means for attaining his own ambitions in life. Every extension of the activities of the state is beneficial and wise if it arouses, promotes, and purifies the independence of free and reasoning men; it is evil when it kills and stunts the independence of free men. It is men who make history. . . .

Only the truly great and powerful states ought to exist. Small states are unable to protect their subjects against external enemies; moreover, they are incapable



of *Kultur* in great dimensions. Weimar produced a Goethe and a Schiller; still these poets would have been greater had they been citizens of a German national state. . . .

#### ON WAR

The idea of perpetual peace is an illusion supported only by those of weak character. It has always been the weary, spiritless, and exhausted ages which have played with the dream of perpetual peace. A thousand touching portraits testify to the sacred power of the love which a righteous war awakes in noble nations. It is altogether impossible that peace be maintained in a world bristling with arms, and even God will see to it that war always recurs as a drastic medicine for the human race. Among great states the greatest political sin and the most contemptible is feebleness. It is the political sin against the Holy Ghost.

War is elevating because the individual disappears before the great conception of the state. The devotion of the members of a community to each other is nowhere so splendidly conspicuous as in war.

Modern wars are not waged for the sake of goods and chattels. What is at stake is the sublime moral good of national honor, which has something in the nature of unconditional sanctity, and compels the individual to sacrifice himself for it.

#### ON THE ENGLISH

The hypocritical Englishman, with the Bible in one hand and a pipe of opium in the other, possesses no redeeming qualities. The nation was an ancient robber-knight, in full armor, lance in hand, on every one of the world's trade routes.

The English possess a commercial spirit, a love of money which has killed every sentiment of honor and every distinction of right and wrong. English cowardice and sensuality are hidden behind unctuous, theological fine talk which is to us free-thinking German heretics among all the sins of English nature the most repugnant. In England all notions of honor and class prejudices vanish before the power of money, whereas the German nobility has remained poor but chivalrous. That last indispensable bulwark against the brutalization of society—the duel—has gone out of fashion in England and soon disappeared, to be supplanted by the riding whip. This was a triumph of vulgarity. The newspapers, in their accounts of aristocratic weddings, record in exact detail how much each wedding guest has contributed in the form of presents or in cash; even the youth of the nation have turned

their sports into a business, and contend for valuable prizes, whereas the German students wrought havoc on their countenances for the sake of a real or imaginary honor.

#### ON JEWS

The Jews at one time played a necessary role in German history, because of their ability in the management of money. But now that the Aryans have become accustomed to the idiosyncrasies of finance, the Jews are no longer necessary. The international Jew, hidden in the mask of different nationalities, is a disintegrating influence; he can be of no further use to the world. It is necessary to speak openly about the Jews, undisturbed by the fact that the Jewish press befouls what is purely historical truth.

### Does Germany Need Colonies?

*Friedrich Fabri*

*Imperialism swept through Europe with extraordinary force in the late nineteenth century. Probably the most apparent motive for the new imperialism was economic. With each conquest, people expected to develop new commerce and particularly new markets for manufactured goods. But there was another, perhaps even more important motive: nationalism. The step between the increasingly assertive nationalism of the time and the new imperialism was a short one. Both of these views are reflected by Friedrich Fabri in his 1879 pamphlet, "Does Germany Need Colonies?" A former inspector of a German missionary association in South West Africa, Fabri emphasizes Germany's "cultural mission" in becoming an imperial power.*

CONSIDER: *What arguments Fabri mounts to justify Germany's acquisition of colonies; what Fabri means by Germany's "cultural mission" and how that relates to imperialism.*

Should not the German nation, so seaworthy, so industrially and commercially minded, more than other peoples geared to agricultural colonization, and possessing a rich and available supply of labor, all these to a greater extent than other modern culture-peoples, should not this nation successfully hew a new path on the road of imperialism? We are convinced beyond doubt that the colonial question has become a matter of life-or-death for the

SOURCE: Louis L. Snyder, *The Imperialism Reader* (New York: D. Van Nostrand, 1962), pp. 18–20 as excerpted.

development of Germany. Colonies will have a salutary effect on our economic situation as well as on our entire national progress.

Here is a solution for many of the problems that face us. In this new Reich of ours there is so much bitterness, so much unfruitful, sour, and poisoned political wrangling, that the opening of a new, promising road of national effort will act as a kind of liberating influence. Our national spirit will be renewed, a gratifying thing, a great asset. A people that has been led to a high level of power can maintain its historical position only as long as it understands and proves itself to be *the bearer of a culture-mission*. At the same time, this is the only way to stability and to the growth of national welfare, the necessary foundation for a lasting expansion of power.

At one time Germany contributed only intellectual and literary activity to the tasks of our century. That era is now over. As a people we have become politically minded and powerful. But if political power becomes the primal goal of a nation, it will lead to harshness, even to barbarism. We must be ready to serve for the ideal, moral, and economic culture-tasks of our time. The French national-economist, Leroy Beaulieu, closed his work on colonization with these words: "That nation is the greatest in the world which colonizes most; if she does not achieve that rank today, she will make it tomorrow."

No one can deny that in this direction England has by far surpassed all other countries. Much has been said, even in Germany, during the last few decades about the "disintegrating power of England." Indeed, there seems to be something to it when we consider the Palmerston era and Gladstonian politics. It has been customary in our age of military power to evaluate the strength of a state in terms of its combat-ready troops. But anyone who looks at the globe and notes the steadily increasing colonial possessions of Great Britain, how she extracts strength from them, the skill with which she governs them, how the Anglo-Saxon strain occupies a dominant position in the overseas territories, he will begin to see the military argument as the reasoning of a philistine.

The fact is that England tenaciously holds on to its world-wide possessions with scarcely one-fourth the manpower of our continental military state. That is not only a great economic advantage but also a striking proof of the solid power and cultural fiber of England. . . .

It would be wise for us Germans to learn about colonial skills from our Anglo-Saxon cousins and to begin a friendly competition with them. When the German Reich centuries ago stood at the pinnacle of the states of

Europe, it was the Number One trade and sea power. If the New Germany wants to protect its newly won position of power for a long time, it must heed its *Kulturmission* and, above all, delay no longer in the task of renewing the call for colonies.

## The White Man's Burden

Rudyard Kipling

*Imperialism was often glorified both by those actively involved in it and by the public at home. Part of this glorification involved perceiving imperialism as a Christian and nationalistic venture. More broadly it involved portraying imperialism as a heroic deed carried out by idealistic leaders of Western civilization in an effort to spread the "benefits" of "true civilization" to "less advanced" peoples of the world. One of the most popular expressions of this is found in the writings of Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936), particularly in his poem "The White Man's Burden," written in 1899 to celebrate the American annexation of the Philippines.*

CONSIDER: *What Kipling means by "the White Man's burden"; how Kipling justifies imperialism; why such a justification might be so appealing.*

Take up the White Man's burden—

Send forth the best ye breed—

Go, bind your sons to exile

To serve your captives' need;

To wait, in heavy harness,

On fluttered folk and wild—

Your new-caught sullen peoples,

Half devil and half child.

Take up the White Man's burden—

In patience to abide,

To veil the threat of terror

And check the show of pride;

By open speech and simple,

An hundred times made plain,

To seek another's profit

And work another's gain.

Take up the White Man's burden—

The savage wars of peace—

Fill full the mouth of Famine,

And bid the sickness cease;

And when your goal is nearest  
 (The end for others sought)  
 Watch sloth and heathen folly  
 Bring all your hope to nought.

Take up the White Man's burden—  
 No iron rule of kings,  
 But toil of serf and sweeper—  
 The tale of common things.  
 The ports ye shall not enter,  
 The roads ye shall not tread,  
 Go, make them with your living  
 And mark them with your dead.

Take up the White Man's burden,  
 And reap his old reward—  
 The blame of those ye better  
 The hate of those ye guard—  
 The cry of hosts ye humour  
 (Ah, slowly!) toward the light:—  
 "Why brought ye us from bondage,  
 Our loved Egyptian night?"

Take up the White Man's burden—  
 Ye dare not stoop to less—  
 Nor call too loud on Freedom  
 To cloke your weariness.  
 By all ye will or whisper,  
 By all ye leave or do,  
 The silent sullen peoples  
 Shall weigh your God and you.

Take up the White Man's burden!  
 Have done with childish days—  
 The lightly-proffered laurel,  
 The easy ungrudging praise:  
 Comes now, to search your manhood  
 Through all the thankless years,  
 Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom,  
 The judgment of your peers.

## Controlling Africa: The Standard Treaty

### Royal Niger Company

*Europeans used many means to gain control over African lands, the most obvious being force. However, more subtle means included "treaties," or what the Europeans could*

SOURCE: Edwart Hertslet, ed., *The Map of Africa by Treaty*, 2nd ed. (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1896), vol. 1, pp. 467-468.

consider "legal contracts." During the scramble for Africa, African chieftains signed hundreds of these documents. The following document is an example of one of these "standard treaties" issued in the 1880s by the British firm, the Royal Niger Company. The company had already been granted a trade monopoly over the area around the Niger River in West Africa by the British government and was competing with the French for control over that area. The treaties would eventually form the basis for creating the British colony of Nigeria.

CONSIDER: What the treaties offered to each side; what the Africans were giving up; why the British found this way of gaining control so appealing.

We, the undersigned Chiefs of \_\_\_\_\_, with the view to the bettering of the condition of our country and people, do this day cede to the Royal Niger Company, for ever, the whole of our territory extending from \_\_\_\_\_.

We also give to the said Royal Niger Company full power to settle all native disputes arising from any cause whatever, and we pledge ourselves not to enter into any war with other tribes without the sanction of the said Royal Niger Company.

We understand that the said Royal Niger Company have full power to mine, farm, and build in any portion of our country.

We bind ourselves not to have any intercourse with any strangers or foreigners except through the said Royal Niger Company.

In consideration of the foregoing, the said Royal Niger Company (Chartered and Limited) bind themselves not to interfere with any of the native laws or customs of the country, consistently with the maintenance of order and good government.

The said Royal Niger Company agree to pay native owners of land a reasonable amount for any portion they may require.

The said Royal Niger Company bind themselves to protect the said Chiefs from the attacks of any neighboring aggressive tribes.

The said Royal Niger Company also agree to pay the said Chiefs \_\_\_\_\_ measures native value.

We, the undersigned witnesses, do hereby solemnly declare that the \_\_\_\_\_ Chiefs whose names are placed opposite their respective crosses have in our presence affixed their crosses of their own free will and consent, and that the said \_\_\_\_\_ has in our presence affixed his signature.

## The Age of Empire

Eric J. Hobsbawm

*Imperialism has been interpreted from a number of perspectives since the early twentieth century. The way that scholars view imperialism often reveals much about their own political and ideological views. Some of the earliest interpretations, such as those by J. H. Hobson and V. I. Lenin, were economic. They criticized imperialism as an outgrowth of capitalism, Hobson from the perspective of a liberal socialist, Lenin as a Marxist theorist and political leader. Economic interpretations of imperialism, often in newer versions, remain popular. This is illustrated in the following selection by the British historian E. J. Hobsbawm, who has written extensively on nineteenth-century Western civilization.*

CONSIDER: *Why Hobsbawm considers economic results irrelevant to economic motives for imperialism; why Hobsbawm calls imperialism a natural by-product of the international economy; why political actions are secondary to the economic motives for imperialism.*

A more convincing general motive for colonial expansion was the search for markets. The fact that this was often disappointed is irrelevant. The belief that the "overproduction" of the Great Depression could be solved by a vast export drive was widespread. Businessmen, always inclined to fill the blank spaces on the map of world trade with vast numbers of potential customers, would naturally look for such unexploited areas: China was one which haunted the imagination of salesmen—what if every one of those 300 millions bought only one box of tin-tacks?—and Africa, the unknown continent, was another. The Chambers of Commerce of British cities in the depressed early 1880s were outraged by the thought that diplomatic negotiations might exclude their traders from access to the Congo basin, which was believed to offer untold sales prospects, all the more so as it was being developed as a paying proposition by that crowned businessman, King Leopold II of the Belgians. . . .

But the crux of the global economic situation was that a number of developed economies simultaneously felt the same need for new markets. If they were sufficiently strong their ideal was "the open door" on the markets of the underdeveloped world; but if not strong enough, they hoped to carve out for themselves territories which, by virtue of ownership, would give national business a monopoly position or at least a substantial advantage. Partition of the unoccupied parts of the

Third World was the logical consequence. In a sense, this was an extension of the protectionism which gained ground almost everywhere after 1879. . . . To this extent the "new imperialism" was the natural by-product of an international economy based on the rivalry of several competing industrial economies, intensified by the economic pressures of the 1880s. It does not follow that any particular colony was expected to turn into Eldorado by itself, though this is what actually happened in South Africa, which became the world's greatest gold-producer. Colonies might simply provide suitable bases or jumping-off points for regional business penetration. . . .

At this point the economic motive for acquiring some colonial territory becomes difficult to disentangle from the political action required for the purpose, for protectionism of whatever kind is economy operating with the aid of politics. . . . Once rival powers began to carve up the map of Africa or Oceania, each naturally tried to safeguard against an excessive portion (or a particularly attractive morsel) going to the others. Once the status of a great power thus became associated with raising its flag over some palm-fringed beach (or, more likely, over stretches of dry scrub), the acquisition of colonies itself became a status symbol, irrespective of their value.

## Imperialism as a Nationalistic Phenomenon

Carlton J. H. Hayes

*Although the economic interpretation of imperialism has not lost its strength, other views have been offered recently as supplements and sometimes as direct alternatives to an economic interpretation. A direct alternative appears in the following selection by Carlton J. H. Hayes. One of the earliest historians to develop a sophisticated understanding of nationalism, Hayes argues that economic motives were at best secondary; on the whole, imperialism was a nationalistic phenomenon.*

CONSIDER: *The evidence Hayes uses to reject economic interpretations of nationalism; how Hobsbawm might reply to this interpretation; the ways in which this view fits with the documents on nationalism in this chapter.*

The founding of new colonial empires and the fortifying of old ones antedated the establishment of neomercantilism, and that the economic arguments adduced

SOURCE: From *The Age of Empire* by Eric Hobsbawm. Copyright © 1987 by E. J. Hobsbawm. Reprinted by permission of Pantheon Books, a division of Random House, Inc.

SOURCE: Excerpted from *A Generation of Materialism, 1871–1900*, pp. 223–224, by Carlton J. H. Hayes. Copyright 1941 by Harper & Row Publishers, Inc. Copyright renewed 1969 by Mary Evelyn Hayes. Reprinted by permission of HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.

in support of imperialism seem to have been a rationalization *ex post facto*. In the main, it was not Liberal parties, with their super abundance of industrials and bankers, who sponsored the outward imperialistic thrusts of the '70's and early '80's. Instead, it was Conservative parties, with a preponderantly agricultural clientele notoriously suspicious of moneylenders and big business, and, above all, it was patriotic professors and publicists regardless of political affiliation and unmindful of personal economic interest. These put forth the economic arguments which eventually drew bankers and traders and industrialists into the imperialist camp.

Basically the new imperialism was a nationalistic phenomenon. It followed hard upon the national wars which created an all-powerful Germany and a united Italy, which carried Russia within sight of Constantinople, and which left England fearful and France eclipsed. It expressed a resulting psychological reaction, an ardent desire to maintain or recover national prestige. France sought compensation for European loss in oversea gain. England would offset her European isolation by enlarging and glorifying the British Empire. Russia, halted in the Balkans, would turn anew to Asia, and before long Germany and Italy would show the world that the prestige they had won by might inside Europe they were entitled to enhance by imperial exploits outside. The lesser powers, with no great prestige at stake, managed to get on without any new imperialism, though Portugal and Holland displayed a revived pride in the empires they already possessed and the latter's was administered with renewed vigor. . . .

Most simply, the sequence of imperialism after 1870 appears to have been, first, pleas for colonies on the ground of national prestige; second, getting them; third, disarming critics by economic argument; and fourth, carrying this into effect and relating the results to the neomercantilism of tariff protection and social legislation at home.

## The Tools of Empire

Daniel R. Headrick

Recently some historians have focused on exactly how the spread of imperial rule took place during the second half of the 19th century. They argue that the tools of colonial conquest constituted an important explanation for that burst of colonial expansion occurring when it did. In the following selection from his influential book, *The Tools of Empire: Technology*

and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century, Daniel R. Headrick focuses on the ways key inventions and innovations enabled Europeans to conquer new lands with such relative ease.

CONSIDER: How, according to Headrick, technology helps explain the events of imperial expansion; whether Headrick's argument undermines an economic or nationalistic interpretation of imperialism or adds to those interpretations.

Imperialism in the mid-century was predominantly a matter of British tentacles reaching out from India toward Burma, China, Malaya, Afghanistan, Mesopotamia, and the Red Sea. Territorially, at least, a much more impressive demonstration of the new imperialism was the scramble for Africa in the last decades of the century. Historians generally agree that from a profit-making point of view, the scramble was a dubious undertaking. Here also, technology helps explain events.

Inventions are most easily described one by one, each in its own technological and socioeconomic setting. Yet the inner logic of innovations must not blind us to the patterns of chronological coincidence. Though advances occurred in every period, many of the innovations that proved useful to the imperialists of the scramble first had an impact in the two decades from 1860 to 1880. These were the years in which quinine prophylaxis made Africa safer for Europeans; quick-firing breechloaders replaced muzzleloaders among the forces stationed on the imperial frontiers; and the compound engine, the Suez Canal, and the submarine cable made steamships competitive with sailing ships, not only on government-subsidized mail routes, but for ordinary freight on distant seas as well. Europeans who set out to conquer new lands in 1880 had far more power over nature and over the people they encountered than their predecessors twenty years earlier had; they could accomplish their tasks with far greater safety and comfort. . . .

What the breechloader, the machine gun, the steamboat and steamship, and quinine and other innovations did was to lower the cost, in both financial and human terms, of penetrating, conquering, and exploiting new territories. So cost-effective did they make imperialism that not only national governments but lesser groups as well could now play a part in it. The Bombay Presidency opened the Red Sea Route; the Royal Niger Company conquered the Caliphate of Sokoto; even individuals like Macgregor Laird, William Mackinnon, Henry Stanley, and Cecil Rhodes could precipitate events and stake out claims to vast territories which later became parts of empires. It is because the flow of new technologies in the nineteenth century made imperialism so cheap that it reached the threshold of acceptance among the peoples

and governments of Europe, and led nations to become empires. Is this not as important a factor in the scramble for Africa as the political, diplomatic, and business motives that historians have stressed?

## Gender and Empire

Margaret Strobel

*While most of the Europeans who served as soldiers, officials, and administrators in overseas colonies were men, women also traveled to the colonies, lived there, and participated in these overseas societies. Their position as unequals to men in their own societies but superior to colonized men and women added complexity to their roles and to controversies over imperial practices. In the following selection, Margaret Strobel analyzes the situation facing these women and how they related to colonized peoples in Africa and Asia.*

CONSIDER: *The ways European women benefited from imperialism; how these women may have viewed imperialism differently than men.*

European women had a complex, varied, and often contradictory relationship to the African and Asian territories controlled by the European powers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As members of the "inferior sex" within the "superior race" (to use contemporary formulations), women were afforded options by imperialism that male dominance in the colonies then limited. By the twentieth century, some European women were attacking aspects of the racial, political, and economic inequalities of the colonial relationship. But the vast majority of them supported and contributed to the imperial venture. These women benefited from the economic and political subjugation of indigenous peoples and shared many of the accompanying attitudes of racism, paternalism, ethnocentrism, and national chauvinism. For most of them,

SOURCE: Margaret Strobel, "Gender, Race, and Empire in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Africa and Asia," in Renate Bridenthal et al., eds., *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, 3rd ed. (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1998), pp. 390, 410.

life in the colonies provided opportunities not found in Europe, where their options were limited by their social class, a "shortage" of marriageable men, difficulty in finding adequate employment, or the lack of "heathen souls" to be converted. At the same time, women continuously experienced, sometimes challenged, and sometimes reproduced the economic, political, and ideological subordination of women. As wives of colonial officials, they subordinated their lives to a male-centered administrative environment. As educators of indigenous women, they reproduced the European notions of bourgeois or Victorian domesticity and female dependence. Even missionary women, whose commitment to career and calling was in some ways a challenge to those very notions, accepted the patriarchal ideology and bureaucracy of the Church and promoted conventional European gender roles to African and Asian women. . . .

In one sense, European women's marginal status within a male-dominated colonial society and structure provided an opportunity. People outside the dominant culture have a different perspective that derives from their different experience and position within the social structure. Perhaps European women's marginal position within the dominant colonial society enabled them to see aspects of imperialism differently. European women frequently saw the needs of indigenous women where male administrators were blind to them. Some chose to use their skills, enhanced power, and status as members of the colonizing society on behalf of indigenous people. In so doing, they contributed, if not always intentionally, to the dismantling of the empire.

## CHAPTER QUESTIONS

1. What historical links are there between nationalism, the national state, and imperialism during the nineteenth century? How might all three be connected to industrialization?
2. How would you explain the rise of imperialism in the late nineteenth century?
3. In what ways have some of our perceptions of imperialism changed since the late nineteenth century?

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## Karl Pearson, "Social Darwinism and Imperialism"

One of the intellectual foundations of the New Imperialism was the doctrine of social Darwinism, a pseudoscientific application of Darwin's ideas about biology to nations and races. The impact of social Darwinism was substantial. In the selection that follows, an Englishman, Karl Pearson (1857–1936), attempts to connect concepts from evolutionary theory—the struggle for survival and the survival of the fittest—to the development of human societies.

**H**istory shows me one way, and one way only, in which a state of civilisation has been produced, namely, the struggle of race with race, and the survival of the physically and mentally fitter race. This dependence of progress on the survival of the fitter race, terribly black as it may seem to some of you, gives the struggle for existence its redeeming features; it is the fiery crucible out of which comes the finer metal. You may hope for a time when the sword shall be turned into the ploughshare, when American and German and English traders shall no longer compete in the markets of the world for raw materials, for their food supply, when the white man and the dark shall share the soil between them, and each till it as he lists. But, believe me, when that day comes mankind will no longer progress; there will be nothing to check the fertility of inferior stock; the relentless law of heredity will not be controlled and guided by natural selection. Man will stagnate. . . The path of progress is strewn with the wreck of nations; traces are everywhere to be seen of the hecatombs of inferior races, and of victims who found not the narrow way to the greater perfection. Yet these dead peoples are, in very truth, the stepping stones on which mankind has arisen to the higher intellectual and deeper emotional life of today.

### Questions

1. What role did Pearson assign race in the dynamic of historical development?
2. According to Pearson, what would be the consequences of the *failure* of European peoples to dominate the globe?
3. How would you explain Pearson's certainty that history is the story of progress and that his society represented the pinnacle of human development?

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Pearson, Karl. *National Life from the Standpoint of Science*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1907), pp. 21, 26–27, 64.



## Vladimir Lenin on Imperialism, 1916

The Russian Communist leader Vladimir Lenin brought a socialist perspective to the debate over imperialism. Linking imperialism to advanced capitalism, Lenin saw the establishment of overseas colonies as evidence that capitalism was reaching its final phase. In Lenin's view, once further global expansion was no longer possible, the collapse of capitalism would begin in earnest. As you read the excerpt from Lenin's writing on imperialism included below, pay particular attention to the way he used Marxist ideas to interpret the previous century of world history.

### Imperialism, as a Special Stage of Capitalism

[. . .] Imperialism emerged as the development and direct continuation of the fundamental characteristics of capitalism in general. But capitalism only became capitalist imperialism at a definite and very high stage of its development, when certain of its fundamental characteristics began to change into their opposites, when the features of the epoch of transition from capitalism to a higher social and economic system had taken shape and revealed themselves all along the line. Economically, the main thing in this process is the displacement of capitalist free competition by capitalist monopoly. Free competition is the fundamental characteristic of capitalism, and of commodity production generally; monopoly is the exact opposite of free competition, but we have seen the latter being transformed into monopoly before our eyes, creating large-scale industry and forcing out small industry, replacing large-scale by still larger-scale industry, and carrying concentration of production and capital to the point where out of it has grown and is growing monopoly: cartels, syndicates and trusts, and merging with them, the capital of a dozen or so banks, which manipulate thousands of millions. At the same time the monopolies, which have grown out of free competition, do not eliminate the latter, but exist over it and alongside of it, and thereby give rise to a number of very acute, intense antagonisms, frictions and conflicts. Monopoly is the transition from capitalism to a higher system.

If it were necessary to give the briefest possible definition of imperialism we should have to say that imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism. Such a definition would include what is most important, for, on the one hand, finance capital is the bank capital of a few very big monopolist banks, merged with the capital of the monopolist combines of industrialists; and, on the other hand, the division of the world is the transition from a colonial policy which has extended without hindrance to territories unseized by any capitalist power, to a colonial policy of monopolistic possession of the territory of the world which has been completely divided up.

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Lenin, Vladimir. *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, no date). pp. 141-44, 121-25.