



Cambridge  
International AS Level

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**International  
History  
1870–1939**  
.....

David Williamson  
Series editor: Dr Jo Edwards

Syllabus **9489/9982**

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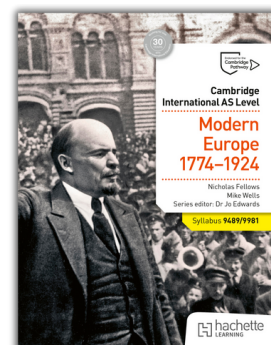
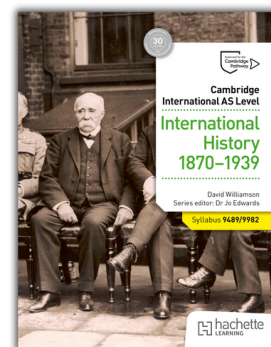
# Cambridge International AS Level History: International History 1870–1939

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# Introduction

This book has been written to support your understanding of the key movements, themes, topics and people significant to the study option International history, 1870–1939 for Cambridge International AS Level History (syllabus codes 9489 or 9982). The course offers an education in understanding the changes that characterised the period, and this book supports this. This section gives you an overview of:

- the content you will study for the International option: International history, 1870–1939 structure of the syllabus
- the different features of this book and how these will aid your learning.

## 1 What you will study

This book is a study of international relations and international history from 1870 to 1939, which is dominated by the emergence of the ‘New Imperialism,’ the two world wars and the emergence of two new imperial powers, Japan, and the USA. Yet these were also years when there were attempts to create a new international system of peace and security through the League of Nations.

Between 1870 and 1914 the European imperial powers partitioned and colonized Africa, leaving only Liberia and Abyssinia (Ethiopia) independent. The years 1870–1914 saw the development of both Japan and the USA as imperial powers, which began to play important roles in the power politics of the time. The year 1870 was also the date when Prussia defeated France and created the German Reich (Empire), which was to become, for most of the period studied by this book, the dominant power in continental Europe. The tensions created by the emergence of this new great power led to the formation of rival alliance systems and ultimately to the outbreak of war in 1914. The First World War and the Russian Revolution of 1917 were seismic events that influenced the history not just of Europe but of the world for the rest of the century. Although the focus of the war was the European continent, by November 1918 Japan, the USA, and China had been sucked into the conflict and the peoples and economies of the British and French empires mobilised for the struggle. The post-war peace treaties proved deeply flawed and were perceived by the defeated powers as acts of revenge.

In 1924 the USA’s new willingness to play a leading financial role in the reconstruction of Germany’s economy and the atmosphere of detente opened up the way for the gradual peaceful revision of the Treaty of Versailles and the more effective functioning of the League of Nations. Yet this period was short-lived. The Wall Street Crash and the Great Depression were significant causes of the rise of extremism and nationalism in Germany and Japan, leading to the failure of both disarmament and the League of Nations.

As a consequence of the impact of the Great Depression on the Japanese economy, the influence of the army in the country’s politics became dominant. From 1931, with the seizure of Manchuria, until defeat in 1945, Japan was engaged in steadily escalating conflict, first with China and then with Britain and the USA after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. In Germany the Great Depression was instrumental in bringing Hitler and the Nazis to power, whose continued aggression despite the appeasement policies of Britain and France caused the outbreak of the Second World War.

This book covers the following topics:

- Chapter 1 explores the impact of European imperialism on the rest of the world, particularly Africa before 1914, as well as the impact of this imperialism on relations between the European powers. It looks, too, at the emergence of two new world powers, the USA and Japan.

- Chapter 2 analyzes the peace settlements of 1919–20 and their impact on Europe, as well as the attempts to solve the reparations problem and to reconcile France and Germany. It also looks at the aims, membership and development of the League of Nations and efforts to secure global disarmament during the 1920s.
- Chapter 3 is focused on extremism and the road to war. It looks at the impact of the Wall Street Crash and the Great Depression, which fuelled Japanese nationalism and brought Adolf Hitler to power in Germany. The rise of extremism and dictatorship, the failures of the League of Nations, and the causes of the Second World War are the main themes of this chapter.

## 2 Structure of the syllabus

The information in this section is based on the Cambridge International Education syllabus. You should always refer to the appropriate syllabus document for the year of examination to confirm the details and for more information. The syllabus document is available on the website: [www.cambridgeinternational.org](http://www.cambridgeinternational.org).

The Cambridge International AS Level History course will be assessed through two papers: a Historical Sources Paper and an Outline Study.

- For Paper 1, you need to answer one two-part document question on one of the options given. You will need to answer both parts of the question you choose. This counts for 40 per cent of the AS Level.
- For Paper 2, you need to answer two two-part questions from three on one of the options given. You must answer both parts of the question you choose. This counts for 60 per cent of the AS Level.

AS Level topics rotate year on year between Papers 1 and 2 – the prescribed topic for Paper 1 in the June and November series of any given year is not used for Paper 2.

### Assessment questions

For Paper 1, there will be two parts to each question. For Part (A), you will be expected to compare two sources on one aspect of the material. For Part (B), you will be expected to use all the sources and your knowledge of the period to address how far the sources support a given statement.

For Paper 2, you will select two questions from the option on International history, 1870–1939. There will be two parts to each question. Part (A) requires an explanation of causes, and Part (B) requires you to consider and weigh up the relative importance of a range of factors. You will need to answer both parts of the question you choose.

### Key concepts

The syllabus also focuses on developing your understanding of a number of key concepts and these are also reflected in the nature of the questions set in the examination. The key concepts for AS History are as follows:



#### Cause and consequence

The events, circumstances, actions, and beliefs that have a direct causal connection to consequential events and developments, circumstances, actions, or beliefs. Causes can be both human and non-human.



#### Change and continuity

The patterns, processes and interplay of change and continuity within a given time frame.



#### Similarity and difference

The patterns of similarity and difference that exist between people, lived experiences, events, and situations in the past.



## Significance

The importance attached to an event, individual, or entity in the past, whether at the time or subsequent to it. Historical significance is a constructed label that is dependent upon the perspective (context, values, interests, and concerns) of the person ascribing significance and is therefore changeable.

These icons appear next to questions to show where key concepts are being tested and what they are.

## Command words

When choosing essay questions, keep in mind that it is vital to answer the actual question that has been asked, not the one that you might have hoped for. A key to doing well is understanding the demands of the question. Cambridge International AS Level History uses key terms and phrases known as command words. The command words are listed below:

Command word	What it means
Compare	Identify / comment on similarities and/or differences
Explain	Set out purposes or reasons / make the relationships between things evident / provide reasons why and/or how and support with relevant evidence

Questions may also use phrases such as:

- How far do you agree?
- To what extent?

## Answering assessment questions

It is important that you organize your time well during an assessment. In other words, do not spend too long on one question and leave yourself short of time. Before you begin a question, take a few minutes to draw up a brief plan of the major points you want to make and your argument. You can then tick them off as you make them. This is not a waste of time as it will help you produce a coherent and well-argued answer. Well-organized responses with well-supported arguments and a conclusion will score more highly than responses that lack coherence and jump from point to point.

### Answering source questions

For questions that ask you to compare two sources, you should be able to:

- make a developed comparison of the two sources
- identify both similarities **and** differences in the evidence that two sources give about a particular issue
- use contextual knowledge or source evaluation to **explain** the similarities and differences
- evaluate the sources to reach a supported judgement as to how far the sources support the statement.

For questions that ask you to consider how far sources support a view you should be able to:

- identify whether each source supports or challenges the statement in the question
- use each source's content to explain how the source supports or challenges the statement
- use your contextual knowledge to help you understand and analyze the sources
- use the provenance of the sources to help you explain how this affects the extent to which they support the statement.

### Answering essay questions

For questions that ask you to explain causes you should be able to:

- consider two or three relevant causes and explain how they were factors
- support each cause with relevant and accurate evidence
- make links between the factors.

For analytical essay questions you should be able to:

- consider a range of different issues and analyze each
- use a balanced argument throughout

# Overview

This course is designed to develop understanding of key events in international history from 1870 to 1939 and the substantial forces that shaped nations and affected the world's population over this significant period.

Between 1870 and 1939, the modern international system began to take shape, influencing global events. Nations grew and developed, leading to more advanced diplomacy as they managed conflicts and cooperation. European powers sought new lands, resources, and influence, driven by economic and ideological goals. This competition created significant tensions, which were managed through alliances and efforts to maintain a balance of power. However, the failure of these alliances to keep peace, along with the ambitions of major powers, led to the devastating conflicts of the First World War.

Making a peace deal at the end of the war was very hard. The leaders of the major powers that had won the war had different goals and disagreed on many issues. Some wanted global cooperation, while others, who were badly affected by the war, wanted strict measures to protect their territory. Promises made during the war to gain support from allies made things even more complicated, as those promises had to be kept, which wasn't always possible, causing dissatisfaction and distrust. Some important nations were not included in the negotiations, weakening the process. The peace conferences had to be done quickly, so not all issues were fully discussed. Since 32 nations were involved, it was tough to reach an agreement in the unstable international environment after the war. The resulting changes in international relations and foreign policies, and their successes and failures would affect the whole world in the twentieth century.

This course will cover the causes, sequence, and effects of the new international order as independent topics that provide an overall chronology to structure both knowledge and understanding of the development of international history between 1870 and 1939.

## Imperialism and the emergence of world powers c.1870–1918

Our starting point to explore the development of international history focuses on the ambitions of European powers that were attempting to colonize different parts of Africa. We also analyze the circumstances of Japan and the USA in this period, their imperial motivations and actions and their rapid development to becoming global powers.

Since the fifteenth century, European powers had aimed to build empires by colonizing territories worldwide. They conquered North and South America and established settlements in India, Southeast Asia, and Oceania. Europeans also set up trading posts and tried to colonize parts of West and South Africa, driven by developing the transatlantic slave trade and securing global trade routes. By the nineteenth century, the difficulties and costs of maintaining significant overseas territories had become clear. Britain lost control of its North American colonies, and Spain and Portugal were losing control in South America. However, by 1870, a new wave of colonization, known as 'New Imperialism,' emerged, driven by economic, political, ideological, and social motivations.

Seven European powers were involved in the 'Scramble for Africa.' This was driven by their desire to increase wealth through trade, find new markets for their goods, and take raw materials for industry. Politically, they aimed to control key areas for global trade, like rivers and strategic canals. Some nations believed imperialism would benefit their working classes by funding social reforms and keeping employment high. Religious motives and racial ideologies also played a role, as many Europeans believed their language, beliefs, and culture were superior and would bring 'civilization' to the world. This expansion significantly affected African kingdoms and caliphates and increased international tensions.

# Imperialism and the emergence of world powers c.1870–1918

## Introduction

This chapter considers the colonization of Africa by European countries, and the emergence of Germany, Japan, and the USA as imperial powers between c.1870 and 1918 under the following headings:

- ▶ Why was imperialism a significant force in Africa from 1870?
- ▶ What was the impact of imperial expansion on international relations?
- ▶ Why did Japan emerge as a world power and what was the impact on international relations?
- ▶ Why did the USA emerge as a world power and what was the impact on international relations?

## KEY DATES

<b>1870–71</b>	Defeat of France and German unification
<b>1879</b>	Anglo-Zulu War
<b>1882</b>	Defeat of Egyptian nationalists by Britain at Tel el Kebir
<b>1884–85</b>	Foundations of German colonial empire laid
<b>1884–85</b>	Berlin West Africa Conference
<b>1894–95</b>	Sino-Japanese War
<b>1896</b>	Battle of Adwa
<b>1896–97</b>	Ndebele Rebellion
<b>1898</b>	Fashoda incident
<b>1898</b>	US occupation of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines
<b>1902</b>	Anglo-Japanese alliance
<b>1904</b>	Anglo-French colonial agreement (Entente Cordiale)
<b>1904–05</b>	Russo-Japanese War
<b>1904–08</b>	Herero War
<b>1905–06</b>	First Moroccan crisis
<b>1908</b>	King Leopold forced to hand over the administration of the Congo to Belgian government
<b>1914 July</b>	Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, which leads to the First World War
<b>1917 April</b>	US declaration of war on Germany
<b>1918 November</b>	Armistice



# 1 Why was imperialism a significant force in Africa from 1870?

## KEY TERMS

**Colonization** Taking control of a territory through settlement and military force.

**Liberia** was founded in the early nineteenth century by the American Colonization Society as a refuge for African-Americans. It was only nominally independent of the US government.

From 1870, European powers sought to control new territories through **colonization**. By 1910 almost all of Africa, with the exception of Ethiopia and **Liberia**, had been colonized by the European powers. Britain controlled Egypt, Sudan, Nigeria, the Gold Coast, most of South Africa, and Uganda and the East Africa Protectorate. France dominated much of West and North Africa, and Belgium dominated the economically valuable Congo. While Germany and Portugal also had substantial territories, Italy controlled a small part of east Africa.



Figure 1.1 Africa in 1850

## KEY TERMS

**Imperialism** The policy, carried out by a state, of acquiring and controlling dependent territories.

**Partition** Dividing up a continent or country into territories controlled by different powers.

**Decolonization** This refers to the process by which colonies gained independence from their colonial powers, often after years of struggle and negotiation.

## ACTIVITY

Use Figure 1.1. to describe the colonization of Africa by 1850.

The European powers had political and economic reasons for wanting to control new territories. European powers justified the division of Africa as part of the destiny of great powers, dominating other peoples who they considered less civilized than themselves. A consequence of the **partition** of Africa was that Africa became part of a European – and American – dominated world. This meant that Africa adapted to this industrialized world, but this also brought considerable pain and humiliation to its peoples. European powers exploited Africa economically and it was drawn into European conflicts such as the First World War. By the middle of the twentieth century, many African states had regained their independence in a process known as **decolonization**.

# Motives for the 'Scramble for Africa' by European countries

There were various reasons why European countries wanted African colonies.

## Economic motives

### KEY TERM

**Tariffs** Taxes placed on imported goods to protect the home economy.

European states were expanding their trade and industry and looking for markets for the goods they manufactured, and businesses and investors thought that it would be profitable to invest in the new companies that were being formed to trade in Africa. Also, since more and more countries were introducing **tariffs**, the possession of colonies was seen as the only way of finding and guaranteeing access to vital raw materials needed by modern industrial economies. Businesses in Marseilles, Liverpool, and Hamburg, for example, were constantly pushing their governments into annexing areas where they had important trading interests. There was often an exaggerated belief in the potential wealth of new colonies in Africa.

### KEY TERMS

**Lutheranism** A German variant of Protestantism that followed the teachings of the sixteenth-century theologian Martin Luther.

**Polygamy** Having more than one wife or husband.

**Twin infanticide** The practice of killing twins at birth in the belief that they were unnatural and inhabited by evil spirits.

## Religious and cultural motives: the 'civilizing mission'

Missionary societies and churches were also keen to convert African people to Christianity. Many of the anti-slave trade and anti-slavery campaigners of the nineteenth century were evangelical Christians, and part of their motivation in stopping enslavement was connected with bringing Christian ideas to Africa. The majority of the missionaries were from Europe and they brought with them their own versions of Christianity – Catholicism, Anglicanism, and **Lutheranism**. They were united in their belief that ultimately the whole of Africa should be converted to Christianity. The missionaries also hoped to eradicate cultural practices such as **polygamy**, female genital mutilation, and **twin infanticide**.

## National and strategic rivalry

The **strategic aims** of the imperial powers also influenced the 'Scramble for Africa.' In South Africa, for example, the discovery of gold in the Transvaal, and the growth of German economic and political influence there, convinced Britain that the Boer republics of the Orange Free State and Transvaal needed to be absorbed into British South Africa before they drew too close to Germany. Strategic considerations motivated Britain to take firm control of Egypt and ultimately of Sudan. Sometimes strategy could also dictate concessions by the imperial powers. In 1890 the German government conceded Zanzibar to Britain in exchange for the return of the important North Sea naval base of Heligoland. Once France recognized British control of Egypt and Sudan, Britain was ready to recognize French claims in West Africa. (See pages 20–26 and 29–35 for a more detailed analysis of the national and strategic rivalries of the imperial powers in Africa and elsewhere.)

### KEY TERM

**Strategic aims** Aims intended to gain military or economic security for a state.

## ACTIVITY

List the causes of the partition of Africa in this table.

Cause	Explanation	Importance on a scale of 1–6	Reason for awarding this score

## Process of colonization of Africa

### KEY TERMS

**Free trade** Trade between nations unimpeded by tariffs.

**Indirect government** Control exercised by a colonial power indirectly through trading companies or local community leaders.

### KEY FIGURES

**Sir George Goldie (1846–1925)** Founder of the Royal Niger Company, which established British rule on the Niger River.

**Franz Lüderitz (1835–86)** German merchant and founder of German South West Africa.

**Carl Peters (1856–1918)** German explorer and administrator, and founder member of the German East Africa Company.

What attitudes to African people are presented in Source 1.1? Use your knowledge of European reasons for colonization to help explain the portrayals in the source.

### Expansion and government of colonies – direct and indirect

In 1870 ten per cent of the African continent was under European control. France had annexed Algeria and Senegal, and Britain had Cape Colony and Lagos, while Dutch settlers, the Boers, had established settlements in the Transvaal and Orange Free State, and there were small Spanish zones in north-west Africa. Portugal was by far the oldest colonial power in Africa as it had established colonies in Angola and Mozambique as far back as the sixteenth century. At the start of this period, little was known in Europe about the interior of Africa, but despite the hazards of disease and lack of suitable transport, the number of explorations increased. At home, Europeans' interest in Africa was growing due to coverage by the press (newspapers) and newly founded geographical societies promoted journeys across the continent undertaken by explorers.

### Trading companies and indirect government

In the middle of the nineteenth century, European governments had little interest in gaining more colonies. In an era of **free trade**, it seemed that political control of overseas markets was unnecessary. In 1865 a parliamentary committee even recommended that Britain should withdraw from its bases on the west coast of Africa. Governments were inclined to stand back and allow trading companies to negotiate commercial agreements with African chiefs. This led to **indirect government** of particular regions of Africa by European states. In 1879 five British companies on the Niger River were taken over by **George Goldie's** Royal Niger Company (RNC). The RNC dominated commerce in the area, compelling local traders to deal with a British monopoly. Terms of private trading contracts were often made into general treaties by the British government consuls for the area. Goldie was challenged by French traders, and above all the Société française de l'Afrique équatoriale, which was authorized by the French government to set up trading stations wherever the RNC was trading. Germany was also increasing trade activities in Africa. A Bremen merchant called **Franz Lüderitz** had set up a trading station at Angra Pequena, some 160 miles (260 km) north of the Orange River, and in East Africa **Carl Peters' Society** for German Colonization had negotiated treaties with the local African chiefs.

### SOURCE 1.1

A 'collecting card' showing ivory being traded in Africa. The German company Liebig, which sold beef extracts, produced cards for people to collect that showed various images of Africa. The cards were designed to appeal to the idea of what Africa was like in Europeans' popular imagination.



## KEY FIGURES

### Leopold II (1835–1909)

King of Belgium, 1865–1909, and founder of the Congo Free State.

### Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza (1852–1905)

French explorer from an Italian family.

Study source 1.2. What does it tell you about the nature of colonialization in Africa?

## KEY TERM

**Cowrie** Type of sea snail or mollusc.

## KEY FIGURE

### David Livingstone

(1813–73) A Scot, who by the age of ten was working in a cotton factory on the banks of the Clyde near Glasgow. Later he studied medicine at the University of Glasgow and became a doctor. He fulfilled his main ambition by becoming a minister of the **Congregational Church** and a missionary.

## KEY TERM

### Congregational Church

A branch of the Protestant Church founded in England in the sixteenth century.

## The International African Association

In September 1876 **Leopold II**, king of Belgium, set up the International African Association (IAA). Its declared aim was to suppress the slave trade and open up Central Africa to international commerce, but in reality King Leopold was secretly scheming to get, as he wrote to the Belgian ambassador in London, ‘a slice of this magnificent African cake,’ meaning he wanted to take a large portion of it for his own benefit. In 1879, with Leopold’s encouragement, **Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza** and Henry Stanley organized two separate expeditions in the name of the IAA to explore the area to the south of the Congo River. Unknown to Leopold, de Brazza had secret instructions to annex this territory for France. Despite initial successes, he failed, but on his return to France, unsuccessful and bankrupt, de Brazza was greeted as a hero and gained widespread public support for French ambitions in the region around the Congo River.

## SOURCE 1.2

**The treaty between the sultan of Sokoto and the National Niger Company (quoted in Siollun, M., *What Britain Did to Nigeria*, London: Hurst and Co., 2021, pp. 337–8).**

### Article I

For the mutual advantage of ourselves and people, and those Europeans trading under the name of the ‘National African Company (Limited)’, I Umaru, King of the Musselmans of the Soudan, with the consent of my Council, grant and transfer to the above people, or other with whom they may arrange, my entire rights to the country on both sides of the river Benue and rivers flowing into it throughout my dominions for such distance from its and their banks as they may desire.

### Article II

We further grant to the above mentioned company, the sole right, also among foreigners, to trade in our territories and the sole right, also among foreigners, to possess or work places from which are extracted articles such as lead and antimony.

### Article III

We further declare that no communication will be held with foreigners coming from the rivers except through the above mentioned company.

### Article IV

These grants we make for ourselves, our heirs and successors for ever, and declare them to be irrevocable.

### Article V

The Europeans above named, the National African Company (Limited), agree to make Umaru, Sultan of Sokoto, a yearly present of goods to the value of 3,000 bags of **cowries**, in return for the above grants.

Signed and sealed at Wurno, the 1st June 1885

[Signature of the Sultan in Arabic]

For the National African Company (Limited)

Joseph Thomson FRGS

## Activities of European explorers

It was the discoveries of several explorers that revealed the potential of Africa to the European states and played a key part in the first stages of the ‘Scramble for Africa.’ **David Livingstone** was arguably the most famous of the explorers, but there were others, such as



**KEY FIGURE**

**Henry Morton Stanley (1841–1904)** Born in Denbigh in North Wales, and baptized John Rowlands, Stanley was abandoned as a baby and grew up in a workhouse. At 17 he went to the USA, where he was befriended by Henry Hope Stanley, a wealthy British cotton merchant, whose surname he took. His work as a journalist took him to Africa, where he became an agent for King Leopold II of Belgium and the IAA. In 1890 in celebrations marking the 25th year of King Leopold's reign, Stanley was honored with a medal, the Order of Leopold, and declared a hero. He retired to Britain, where he became a Liberal MP and was knighted in 1897.

Richard Burton, John Speke, Verney Cameron, **Henry Morton Stanley**, the Germans **Heinrich Barth**, and Gustav Nachtigal.

**KEY FIGURE**

**Heinrich Barth (1821–65)** Born in Hamburg, Barth had the benefit of an excellent education. He was fluent in several languages, including Arabic, which helped his research into the history, culture, and languages of some of the peoples he encountered during his explorations in Africa. He was made an honorary professor at the Royal Friedrich Wilhelm University in Berlin in 1863.

**David Livingstone**

David Livingstone's first visit to Africa was in 1841, when he served as a missionary in South Africa. In 1854–56 he was the first European to cross the African continent. He has been credited as the first European to identify areas around Lake Nyasa and the Zambezi River, which he hoped would become highways for the new steamboats and encourage Africans to trade with Britain. Although he is often believed to have been the first European to see the great Mosi-oa-Tunya Falls ('the smoke that thunders'), it is most probable that they had previously been sighted by Portuguese ivory trader Antonio da Silva Porto, who had been active in the region in the 1840s. Livingstone renamed the falls in honor of Queen Victoria, the reigning monarch of England at the time. Livingstone undertook long and difficult expeditions, traveling with African porters and assistants. He traveled with navigation equipment, medicines, weapons, and scientific instruments, as well as food and water supplies. Livingstone's book *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* was aimed at persuading British public opinion and the government to support his plans for establishing a British colony of settlers in the Zambian Highlands. He was convinced that once this was established it would lead to the whole continent of Africa becoming Christian and, as he saw it, 'civilised.' Livingstone was a dedicated missionary who wanted to spread Christianity to African people for what he believed would be their spiritual salvation. He strongly opposed the slave trade and believed that economic development was key to Africa's progress, hoping it would bring prosperity and stability.

What impression of David Livingstone and his explorations is given by Source 1.3? What does that tell us about European attitudes to Africa? Refer to specific details from the source to support your answer.

**SOURCE 1.3**

**An 1878 painting by an unknown artist, showing David Livingstone (holding a child's hand) with his assistants arriving at Lake Ngami in 1849.**



## Henry Morton Stanley

As a foreign correspondent, or journalist, for the *New York Herald*, Henry Stanley went on trips to the Ottoman Empire, Ethiopia, Persia and India. In 1871 he was commissioned by the *Herald* to find Livingstone, who had not been heard from since he had started on an expedition up the Ruvuma River towards Lake Tanganyika. He eventually found him at Ujiji, on the northern shore of the lake. When Stanley's story reached Britain and the USA, it dominated newspaper headlines. However, the significance of this event was more than just as a newspaper scoop. In many ways, it was a symbolic meeting of two contrasting philosophies: the **evangelical** Livingstone believed in the spiritual and moral transformation of Africa through Christianity, while Stanley was far more interested in trade and financial profit.

Unlike Livingstone, Stanley believed in using force if necessary to subdue Africa. For example, on another expedition in 1874–75 to explore the central African Great Lakes and Rivers, in revenge for being attacked by local tribesmen, he later boasted of having killed some 30 men and wounding at least 100 more.

By 1878 Stanley was effectively a Belgian agent working for King Leopold II to establish the IAA in the Congo River basin (see page 10).

## Heinrich Barth

Heinrich Barth was a very different man from both Livingstone and Stanley. His first journey of exploration was to North Africa, which he was later to write about in a book. After three years as a university lecturer, in 1849, on the recommendation of the Prussian ambassador in London, he joined an expedition led by James Richardson and Adolf Overweg, a Prussian astronomer, to open up trading relations with the states of central and western Sudan. Both Richardson and Overweg died on the expedition, leaving Barth in charge. The expedition trekked across the Sahara to Adamawa and the Cameroons in the south and from Lake Chad in the east to Timbuktu in the west.

Barth did not want to convert Africans to Christianity nor to lay the foundations of a business empire in Africa. Instead, he was interested in the history, culture, and languages of African communities and civilizations. As an accomplished linguist, he was able to investigate and research the history of some of the peoples he encountered. He also made friends with several African monarchs and scholars. When he returned home to Germany, he compiled a dictionary of central African languages. Essentially, Barth was a scholar rather than a missionary or an adventurer. He never became a household name as did Livingstone and Stanley.

### KEY TERM

**Evangelical** Referring to Christians who are determined to spread their beliefs through the Gospels.

### ACTIVITY

- 1 Create a list of the key aims and opinions of Livingstone, Stanley, and Barth. What similarities and differences are there between them?

What does Source 1.4 reveal about the attitudes and motives of the European explorers of Africa? Consider the language and tone of the source. Which words demonstrate their attitudes? Refer to specific details from the source.

## SOURCE 1.4

**Charles Livingstone accompanied his brother David on his expedition to explore the Zambezi and its tributaries. He served as his brother's general assistant and in effect his secretary. This extract is from *Expedition to the Zambesi and Its Tributaries and of the Discovery of the Lakes Shirwa and Nyassa, 1858–64*, Livingstone, D. and Livingstone, C., London: John Murray, 1865, pp. 352–3.**

Now that we had accommodation, Charles Livingstone pursued the same system of attempting to turn the industrial energies of the natives to good account. Cotton was bought and cleaned with cotton gins, and in three months he had collected 300lbs of clean cotton-wool at less than a penny a pound. No great amount, certainly, when compared with the thousand bales which come from other countries; but still sufficient to prove that cotton of superior quality can be raised by native labour alone ...

## Influence of the advance of technology and science

Rapid developments in technology and science helped the great powers colonize Africa. For example, the invention of the steamship helped the quick transportation of African produce to Europe and in return troops, settlers, and equipment to Africa. Steamships reduced the time a voyage took from West Africa to Britain from 35 days to 21. They also reduced the cost of shipping products between Africa and Europe because they

could take much larger cargoes than the old sailing ships. The **Industrial Revolution** in Europe increased the demand for African products such as palm oil, which served both as a **lubricant** for machinery and as an important ingredient in food and soap. Materials such as rubber, cotton, and copper and crops like coffee, tea, and tobacco, which were grown specially for the European market, were also popular and were imported into Europe in large quantities.

Medical advancements played a crucial role in the colonization of Africa. Notably, the discovery of **quinine**'s effectiveness in treating **malaria** significantly reduced the mortality rate from the disease. Additionally, understanding that Malaria was transmitted by mosquitoes and the use of mosquito nets provided further protection and helped lower death rates.

Other advances in technology, including railways, new road-building methods, and innovative weaponry, helped the colonizers administer and police African territories. Revolts were often brutally suppressed using the **Maxim gun**. Operated by a four-man team and capable of firing 500 rounds a minute, this weapon was devastatingly efficient, being 50 times faster than any other firearm of its time. The use of such overwhelming force caused immense suffering and loss of life among those who resisted.

### KEY TERMS

**Industrial Revolution** The process that enabled the mass production of goods in factories and their transportation by steam-powered trains and ships.

**Lubricant** A substance used to make movement smoother, on machines, for example.

**Quinine** A chemical compound derived from the bark of the South American cinchona tree that was first discovered as a malaria treatment in the seventeenth century. In 1820, French chemists managed to isolate and extract quinine and it began to be widely used against malaria. It is still sometimes used as a treatment today.

**Malaria** A potentially life-threatening disease carried by mosquitoes.

**Maxim gun** A machine gun invented in the USA by Hiram Maxim and mass-produced from 1884.

### ACTIVITY

How were the explorers and their activities in Africa viewed by their contemporaries? Find three examples. Look online for examples in the built environment (statues, memorial plaques) and in material culture (coins, stamps). What attitudes to Africa and its peoples are portrayed in these examples?

## Development of the Suez Canal

In 1858 French diplomat Ferdinand de Lesseps formed the Suez Canal Company to raise the necessary money for the construction of the Suez Canal. Building work started the following year and the canal officially opened on November 17, 1869. Extending between the Egyptian cities of Port Said and Suez, the canal created a direct route between the North Atlantic and northern Indian oceans via the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea, avoiding the South Atlantic and southern Indian oceans. This reduced the shipping route from the Arabian Sea to London by about 5,500 miles (8,850 km).

The Suez Canal rapidly became a key link in Britain's communications with India, the wealthiest and most strategically important part of the British Empire. In 1875, when Isma'il Pasha, the **Khedive** of Egypt, needed money because his government was £100 million in debt, British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli saw an opportunity.

The Khedive had initially planned to approach the French government to ask for a loan against the security of Egypt's stake in the Suez Canal Company, but Disraeli opened negotiations with him instead to purchase as many shares as he could to stop them falling into the hands of a rival power. He succeeded in securing 44 per cent of the shares for Britain; France had the remaining 56 per cent. The British government then had some say in the running of the

### KEY TERM

**Khedive** The title used by the governor and ruler of Egypt and Sudan.

canal, including deciding on toll charges and overseeing maintenance. However, Britain did not exercise any political control until it intervened militarily in Egypt.

The canal proved to be of great importance for global trade. Britain especially benefited as 21 per cent of its exports and 16 per cent of its imports went through the canal. It was also important militarily for the British Empire. For example, in 1877–78, during the **Balkan crisis**, when war with Russia seemed imminent, Britain was able to transport a large detachment of Indian troops to Europe via the canal. Similarly, it made it much quicker to send British troops to India or Afghanistan.

### KEY TERM

**Balkan crisis (1875–78)** When revolts against Ottoman rule occurred in Bosnia, Serbia, and Montenegro, Russia threatened to support the rebels and advanced to Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul). This worried Britain, which feared Russia gaining access to the Mediterranean. The crisis was resolved when German Chancellor Bismarck called the Berlin Congress.

## Impact of colonialism on Africa

By 1914, Africa was heavily controlled by European powers and changed forever. Most of the continent was ruled from European capitals like London, Paris, and Berlin. Power was exercised by a colonial administration headed by a governor and backed up with military power.

### KEY DEBATE

#### HOW WERE THE EUROPEAN POWERS ABLE TO DEVELOP COLONIES IN AFRICA?

There are a lot of reasons why European colonies were aggressively established in nineteenth-century Africa. These reasons are varied and attempts to explain how the European powers developed colonies are intensely debated by historians.

Some historians argue that European powers were able to dominate other continents because of geographical, environmental, and economic factors. Access to technologies such as gunpowder and mechanised weapons, together with advances in medical science, meant that European colonies could be successfully, if brutally, established. The transport revolution, which resulted in the building of steamships and railways, made commercial activity more effective and encouraged the European powers to extend their 'spheres of influence' as the profitability of their enterprises was proved. Some historians argue that the search for fuels and raw materials for industrial production – the drivers of capitalism and consumerism – was a key motivator.

Other historians focus on the ideological reasons for colonization. They argue that the technological advantages held by the European powers were limited. These historians see the desire to acquire colonies as being shaped by religious and cultural factors. Others dispute the idea of large forces of causation, arguing that individuals and explorers chose to set out to discover new lands as personal projects. These arguments reject the idea that nation states purposely set out to compete with each other in establishing colonies and see colonial expansion as an opportunistic development.

## Imposition of arbitrary boundaries by colonizing powers

The European colonizers imposed arbitrary frontiers that did not reflect the natural geographical and cultural boundaries of Africa. To quote the journalist John Gunther in 1955, when most of Africa was still under European control: 'For the most part [the colonial frontiers] mark off where the rule of one white man stops and another begins.' However, different peoples and kingdoms did not correlate with these arbitrary boundaries. For example, the Masai lands were divided between the British East African and German East African territories. There was also the colony of Nigeria, which was formed in 1914 by the joining of two essentially incompatible states – northern and southern Nigeria.



Sir George Goldie, the founder of the RNC, admitted that the two states were 'as widely separated in laws, government, customs and general ideas about life, both in this world and the next, as England is from China' (Siollun, M., *What Britain Did to Nigeria*, p. 320).



Figure 1.2 Africa in 1914

## ACTIVITY

Look at Figures 1.1 and 1.2 showing Africa in 1850 and 1914. Note down the key differences. Did anything remain the same? What can we learn from these maps about the colonization of Africa?

## Human exploitation and abuse: the Belgian Congo

While atrocities were committed by all the colonial powers in the process of establishing their colonies, some of the most terrible occurred in the Congo Free State and were carried out by the International Association of the Congo, which brutally exploited the local population to harvest rubber and which crushed any resistance. The International Association of the Congo was an organization established by King Leopold II of Belgium in 1876. Supposedly created to promote humanitarian and scientific projects in Central Africa, in reality, it was used to further Leopold's ambitions to control the Congo region. At the trading stations, laborers who returned from the forest with less than their quota of rubber often had their hands or feet cut off. With the maltreatment amplified by the impact of disease and famine, more than a million Africans died due to the actions of the International Association of the Congo.

Now consider this sample conclusion:

### Commentary

This is an excellent conclusion because:

- It focuses immediately on the issue in the question.
- It provides a clear judgment on the issue.
- That judgment is supported with good argument and evidence.
- It briefly summarizes what the author believes was the main reason.

While German nationalists wished to make Germany as great a power as it had been before 1914, it was the dynamism of Hitler and his intentions that were the main reason for war in 1939. There is plenty of evidence stretching from 'Mein Kampf' to Hitler's speeches to his military commanders in the summer of 1939 that indicates that Hitler had plans for seeking 'living space' in eastern Europe and Russia. He stressed unambiguously in November 1937 that Germany had a right to enlarge its 'living space.' On the other hand, Hitler's ambitious plans could have been contained if Britain, France, and Italy had consistently worked together and intervened decisively in the early stages to stop Nazi Germany breaking the Versailles and Locarno treaties.

Chamberlain's appeasement policy, instead of leading to a settlement with Nazi Germany, convinced Hitler that he could risk the destruction of what remained of Czechoslovakia. This in turn set in motion a train of events that ended in war. The Anglo-French guarantee of Poland would have been effective only if Germany could have been contained by an alliance of eastern and southern European states, containing above all the USSR. By avoiding a war on two fronts, the Nazi-Soviet Pact made it safe for Hitler to invade Poland and risk war with Britain and France.

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# Glossary

**Alliance system** A mutual agreement between two or more countries, possibly involving defending each other in the event of an attack.

**Allies** An international coalition of countries fighting in the First World War led by Britain, France, and Russia and also including Japan and Italy.

**Anarchist** A supporter of anarchism, a political theory advocating small, self-governing societies.

**Anarcho-syndicalism** A belief that the state should be replaced by trade unions and similar organizations, which would negotiate directly with each other and exchange all the goods and services necessary to meet the needs of the population.

**Anderson shelters** Named after Sir John Anderson, the government minister who commissioned their development, these were steel shelters installed in gardens to provide protection against air raids.

**Annex** An addition to a treaty.

**Anschluss** The union of Austria with Germany.

**Anthropologist** Someone who studies human beings and their societies, customs, and beliefs.

**Apartheid** The system of racial segregation and discrimination against non-white people in South Africa in the second half of the twentieth century.

**Arbitration** A form of dispute resolution through mediation by a third party.

**Article 48** An emergency provision in the Weimar Constitution which allowed the president to pass laws without the consent of the *Reichstag*.

**Associated power** A status held by the USA when it entered the First World War which meant it was free, if necessary, to pursue its own policies.

**Autarky** Economic self-sufficiency.

**Balfour Declaration** A 1917 communication by Arthur Balfour, the British foreign secretary, declaring British support for establishing a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine.

**Balkan crisis (1875–78)** When revolts against Ottoman rule occurred in Bosnia, Serbia, and Montenegro, Russia threatened to support the rebels and advanced to Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul). This worried Britain, which feared Russia gaining access to the Mediterranean. The crisis was resolved when German chancellor Bismarck called the Berlin Congress.

**Balkan Prussia** A descriptive phrase by which Bulgaria was compared to Prussia, which in the eyes of the Allies had an aggressive, militarist reputation.

**Banking crisis of 1931** A financial crisis triggered in May 1931 by the failure of the Kreditanstalt bank in Vienna.

**Battle of Sedan** A traumatic defeat of France by Prussia in September 1870.

**Battle of Waterloo** An 1815 battle in Belgium in which Britain defeated France.

**Benevolent passivity** Favoring one side while not officially supporting them.

**Bessemer process** A new process to mass-produce steel from molten pig iron, primarily by removing impurities from the iron by oxidation.

**Bilateral** Describing an agreement or action between or by two states.

**Black Dragon Society** Also the Kokuryukai or Amur Society; an ultranationalist association founded in 1901 with the aim of extending Japan's 'imperial mission' to Manchuria, Mongolia, and Siberia.

**Blackout blinds** Blinds that would cover windows to prevent light from inside attracting the attention of enemy bomber crews, who would be targeting large industrial cities.

**Blueshirts** A fascist organization founded in Ireland to bring about Irish unity by creating a corporate state along Italian lines.

**Boers** Descendants of Dutch settlers who had originally colonized South Africa.

**Bolshevism** A term associated with the Bolsheviks, a faction of the Russian socialist movement led by Vladimir Lenin. The Bolsheviks believed in radical, revolutionary methods to overthrow the existing government. This ideology laid the foundation for the Russian Revolution of 1917, leading to the creation of the Soviet Union.

**Bond** A means for a government or large company to borrow money, which they promise to repay at a fixed rate of interest by a specified date.

**Boxers** The English name for a secret Chinese patriotic and nationalist organization, which instigated an anti-Western uprising in 1899–1901. The literal translation of the group's name is 'the Society of Righteous and Harmonious Fists.'

**Buffer state** A neutral state positioned geographically between two rival powers.



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ISBN 978-1-0360-0895-6

