

EXAMINING IMPERIALISM – “GLOBALIZATION” IN THE 1800S

A Lesson Plan for Teachers



DESIRED RESULTS

Established Goals:

World History Era Seven

Standard 3C

The student understands the consequences of political and military encounters between Europeans and peoples of South and Southeast Asia.

Standard 5B

The student understands the causes and consequences of European settler colonization in the 19th century.

Standard 5D

The student understands transformations in South, Southeast, and East Asia in the era of the “new imperialism.”

Standard 5E

The student understands the varying responses of African peoples to world economic developments and European imperialism.

Standard 6A

The student understands major global trends from 1750 to 1914.

Source: National Standards for History

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Source: Common Core State Standards Initiative

Themes:

- Individuals, Groups and Institutions
- Time, Continuity and Change

Understandings:

Students will understand that...

- Imperialism, power and resistance and how these concepts change and remain constant over time.

Students will know...

- The role played by European nations and the United States in reshaping the world in the 19th century
- How oppressed nations resisted imperialism
- Key factual information about interactions between imperial powers and the nations and peoples they subjugated

Essential Questions:

- What is imperialism?

Students will be able to...

- Describe the nature of imperialism and resistance
- Trace the evolution of imperialism over time
- Use criteria to assess whether interactions between groups and nations are of an imperial nature

ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE**Performance Tasks:**

Students will research an imperial episode from the 1800s and develop a presentation to explain this episode to their classmates

Other Evidence:

Student criteria developed for assessing imperialism

Small group discussions where criteria are applied to modern claims about imperialism

LEARNING PLAN**Learning Activities:**

- Researching for, preparing and delivering a presentation
- Short lectures on central concepts of the unit
- Reading, discussing and analyzing documents
- Small group work

SUGGESTED GRADE: 10-11

LESSON ONE: THE NEW IMPERIALISM

Overview: After being introduced to the concept of imperialism through a discussion of power and a brief lecture refreshing their memories of the Colonial era, students will be introduced to the central group project of the unit and then begin their work.

Time: 90 minutes

Procedures

Establish Unit Theme..... 15 minutes

- *Hold a whole group discussion/deliberation on the following questions: What is power? How do we experience being powerful? How do we experience being overpowered? What does it look like when power is abused?*
- Record some responses.
- Explain to students that this unit will examine one way that nations express their power: imperialism. The central question of the unit is: What is imperialism?
- To answer it, we will research and examine some cases of imperialism. After that, we will debate whether imperialism exists in the world today.

Create Unit Context..... 15 minutes

- Remind students of the early colonial history they have already studied:
 - Spain and Portugal raced to gain territory in the Caribbean and the Americas. Typically, both nations established forts, trading posts, ports, missions (to convert natives) and, eventually, large plantations and mining operations.
 - Later, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom entered the race, taking territories in North America and in islands around the Caribbean. These groups followed similar patterns, establishing colonies and eventually building cities and entirely new ways of living.
 - This sort of direct conquering and taking of land characterizes the first wave of European imperialism, often referred to as colonialism. It displaced native populations, disrupted or destroyed old ways of living and left new populations in their place.
- During the 1700s and early 1800s, colonized nations in the Americas began to rebel with various levels of success. (The United States, Venezuela, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and Haiti were all independent by 1830.)
- In the 1800's, new ideas about imperialism and use of power began to emerge. This era in history is sometimes called New Imperialism or neo-imperialism.
- In this model, the imperial nations still exercised broad power over the subjugated nations, but they exercised that power differently than during the colonial era. Imperial nations were less likely to exterminate the indigenous populations in these new territories (though widespread atrocities did occur).
- Instead, imperial powers used their military and economic might to dictate the actions of other nations.

- This type of imperialism was at its peak between the 1880s and World War I. The United States mainly engaged in Central and South America; European nations scrambled for control of territory in Africa and Asia.
 - In both the United States and Europe, rapid industrialization was occurring during this period.
 - Discuss (as a whole group or a think-pair-share): What is the possible relationship between industrialization and imperialism?
 - Some possible responses: Industrialization drives a need for resources; industrialism increases the demand for cheap labor; industrial power could be used to produce ships and weapons

Explain Assignment 5 minutes

- Tell students that they will be placed into groups and that each group will examine one of the major episodes in neo-imperialism.
- The students will have the remainder of this class period and the bulk of the next class period to conduct their research and to prepare a presentation for their classmates. Groups will also be asked to produce a short paper (though the due date for this could be set later; alternatively, the papers could be collected into a booklet).
- Remind students of three central, conceptual questions that their work needs to help their classmates answer and understand:
 - *What is imperialism?*
 - *How do imperial nations experience their power?*
 - *How do the subdued nations experience imperial power?*
- Additionally, there are some specific guidelines about what to include in the presentations.
- Place students in groups labeled A-E. Distribute Handout A (attached to this lesson).

Research..... 50 minutes

- Allow research time; if there are not sufficient computers/tablets available, provide one terminal per group.

Homework

Continue research.

GROUP TASK: EXAMINING IMPERIALISM

Research

Each group will be assigned one aspect of imperialism from the list at the bottom of this page. It will be your team's job to research the nations, peoples and events involved. You can use any resource to help do your work, but you must keep a detailed list of sources used and be ready to defend each source's validity. The research will be used to inform an 8-10 minute presentation to the class about your imperial episode. While there are some specific questions your presentation must answer (see below) keep the following general questions in mind:

- What is imperialism?
- How do imperial nations experience their power?
- How do the subdued nations experience imperial power?

Presentation

On the assigned day, you will need to teach your classmates about your group's imperial episode. Your presentation should help all students better understand what imperialism is and how it affects both the imperial power and the subjugated group. Your presentation must inform your classmates on the following:

- What did the imperial power hope to gain by subjugating this territory?
- Who were two key players (individuals or groups) in carrying out this imperial action?
- How, if at all, did the subjugated nation or peoples resist imperialism?
- Who were two key players (individuals or groups) in resisting or responding to imperial actions?
- What were three major events in the imperial episode you are examining?

Paper

To go along with your presentation, your group must submit a 2-page paper telling the story of the imperial episode you examine. On a separate page, include the list of sources that inform your paper and presentation.

Team A: The Venezuela Crises (U.S., Venezuela, others)

Team B: Scramble for Africa: Belgian Congo

Team C: Scramble for Africa: German East Africa

Team D: The Opium Wars (Britain and China)

Team E: The Dutch East Indies (Holland and Indonesia)

LESSON TWO: RESISTANCE

Overview: In addition to continuing their research and preparation of their presentations, students will consider different modes of resistance to authority in order to expand their understandings of ways that groups and individuals may have resisted imperial power.

Time: 90 minutes

Procedure

Research Check-in 15 minutes

- Ask students to gather with other members of their groups.
- Students should take a few minutes to share findings from homework and to consider a few questions:
 - How does the information gathered so far help us answer the three general questions. (What is imperialism, how do imperial nations experience their power and how do subjugated nations experience imperial power?)
 - If they feel they are able to answer these questions, what information is most useful in answering these questions? If they cannot answer these questions, what is missing?
- Students should then review the five specific questions their presentations must answer – do they have good answers for all five questions? If not, which ones require further research?

Considering Resistance 30 minutes

- Hold a whole group discussion using the following questions as a guide:
 - What is resistance?
 - How do we resist authority? (Think of ways you resist school authorities or your parents)
 - How do groups resist? How many types of resistance can we identify? (Include doubles if necessary to accommodate your class size)
- Post the images of different types of resistance (handouts labeled with A; attached) around the room.
- Conduct a directed carousel:
 - In groups of 3-4, ask students to spend a few minutes at each photo (you can call ‘rotate’ or allow groups to move freely). Groups examine what type resistance is portrayed in each image. Why might this form of resistance be used? What, if anything, does this type of resistance accomplish?
 - After students have seen all the images, ask them to compare the types of resistance:
 - Which seemed most effective? Least effective? What would cause a group to use one type of resistance and not the other?
 - What forms of resistance are not included in these images?
- Return to the question: How do groups resist? Ask for a few students to summarize what they have seen and discussed.

Return to Research 45 minutes

- Again allow the groups to return to their research projects.
- Remind them that, next period, their presentations will be due.
- Remind students to consider the wide array of forms of resistance discussed today when responding to their research questions.

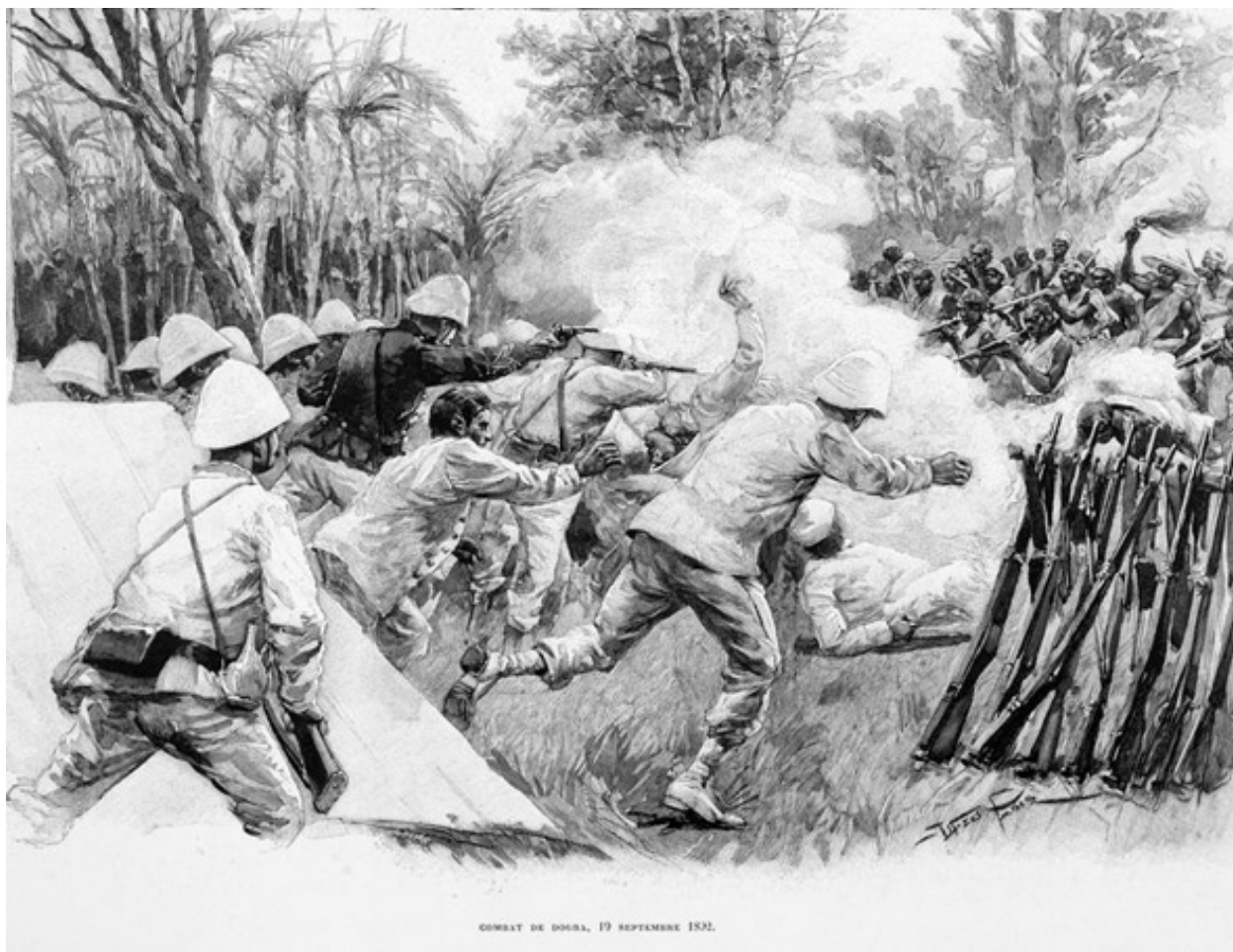
Homework

- Final preparations for presentations



ABOMEY : PALAIS DE SIMBÓDJI, APRÈS L'INCENDIE.

Rather than allow his political capital (Abomey) and the holy city (Cana) fall to French rule and desecration, Behanzin (the ruler of the African Kingdom of Dahomey) burned both cities.



The army of Dahomey (an African kingdom in present-day Benin) battling the French colonial army.



High school students being sprayed with high power water canon during a civil rights march in Birmingham, AL in 1963.



10 am: Gather for music, theater, face painting, banner and sign making, food and more @ Ferry Park, (Washington btwn Davis and Drumm St.), SF. Get off at Embarcadero Bart

11:30 am: March to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.) @ 630 Sansome (near Washington), SF.

12:30 pm: Mass Rally, Theater and More in front of ICE headquarters.

FRIDAY OCT 31

WALK OUT

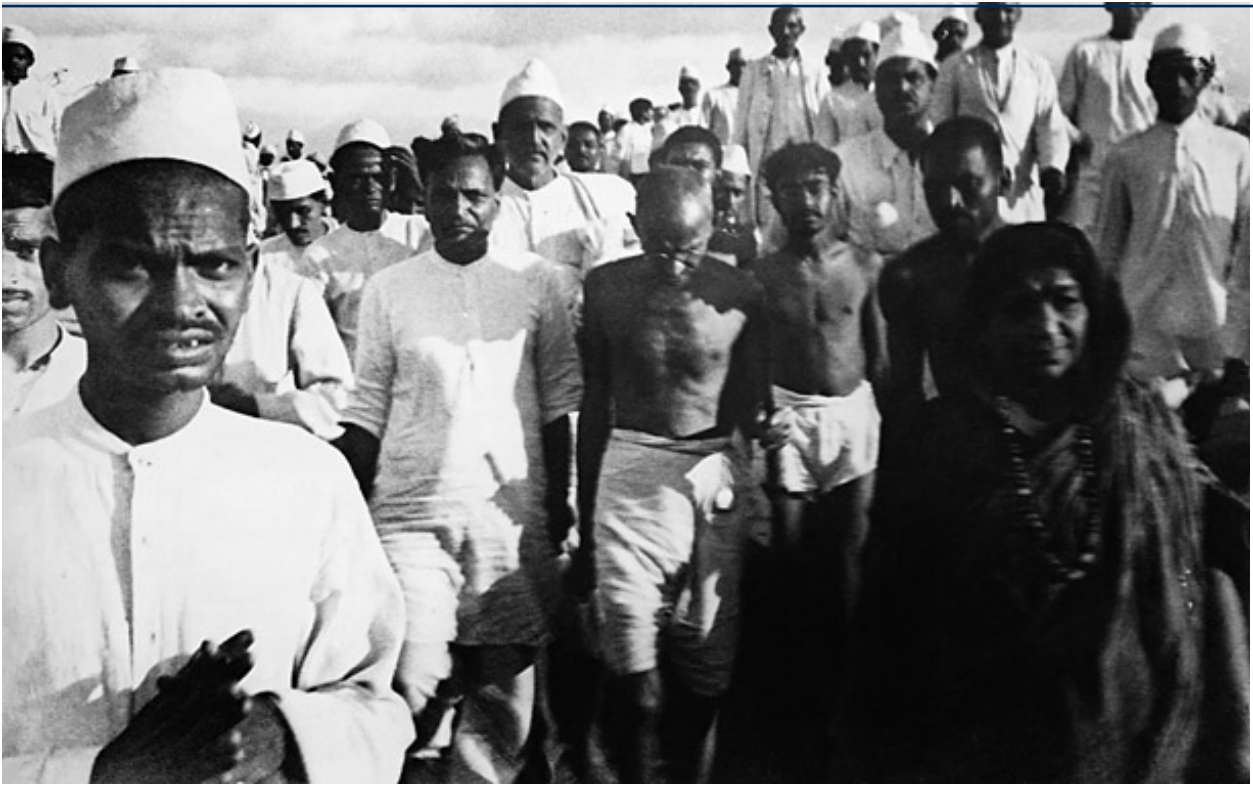
JOIN HUNDREDS OF YOUTH FIGHTING FOR OUR COLLECTIVE LIBERATION!
MAKE THIS HALLOWEEN A DAY TO REMEMBER

Participate in the youth-led resistance against immigration raids and deportation! We must get involved and stop the persecution and criminalization of economic and political refugees in our cities!
NO ONE IS ILLEGAL!!!

For more info, email stoptheraldsnow@gmail.com

REMEMBER TO WEAR BLACK AND SKULL FACE PAINT OR MASKS! Represent the violence done to im/migrants and families in Africa, Mexico, Central and South America, Asia and Pacific Islands, the "Middle" East.

Source: Time Magazine: http://content.time.com/time/photogallery/0,29307,1887394_1861264,00.html



The Salt March

Gandhi marched, along with dozens of volunteers, to the sea, a march of over 200 miles. After 24 days, he and his followers arrived at the beach, where they collected salt, thus breaking Britain's laws controlling the production and trade of salt.



A demonstrator offers a flower to military police at an anti-Vietnam War protest in Arlington, Virginia. 21 October 1967.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Flower_Power_demonstrator.jpg

LESSON THREE: PRESENTATIONS AND FURTHER REFLECTION

Overview: Students will complete final preparations for, and then conduct, their presentations. During the presentation, students will keep several central questions in mind in order to help make comparisons about, and draw lessons from, each of the imperial episodes under scrutiny. Students will then discuss common characteristics of the episodes and begin to develop criteria for identifying imperialism.

Time: 90 minutes

Procedure

Final Preparation 10 minutes

- Remind students that each group will have 8-10 minutes for their presentations.
- Allow some time to appropriately arrange the room and set up technology (e.g., PowerPoint presentations) if in use.

Conduct Presentations 55 minutes

- Remind students to be thinking about imperialism as a concept during the presentations. Post or remind students of the three overarching questions:
 - What is imperialism?
 - How do imperial nations experience their power?
 - How do the subdued nations experience imperial power?
- Allow ten minutes for each group to give their presentations.

Identifying Common Characteristics 25 minutes

- Place students in groups where, to the extent possible, each group has one person from each presentation team.
- Ask students to discuss the following questions:
 - What are the common characteristics of these imperial episodes?
 - In what ways did the imperial nations use their power?
 - How did subjugated peoples resist imperialism?
- Then, students should develop criteria for determining whether imperialism is taking place. If it helps, they can use the sentence stem:
 - You might be an imperial power if... — OR — I know I am seeing imperialism in action when I see...

Homework

- Students should continue to hone their criteria for identifying imperialism. Each student should have four to five specific criteria when they return for the next class meeting.

LESSON FOUR: DEBATING MODERN “IMPERIALISM”

Overview: Students will use the criteria they developed to assess claims of modern imperialism made by social critics and others. Students will debate whether imperialism exists today and then revisit, and possibly revise, the criteria they generated for assessing claims of imperialism. Finally, students will reflect on the unit as a whole.

Time: 90 minutes

Procedure

Sharing criteria 20 minutes

- Growing groups:
 - In pairs, ask students to select the best three criteria from those they developed overnight.
 - Form quads; from those lists of three, create one list of four.
 - Form groups of eight; in those groups, compare the two lists of four to develop a single list of five.
- Ask each group to share their lists of five; record the criteria on a whiteboard or flip chart paper, consolidating similar criteria where possible.

Assessing modern claims of imperialism..... 45 minutes

- Place students in groups of four to five. Give each group one of the attached articles (handouts A-E).
 - A: Japanese imperialism
 - B: U.S. and British imperialism
 - C: Cultural Imperialism (written by a high school student)
 - D: the World Bank
 - E: Russian Imperialism
- After reading their articles, groups should discuss the following questions:
 - What nations or groups are involved?
 - Who is the author accusing of acting imperially?
 - What evidence does the author use to make that claim?
 - Based on the criteria we have established, is this author’s claim credible?
- When groups are finished discussing, jigsaw students so that new groups of five are created where each student read a different article.
- Ask each student to give a one-minute summary of the article and then explain whether they believed the author was describing an episode of imperialism.
- Students should then discuss whether these articles collectively make a case that imperialism still exists.

Reflect..... 25 minutes

- Discuss, either as a class or in small groups, the following questions:
 - Does imperialism still exist?
 - Are the criteria we developed useful in determining whether imperialism exists? How, if at all, should they be revised?
 - If yes, how is it impacting those it oppresses?
 - If yes, how does it impact the imperial powers?
 - Again, if yes, who is responsible for imperialism?
 - What can or should be done to address imperialism to the extent it exists today?

Excerpted from: Is Shinzo Abe's 'new nationalism' a throwback to Japanese imperialism?

The escalating standoff in the Pacific is seen by Beijing and Seoul as proof that Japan is reviving its military mindset.

Simon Tisdall in Yokosuka; theguardian.com, Wednesday 27 November 2013 05.46 EST

The deepening confrontation between Japan and its giant neighbour, China, over a disputed island chain, which this week sucked in US military forces flying B-52 bombers, holds no terrors for Kenji Fujii, captain of the crack Japanese destroyer JS Murasame.

The Murasame, armed with advanced missiles, torpedoes, a 76mm rapid-fire turret cannon and a vicious-looking Phalanx close-in-weapons-system (CIWS) Gatling gun, is on the frontline of Japan's escalating standoff with China and its contentious bid to stand up for itself and become a power in the world once again. And Fujii clearly relishes his role in the drama.

The name Murasame means "passing shower". But Japan's decision last year to in effect nationalise some of the privately owned Senkakus – officials prefer to call it a transfer of property rights – triggered a prolonged storm of protest from China, which has been sending ships to challenge the Japanese coastguard ever since.

So far, there have been no direct armed exchanges, but there have been several close shaves, including a Chinese navy radar lock-on and the firing of warning shots by a Japanese fighter plane.

China's weekend declaration of an exclusive "air defence identification zone" covering the islands was denounced by Tokyo and Washington and sharply increased the chances of a military clash. US B-52 bombers and Japanese civilian airliners have subsequently entered the zone, ignoring China's new "rules".

For Shinzo Abe, Japan's conservative prime minister who marks one year in office next month, the Senkaku dispute is only one facet of a deteriorating east Asian security environment that is officially termed "increasingly severe" and which looks increasingly explosive as China projects its expanding military, economic and political power beyond its historical borders.

One year on, Abe's no-nonsense response is plain: Japan must loosen the pacifist constitutional bonds that have held it in check since 1945 and stand up forcefully for its interests, its friends and its values. The way Abe tells it, Japan is back – and the tiger he is riding is dubbed Abe's "new nationalism".

It is no coincidence that high-level contacts with China and South Korea have been in deep freeze ever since Abe took office, while the impasse over North Korea has only deepened. Unusually, a date for this year's trilateral summit between Japan, China and South Korea has yet to be announced.

The Beijing and Seoul governments profess to view Abe's efforts to give Japan a bigger role on the world stage, forge security and defence ties with south-east Asian neighbours, and strengthen the US alliance as intrinsically threatening – a throwback to the bad old days of Japanese imperialism.

Addressing the UN general assembly in September, Abe set an unapologetically expansive global agenda for a newly assertive Japan. Whether the issue was Syria, nuclear proliferation, UN peace-keeping, Somali piracy, development assistance or women's rights, Tokyo would have its say. "I will make Japan a force for peace and stability," Abe said. "Japan will newly bear the flag of 'proactive contribution to peace' [his policy slogan]."

Referring to the initial success of his “Abenomics” strategy to revive the country’s economic fortunes, he went on to promise Japan would “spare no pains to get actively involved in historic challenges facing today’s world with our regained strength and capacity ... The growth of Japan will benefit the world. Japan’s decline would be a loss for people everywhere.”

Just in case Beijing missed his drift, Abe spelled it out: as a global trading nation, Japan’s reinvigorated “national interest” was existentially linked to freedom of navigation and open sea lanes around the Senkakus and elsewhere. “Changes to the maritime order through the use of force or coercion cannot be condoned under any circumstances.”

A senior government official was more terse: “We don’t want to see China patrolling the East and South China seas as though they think they own them.”

He comprehensively outflanked Beijing during this month’s typhoon emergency in the Philippines, sending troops, ships and generous amounts of aid, the biggest single overseas deployment of Japanese forces since 1945 – while China was widely criticised for donating less financial aid than the Swedish furniture chain Ikea.

Abe is also providing 10 coastguard vessels to the Philippines to help ward off Chinese incursions. Improved security and military-to-military co-operation with Australia and India form part of his plans.

Officials insist, meanwhile, that the US relationship remains the bedrock of Japanese security. Taking full advantage of Barack Obama’s so-called “pivot to Asia”, Abe’s government agreed a revised pact in October with the US secretary of state, John Kerry, and the defence secretary, Chuck Hagel, providing for a “more robust alliance and greater shared responsibilities”.



With a wary eye on China, the pact envisages enhanced co-operation in ballistic missile defence, arms development and sales, intelligence sharing, space and cyber warfare, joint military training and exercises, plus the introduction of advanced radar and drones. Japan is also expected to buy American advanced weapons systems such as the F35 fighter-bomber and two more Aegis-equipped missile defence destroyers.

Washington is positively purring with pleasure over Abe’s tougher stance. “The US welcomed Japan’s determination to contribute proactively to regional and global peace and security,” a joint statement said. The pact reflected “shared values of democracy, the rule of law, free and open markets and respect for human rights”. But Abe’s opponents fear the country is developing a new military mindset.

“Why we fight”: The Nature of Modern Imperialism *by Alan McKinnon*

The world of war is today dominated by a single superpower. In military terms the United States sits astride the world like a giant Colossus. As a country with only five per cent of the world's population it accounts for almost 50 per cent of global arms spending. Its 11 naval carrier fleets patrol every ocean and its 909 military bases are scattered strategically across every continent. No other country has reciprocal bases on US territory – it would be unthinkable and unconstitutional. It is 20 years since the end of the Cold War and the United States and its allies face no significant military threat today. Why then have we not had the hoped-for peace dividend? Why does the world's most powerful nation continue to increase its military budget, now over \$1.2 trillion a year in real terms? What threat is all this supposed to counter?

Britain's armed forces are different only in scale. For generations our defence posture has emphasised the projection of power to other parts of the world. And today our armed forces have the third highest military spending in the world (after the United States and China) and the second highest power projection capability behind the United States. The Royal Navy is the world's second largest navy and our large air force is in the process of procuring hundreds of the most advanced aircraft in the world. And then there is Trident, Britain's strategic nuclear 'deterrent' – the ultimate weapon for projecting power across the world. None of this is designed to match any threat to our nation. It is designed to meet the 'expeditionary' role of our armed forces in support of the policy of our senior ally, the United States.

This military overkill cannot be justified by 'defence' unless we extend its meaning to the 'defence of its interests' across the world. And this gets us closer to the real explanation for this military build up. US and UK companies comprise many of the biggest transnational companies. Twenty-nine of the top 100 global companies by turnover are US and seven are UK-based. And the top five global companies are all US or UK based. Both economies share many of the same strengths and weaknesses. Both have seen major erosion of their manufacturing base as compared with economies like Germany and Japan. Both have become increasingly dependent on banking, privatised utilities and financial services, hence their vulnerability in the recent banking collapse. But both retain dominance in certain key areas such as oil and gas and arms manufacturing. In the case of the UK we can add mining. Of the top 10 global companies, all but three are in oil and gas, with British companies Royal Dutch Shell and BP coming first and fourth on the list. The world's three biggest mining companies – Anglo-American, Rio Tinto and BHP Billington – are UK-based.

Today Britain continues to export capital on a scale unmatched by any other country apart from the United States. By 2006 British capital assets overseas were worth the equivalent of 410 per cent of Britain's GDP. This is the highest of any major capitalist economy. Much of this investment is in the United States and Europe, but a significant amount continues to be invested in extractive industries in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America. An even greater amount of money from abroad (mainly US) is invested in British financial and industrial companies, many of them now under external ownership. It is this interlocking of capital between the UK and the much stronger US economy which helps to bind UK and US foreign policy together. Britain's oil and gas giants, its mining companies and its arms manufacturers have a powerful and ongoing relationship with government and an effective lobbying influence in the office of successive Prime Ministers.

All of these strands come together with the drive for 'energy security' by the US and UK governments. It is the desire to protect overseas investments and control the strategic materials such as oil, gas and minerals that drive the foreign and defence policy of both countries. Britain no longer has the global military reach to defend its overseas investments. Increasingly it depends on the United States for this. The unwritten agreement is that, in return, the British government supports US policy around the world. The same is true for Britain's biggest arms manufacturer, BAE Systems. It has grown rapidly in recent years to become the second biggest arms manufacturer in the world, mainly through the acquisition of other US companies. It now gets more business from the Pentagon than the MoD. UK support for America's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan certainly helps to oil the wheels of the UK arms business.

That becomes a greater imperative in a rapidly changing world where US power is being challenged by banking collapse and growing indebtedness at home, the rise of the economies of the east, a political challenge to its hegemony in Latin America, and unwinnable wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. With the steady increase in demand for oil across the world, especially from the rapidly growing economy of China, the emergence of Russia as an oil and gas giant to rival Saudi Arabia, the creation of an Asian Energy Security Grid placing up to half the world's oil and gas reserves outside US control in a network of pipelines linking Russia, Iran, China and the countries of Central Asia, that US strategy to control the arterial network of oil is now in crisis. The Gulf area still accounts for up to 70 per cent of known oil reserves where the costs of production are lowest. So it is no surprise that US policy continues to focus on Iran which has the world's second largest combined oil and gas reserves.

The US response has been largely military – the expansion of NATO and the encirclement of Russia and China in a ring of hostile bases and alliances. And continuing pressure to isolate and weaken Iran by a campaign of sanctions orchestrated through the IAEA and the United Nations with the threat of military action lurking in the background. The danger is that, even under the presidency of Obama, an economically weakened United States will tend to use the one massive advantage it has over its rivals – its global war machine.

Of course the battle to secure control over strategic materials does not explain everything that happens in the world today. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are not *purely* about oil. In the Middle East the US strategy is about changing the balance of forces against the Palestinians, establishing US client states in Iraq and Iran and leaving an expansionist Israel as the only surviving military power (although even that is ultimately connected with control over Middle East oil). The wars in central Africa (especially the Democratic Republic of Congo) are not *purely* about strategic minerals. But behind the rival guerrilla groups vying for control of these assets and the rival African neighbouring states who support them, stand the mining companies and their nation states.

And what is not directly connected to the battle for strategic resources is the wider agenda of free trade, open economies, deregulation and privatisation which the US and its allies are trying to impose on every country in the world through the IMF, the World Bank, the EU and NAFTA. Structural Adjustment Programmes imposed on countries as the price for 'forgiving' or rescheduling debt allow US and UK transnationals to prize open and penetrate the economies of the poorest countries with catastrophic consequences for the people.

In short, to understand the world of war, we need to understand the nature of modern imperialism, and how nation states act internationally to help maximise the profits of their biggest companies. Directly and indirectly these policies generate conflict and war on a daily basis.

Excerpted from: **Cultural Imperialism: An American Tradition** by Julia Galeota

Travel almost anywhere in the world today and, whether you suffer from habitual Big Mac cravings or cringe at the thought of missing the newest episode of MTV's *The Real World*, your American tastes can be satisfied practically everywhere. This proliferation of American products across the globe is more than mere accident. As a byproduct of globalization, it is part of a larger trend in the conscious dissemination of American attitudes and values that is often referred to as *cultural imperialism*. In his 1976 work *Communication and Cultural Domination*, Herbert Schiller defines cultural imperialism as: the sum of the processes by which a society is brought into the modern world system, and how its dominating stratum is attracted, pressured, forced, and sometimes bribed into shaping social institutions to correspond to, or even to promote, the values and structures of the dominant center of the system.

Thus, cultural imperialism involves much more than simple consumer goods; it involves the dissemination of ostensibly American principles, such as freedom and democracy. Though this process might sound appealing on the surface, it masks a frightening truth: many cultures around the world are gradually disappearing due to the overwhelming influence of corporate and cultural America.

The motivations behind American cultural imperialism parallel the justifications for U.S. imperialism throughout history: the desire for access to foreign markets and the belief in the superiority of American culture. Though the United States does boast the world's largest, most powerful economy, no business is completely satisfied with controlling only the American market; American corporations want to control the other 95 percent of the world's consumers as well. Many industries are incredibly successful in that venture. According to the *Guardian*, American films accounted for approximately 80 percent of global box office revenue in January 2003. And who can forget good old Micky D's? With over 30,000 restaurants in over one hundred countries, the ubiquitous golden arches of McDonald's are now, according to Eric Schlosser's *Fast Food Nation*, "more widely recognized than the Christian cross." Such American domination inevitably hurts local markets, as the majority of foreign industries are unable to compete with the economic strength of U.S. industry. Because it serves American economic interests, corporations conveniently ignore the detrimental impact of American control of foreign markets.

Corporations don't harbor qualms about the detrimental effects of "Americanization" of foreign cultures, as most corporations have ostensibly convinced themselves that American culture is superior and therefore its influence is beneficial to other, "lesser" cultures. Unfortunately, this American belief in the superiority of U.S. culture is anything but new; it is as old as the culture itself. This attitude was manifest in the actions of settlers when they first arrived on this continent and massacred or assimilated essentially the entire "savage" Native American population. This attitude also reflects that of the late nineteenth-century age of imperialism, during which the jingoists attempted to fulfill what they believed to be the divinely ordained "manifest destiny" of American expansion. Jingoists strongly believe in the concept of social Darwinism: the stronger, "superior" cultures will overtake the weaker, "inferior" cultures in a "survival of the fittest." It is this arrogant belief in the incomparability of American culture that characterizes many of our economic and political strategies today.

It is easy enough to convince Americans of the superiority of their culture, but how does one convince the rest of the world of the superiority of American culture? The answer is simple: marketing. Whether attempting to sell an item, a brand, or an entire culture, marketers have always been able to successfully associate American products with modernity in the minds of consumers worldwide. While corporations seem to simply sell Nike shoes or Gap jeans (both, ironically, manufactured *outside* of the United States), they are also selling the image of America as the land of "cool." This indissoluble association causes consumers all over the globe to clamor ceaselessly for the same American products.

In recent years, American corporations have developed an even more successful global strategy: instead of advertising American conformity with blonde-haired, blue-eyed, stereotypical Americans, they pitch diversity. These campaigns—such as McDonald’s new international “I’m lovin’ it” campaign—work by drawing on the United States’ history as an ethnically integrated nation composed of essentially every culture in the world. An early example of this global marketing tactic was found in a Coca Cola commercial from 1971 featuring children from many different countries innocently singing, “I’d like to teach the world to sing in perfect harmony/I’d like to buy the world a Coke to keep it company.” This commercial illustrates an attempt to portray a U.S. goods as a product capable of transcending political, ethnic, religious, social, and economic differences to unite the world (according to the Coca-Cola Company, we can achieve world peace through consumerism). [Additionally,] [a] ccording to a 1996 “New World Teen Study,” of the 26,700 middle-class teens in forty-five countries surveyed, 85 percent watch MTV every day.

Critics of the theory of American cultural imperialism argue that foreign consumers don’t passively absorb the images America bombards upon them. In fact, foreign consumers do play an active role in the reciprocal relationship between buyer and seller. For example, according to Naomi Klein’s *No Logo*, American cultural imperialism has inspired a “slow food movement” in Italy and a demonstration involving the burning of chickens outside of the first Kentucky Fried Chicken outlet in India. Though there have been countless other conspicuous and inconspicuous acts of resistance, the intense, unrelenting barrage of American cultural influence continues ceaselessly.

The Internet acts as a vehicle for the worldwide propagation of American influence. Interestingly, some commentators cite the new “information economy” as proof that American cultural imperialism is in decline. They argue that the global accessibility of this decentralized medium has decreased the relevance of the “core and periphery” theory of global influence. This theory describes an inherent imbalance in the primarily outward flow of information and influence from the stronger, more power- ful “core” nations such as the United States. Additionally, such critics argue, unlike consumers of other types of media, Internet users must actively seek out information; users can consciously choose to avoid all messages of American culture. While these arguments are valid, they ignore their converse: if one so desires, anyone can access a wealth of information about American culture possibly unavailable through previous channels. Thus, the Internet can dramatically increase exposure to American culture for those who desire it.

Not all social critics see the Americanization of the world as a negative phenomenon. Proponents of cultural imperialism, such as David Rothkopf, a former senior official in Clinton’s Department of Commerce, argue that American cultural imperialism is in the interest not only of the United States but also of the world at large. Rothkopf cites Samuel Huntington’s theory from *The Clash of Civilizations and the Beginning of the World Order* that, the greater the cultural disparities in the world, the more likely it is that conflict will occur. Rothkopf argues that the removal of cultural barriers through U.S. cultural imperialism will promote a more stable world, one in which American culture reigns supreme as “the most just, the most tolerant, the most willing to constantly reassess and improve itself, and the best model for the future.” Rothkopf is correct in one sense: Americans are on the way to establishing a global society with minimal cultural barriers. However, one must question whether this projected society is truly beneficial for all involved. Is it worth sacrificing countless indigenous cultures for the unlikely promise of a world without conflict?

Around the world, the answer is an overwhelming “No!” Disregarding the fact that a world of homogenized culture would not necessarily guarantee a world without conflict, the complex fabric of diverse cultures around the world is a fundamental and indispensable basis of humanity. Throughout the course of human existence, millions have died to preserve their indigenous culture. It is a fundamental right of humanity to be allowed to preserve the mental, physical, intellectual, and creative aspects of one’s society. A single “global culture” would be nothing more than a shallow, artificial “culture” of materialism reliant on technology. Thankfully, it would be nearly impossible to create one bland culture in a world of over six billion people. And nor should we want to. Contrary to Rothkopf’s (and George W. Bush’s) belief that, “Good and evil, better and worse coexist in this world,” there are no such absolutes in this world. The United States should not be able to relentlessly force other nations to accept its definition of what is “good” and “just” or even “modern.”

Fortunately, many victims of American cultural imperialism aren’t blind to the subversion of their cultures. Unfortunately, these nations are often too weak to fight the strength of the United States and subsequently to preserve their native cultures. Some countries—such as France, China, Cuba, Canada, and Iran—have attempted to quell America’s cultural influence by limiting or prohibiting access to American cultural programming through satellites and the Internet. However, according to the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is a basic right of all people to “seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.” Governments shouldn’t have to restrict their citizens’ access to information in order to preserve their native cultures. We as a world must find ways to defend local cultures in a manner that does not compromise the rights of indigenous people.

The prevalent proposed solutions to the problem of American cultural imperialism are a mix of defense and compromise measures on behalf of the endangered cultures. In *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, Thomas Friedman advocates the use of protective legislation such as zoning laws and protected area laws, as well as the appointment of politicians with cultural integrity, such as those in agricultural, culturally pure Southern France. However, many other nations have no voice in the nomination of their leadership, so those countries need a middle-class and elite committed to social activism. If it is utterly impossible to maintain the cultural purity of a country through legislation, Friedman suggests the country attempt to “glocalize,” that is: to absorb influences that naturally fit into and can enrich [a] culture, to resist those things that are truly alien and to compartmentalize those things that, while different, can nevertheless be enjoyed and celebrated as different.

Julia Galeota of McLean, Virginia, is seventeen years old. This essay placed first in the thirteen-to-seventeen-year-old age category of the 2004 Humanist Essay Contest for Young Women and Men of North America.

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Why the Developing World Hates the World Bank

The Tech: GUEST COLUMN PAYAL PAREKH & OREN WEINRIB

In the current global economy, the World Bank often functions like an international traffic cop of capital. If it says “go” by committing funds to a development project or interim loans to a government, other private and public capital may follow. If a country and its citizens resist the directives of the Bank, they will likely be cut off from both it and other sources of desperately needed assistance. The World Bank can thus exert a tremendous amount of power over the policies of developing countries, such that major decisions about people’s lives are made not by their own governments but by an international financial institution that is accountable only to its wealthy patrons. In essence, the Bank institutionalizes a modern financial imperialism.

Not surprisingly, the consequences of the World Bank’s programs have often been disastrous for powerless citizens in the developing world. As just one example, the Bank often requires countries to impose user fees for healthcare and education services. The worst impact of such a measure is borne by the same impoverished people that the Bank presumably would like to help. In Kenya, where one in seven people has HIV, Bank-mandated user fees for STD clinics have resulted in a decrease in attendance of 40 percent for men and 65 percent for women over a nine-month period. Although both UNICEF and the World Health Organization have reported that user fees compose a minimal portion of health and education budgets, the Bank insists on such fees despite the consequences.

Before further examining such injustices, let us pause to ask how this pattern can be reconciled with the World Bank’s supposed goals of helping the developing world recover from the burdens of colonialism and “catch up” to the West. To determine whose interests are truly served by the decisions of the World Bank, we must examine the power structure of the World Bank and the types of projects it participates in.

The World Bank was created in July 1944 with the aim of creating a stable global economic system. It quickly became the dominant financial institution for lending to developing countries. It usually acts by making long-term loans to governments for projects such as dams or bridges, or to support economic reform programs.

The World Bank has 177 member countries, but the governing structure of the Bank is not democratic. The principle: one dollar, one vote. Therefore, China and India represent 39 percent of the world’s population but have only 5 percent of the total votes. Six countries -- the United States, Canada, Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom and France -- control about 45 percent of the decision-making power. The Bank works under a veil of secrecy and is not required to reveal its internal documents.

The World Bank makes three types of loans. Project loans are given for large infrastructure projects such as dams, mines and power plants. Sector adjustment loans are given to meet the direct cost of a project, but are also used to support sector-specific policy changes. The third type of loans, under the Bank’s Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), provides short-term support in exchange for major policy changes within a country.

Who benefits from World Bank loans and the policy changes in the developing world? Most directly the G7 industrialized nations that dominate the decision-making apparatus. As the Enron fiasco highlights, this translates to the multinational corporations who exert extraordinary influence over these

governments. According to Corpwatch, the World Bank awards 40,000 contracts to private firms. The United States Treasury Department calculates that for every \$1 the United States contributes to international development banks, U.S. corporations receive more than \$2 in bank supported contracts.

The effects of this undemocratic system are dramatic. Many World Bank projects have high environmental and social costs. Projects are often economically unsound, poorly designed, and inefficient. In the Narmada Valley of India, a feasibility study of the Sardar Sarovar Dam overestimated river water volume by 17 percent. Upon completion, the project will have displaced 200,000 people and submerged fertile land. Grassroots pressure forced the World Bank to reassess the project, and an independent review published in 1992 revealed serious flaws that ultimately led to the Bank's pull-out in 1993. By the Bank's own account more than one-third of the Bank's projects in 1991 were failures.

The World Bank and IMF's structural adjustment program (SAP) originated in response to the debt crisis Mexico faced in 1982. A combination of irresponsible lending by commercial banks, a global recession, rising oil prices, and a collapse in the commodities market left developing countries unable to make debt payments.

The World Bank, along with the International Monetary Fund, offered Mexico a bailout loan that had strict policy conditions attached to it. SAPs often require countries to devalue their currencies, lift import/export restrictions, privatize public enterprises, remove state subsidies, and balance the budget. These prescriptions have the effect of generating foreign exchange, making it easier for foreign goods to enter a country, cutting essential government services such as education and healthcare, and increasing the price of necessary goods in a country. Governments agree to such harsh measures because they are faced with the threat of being cut off from external aid. One could say that the World Bank has the developing world "by the balls."

Although colonialism in the form of direct government rule has ended, the vast economic power of the industrialized world allows it to control the developing world by forcing them to accept "free-market" capitalism -- a fiction in a world with closed borders, skewed playing fields, and the military might of the West. The World Bank has forced many developing nations to rewrite laws dealing with issues such as trade, budgets, labor, the environment, and healthcare. This erodes the sovereignty of developing countries and forces their citizens to live under the harsh rule of the World Bank.

Many of the countries of the global South fought colonial rule and now are resisting this new form of economic imperialism. Grassroots resistance in India forced the World Bank to withdraw funding from the Sardar Sarovar dam. There is also an increasing awareness among citizens of North American and Europe that their governments are subjecting the third world to gross injustice to feed the profits of corporate elite.

MIT students now have a profound opportunity and responsibility to question the global order championed by the World Bank -- its President, James Wolfensohn, has been chosen as our commencement speaker. How will students respond to a speaker who champions not the dream of a better world but the injustice of the status quo?

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*Source: <http://tech.mit.edu/V122/N11/col11parek.11c.html>
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The New (Old) Russian Imperialism

By Yuri Zarakhovich / Moscow Wednesday, Aug. 27, 2008

One Soviet-era joke went like this: the worker Ivanov “borrows” a set of spare parts from the stroller factory to make a buggy for his kid. After hours of work he turns in frustration to his wife. “It’s no go,” he says. “I tried putting them together in every possible way, but I always end up with a machine gun.”

For almost 20 years, Russia has been borrowing spare parts to build a democracy but somehow, the country’s rulers have ended up with the same policy the Soviets and the Tsars used: force. On Tuesday, Russia formally recognized South Ossetia and Abkhazia — Georgia’s two breakaway provinces — as independent countries. Their independence, of course, was promoted and is now guaranteed by Russian might. In effect, Russia has acquired as protectorates two major provinces of another sovereign state, Georgia.

Until now, Putin’s Russia has waged a kind of cold peace on the West by smartly using hydrocarbon pipelines rather than its armor or air force. But this month, Putin has reverted to his armor, however obsolete, to acquire the lands he wants and to show the West he can just get away with it. But can he? Even on the crest of the current emotional wave of patriotism — largely fomented by the Kremlin — some Moscow officials fret that Putin has gone too far. They fear the country doesn’t have the resources to sustain another Cold War with the West. (Or a hot war. The equipment used in Georgia is considered outdated.) And they worry that Putin is imprudently choosing allies like Iran and Syria over major powers like the U.S. and the E.U.

Nevertheless, the nationalist march continues. This week, the Moscow daily *Vremya Novostei* ran a story on a new high school history book recommended by the Russian government. It praises Stalin as “the protector of the system” and “a consistent supporter of the transformation of the country into an industrial society, administered from a single center.” The textbook also maintains that “the introduction of Soviet forces onto the territory of Poland in 1939 was for the liberation of the territories of Ukraine and Belarus,” and that the absorption of the Baltic states and Bessarabia (now the independent country of Moldova) was appropriate because “earlier they were part of the Russian Empire.”

So, what earlier parts of the Russian Empire might be reacquired next? Moldova’s own breakaway province, Trans-Dniestria, has been controlled since 1993 by Russian peacekeepers in the same fashion they “kept peace” in South Ossetia and Abkhazia. There is Ukraine’s Crimea, which is still the Russian Fleet’s Black Sea base and is densely populated with ethnic Russians who, the Kremlin keeps hinting, might need the Motherland’s protection.

The West should realize that this adventure could be just beginning. And that the Russians might press forward in spite of their hardware inadequacies. The Black Sea, for example, is not big enough for all the military power congregating in it now — the Russian forces occupying the Georgian port of Poti; the NATO “humanitarian” naval task force at the Georgian port of Batumi; and most formidably, the navy of Turkey (a NATO member), which is three times larger and stronger than what is left of the Russian Black Sea fleet. Any kind of confrontation there is likely to be messy, with no guarantee of any party coming out a winner.

Source: <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1836234,00.html>