

Imperialism

Throughout time more powerful countries have extended their influence over weaker countries and then colonized those countries to expand their own power.

Imperialism causes the stronger countries to grow and become nations or even empires. There are many examples throughout European history of nations enveloping weaker countries and increasing their own wealth and power to form strong nation-states and even empires. Through imperialism one culture is invading another culture and most of the time the European colonialists are not thinking about the effects this invasion might have on the natives of that land.

Problems caused by imperialism have prevailed to this day. Imperialism caused a breakdown of the previous cultures and lifestyles that the natives had followed.

The European imperialism caused many of the now prevalent ethnic rivalries that can be found in northern India, parts of Asia, and parts of Africa. "Africa and much of the developing world have been struggling for nearly half a century to come to terms with grinding ethnic and tribal rivalries that remain, in a way, one of the most enduring legacies of their colonial past." In many cases of European imperialism, the European colonialists would pick a favored minority in one of their colonies to govern their colony locally and with this priority came assurance of the best jobs and favored treatment. This caused a sort of rivalry between that minority and the majority of natives who were not given this priority. Resentment towards these favored minorities grows and after the country achieves independence the popular resentment can turn to violence.

An example of this is the Sikhs in India. The Sikhs created the powerful state of Punjab in 1800, which became a threat to British-controlled India and after two years of war Britain annexed the Punjab in 1849. The Sikhs were loyal to the British. In return for that loyalty, during the Sepoy Mutiny the British gave them preferential land grants. Throughout British rule, the Sikhs gained wealth and a great reputation as soldiers and policemen. After independence, they lost all of their special privileges and found their state divided between India and Pakistan. This followed with a bitter war against the Muslims in 1965, which forced the Sikhs to migrate from their homeland of Punjab to India. This followed a year of extreme agitation between the Muslims and the Sikhs that led Indian government to create Punjab as a single Punjabi-speaking state in 1966.

It remains to this day the home of most of India's 16 million Sikhs. Another example can be seen the Tutsi race. The Tutsi were used to locally rule their lands of Rwanda and Burundi. Throughout their native lands they were assured the best jobs and favored treatment, which included education. After Rwanda gained Independence, a majority rule emerged and the Tutsi lost their power. Uprising and revolts among the majority (the Hutu) usually singled out the Tutsi for revenge. With this came a huge massacre of the Tutsi. The Tutsi are, even now having to flee from their homeland of Rwanda because of the anger and uprising directed toward them.

In South Africa, the first Europeans to colonize were the Boers, which means farmer in Afrikaans. They were Dutch speaking livestock farmers who came over with the Dutch East India Company in 1652. From the Boers emerged the Afrikaners who also included political and religious refugees from Western Europe. British Imperial rule was established over Afrikaners and Africans

alike by the beginning of the twentieth century. Then, through compromise, the Boer and Briton together gained independence from imperial rule and control of a new nation-state, the Union of South Africa, in 1910. From 1910 until 1948, there was a division of power between white political parties aligned essentially with the British and Afrikaner cultural traditions. The Afrikaner-dominated National Party won the 1948 election and immediately began to implement the policy known as apartheid. Through this policy, all of the population groups in South Africa classified by the government as non-European would now be governed separately and subordinated at every level to white South Africans. The vast majority of Africans were restricted to rural reservations that were called homelands. As repression accelerated, petition filled protest gave way to unarmed resistance and then to armed resistance.

One of the primary dissident groups was the African National Congress, the oldest surviving African political organization in sub-Saharan Africa. The goal of the African National Congress was to establish a nonracial alliance to end apartheid and create a nonracial democracy. Over the next fifty years, the African National Congress and other organizations would fight for this cause, until the early 1990s when Nelson Mandela was released from prison to lead the multi-party negotiations. These negotiations were what finally brought an end to apartheid in South Africa.

During the Imperialism of South Africa, the Europeans brought the British and the Boers. The difference between South Africa and other imperialized countries is that after South Africa gained independence the Europeans didn't leave because they did not see themselves as Europeans. The Boers and British in South Africa saw themselves as South Africans and that caused much of the conflict. The whites in South Africa were a frightened minority that feared the black majority. This fear caused much of the turmoil and repression, which tore apart South Africa.

The British became active in Malaysia in the eighteenth century. They sought after trade and wanted to check the French power in the Indian Ocean. Over the years and through different deals made with the Dutch East India Company, Singapore, Pinang, and Malacca (which collectively became the Straits Settlements of 1826) were administered to Britain. In the 1850s, tin mining expanded in the Malaya Peninsula and Malaya rulers the immigrant Chinese that the English employed became involved in territorial disputes. Fearful that disputes would disrupt trade, Britain took control of Malaya Peninsula and Peninsula states. By using diplomacy and taking advantage of dynastic quarrels, Great Britain persuaded the rulers to accept British "advisors" to help dictate policies.

Between 1941 and 1942, after World War Two, ethnic rivalries complicated the movement for independence that emerged after the war.

Great Britain had encouraged Chinese and Indian immigration to supply the labor needed for the tin, rubber, and other industries. During the 1940s, the population was fifty percent Malay, thirty-seven percent Chinese, and twelve percent Indian. A deep division separated these groups coinciding with substantial religious and linguistic differences. These huge differences caused fears for the Malay's that the immigrants would acquire powers in the new government. Another event, which caused agitation and turmoil with in Malaysia, was an ongoing Communist rebellion led by the Malayan Emergency since 1948.

These rebels were poor ethnic Chinese who opposed British rule. They continued to fight for Communist rule even after 1957, when the Federation of Malaya became independent. The conflict finally subsided in 1960 after 11,000 people died, but the Communists did not formally agree to lay down arms until 1989.

Since independence, ethnic disputes have dominated Malaysian politics. In the 1960s, disputes centered on the preeminence of Malays in politics and the supremacy of Chinese and Indians in economic positions. Ethnicity still dominated the political scene, and two major opposition parties opposed the National Front: the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party and the Democratic Action Party.

In Malaysia, the English brought in the Chinese and Indians to work at their industrial plants. This addition of another race caused the racial turmoil and division that can even be seen today. After encouraging the immigration of foreigners, Britain took advantage of quarrels and turmoil that was caused to take over Malaysia. These actions caused problems for that country and many deaths to be lost through the breakdown of their earlier way of life. They were forced to deal with a new culture that caused suspicions and this in turn took away from some of their own cultures and morals.

There are many other examples of imperialism and the effects that it has on the subordinate countries. In many of the situations, over the course of the twentieth century, changes have been made after independence that have caused a change for the better in the post-colonial countries. After years of revolts and turmoil in countries such as South Africa and India, they are finally beginning to modernize and reach the levels of their old imperial nations. European imperialism caused a stalemate in many of the different country's developments, through their proceedings such as "divide and conquer." Those countries will still advance to the level of nation-state and higher, because along with the exploitation of their culture and people, the Europeans also brought the means to advance to an industrial society. With those abilities they can still flourish in the future.

Questions #1 and #2 (already asked)

3. Write down examples of Imperialism in India and Africa (1 example for each). Who was the victim, and what was done to them?
4. Did the article give an example of genocide? If yes, explain the example given in the article.
5. Can you think of any positives from Imperialism? Are any examples given in the article?