

CHAPTER FIVE THE GAP

This chapter explores the processes by which a huge and growing gap opened between the industrialized parts of the world, and Asia and Africa. In particular, the gap is shown to have opened up late in history (in the early 1800s), and to have been the result of specific historical processes, not a "better" or "more advanced" European culture. Where competitive war pressures forced other European countries to industrialize just to keep up with Britain, India deindustrialized under British colonial rule, opium and el Niño-induced famines in China debilitated the ability of its government to protect China, and the tools of empire led to the colonization of Africa. Where India and China had accounted for two-thirds of the world's industrial production in 1800, by 1900 their proportion had shrunk to less than ten percent. Nationalism was pushing European powers toward a global war, while Africa and Asia became third world countries, supplying the industrialized world with raw materials and consuming their manufactured goods.

Key terms/vocabulary

GDP (gross domestic product)	depression	quinine
standard of living	slump	rifling
el Niño	trading bloc	Maxim gun
underdeveloped	New Imperialism	Dervish
Third World	working class	Scramble for China
global capitalism	middle class	Taiping Rebellion
deindustrialization	collective action	Open Door Notes
industrialization	revolution	ecological warfare
serf (enservment)	<i>Communist Manifesto</i>	ENSO
nobility	nations	social Darwinism
Meiji era	nationalism	eugenics
recession	nation-building	scientific racism
	Scramble for Africa	

Study Questions for Chapter Five

A. The big questions for Chapter Five are these:

How and why did a huge, growing, and seemingly permanent gap emerge between the industrialized and third worlds? What consequences did this gap have for Europeans? Asians and Africans?

B. The following questions build up to and inform those questions:

1. What were the relative GDPs of India, China, and Europe in 1800? In 1900? What explains the change? Why is that important to know?
2. When did the gap between the industrialized and third world emerge? What evidence is cited?
3. How does opium contribute to China's 19th-century problems? How much opium did the Chinese consume?
4. How did India's economy "deindustrialize"? When did it happen? Under whose auspices?
5. How did "free trade" work to India's disadvantage in the 19th century? How did it work to Britain's advantage?
6. Why could Britain not impose a "free trade" regime on other European countries? Why did Britain not want to share its industrial technology? What did other European countries do about it? Why? What consequences did that borrowing have? Which countries in Europe industrialized? Which ones outside of Europe?
7. How did industrialization in France, the U. S., Russia, and Japan differ from each other, and from Britain's experience? How was it similar?
8. How did the industrial world create new dynamics? What were they? How did they differ from the dynamics of an agricultural economy?
9. How did the depression of the 1870s lead to protectionism and "the New Imperialism"?

10. What were the social consequences of industrialization? How could industrialization change the concept of time?
11. How did the revolutions of 1848 contribute to "nationalism"?
12. What is the difference between a nation and a state? Between state-building and nation-building? Which came first? When and how did they become linked?
13. What technological advances enabled Europeans to colonize Africa?
14. What factors account for China's decline during the 19th century from a strong, powerful, and independent country to one nearly colonized in 1900?
15. How did late-19th century el Niños contribute to famines in China and India? Were the causes of those famines only natural? How did those famines contribute to forcing India and China to become third world countries?
16. By the end of the 19th century, how did Europeans begin to conceive of, and explain, their good fortune in the world?

C. Advanced considerations.

1. Given what you have learned in this chapter, why does "free trade" not always work to every country's advantage? What are the most important factors for that? Why do some people in the early 21st century protest against "globalization"?
2. Why did some parts of the world have such difficulty industrializing in the 20th century? Do you think that those obstacles have now been removed, and any part of the world can now industrialize "if it wants to"?
3. What do you think of nationalism? Has it been a productive force in world history? Or do you think it has been destructive? What

kinds of evidence on both sides of the question can you cite?
What about lessons and evidence from the 20th century?

4. Put the quote by Herbert Spence on p. 150 into your own words.
What do you think of that idea and the uses to which it has been put? Can an idea be separated from its consequences? Or is an idea only an idea?
5. What does it mean to say that Europeans "dominated" the world in 1900? In what ways? Militarily? Economically? Socially? Culturally? Is it still true today? If you had to guess, what do you think Figs. 5.1 and 5.2 would look like if extended to the year 2000? To 2100? Why? What evidence might you be able to cite?

Map exercise: Using different colored highlighters (or pencils), identify the colonial holdings ca. 1900 of the following: the U.S., Britain, France, Germany, Portugal, Italy, Russia, and Japan. How did Russia's empire differ from the others? Which parts of the world are not formal colonies? To what extent were those countries fully independent? To what extent controlled by others? Is it fair to say that in 1900 Europeans (and their American cousins) had come to dominate the world?

Additional Web Sites to Explore

- [Scramble for Africa](#)
- [French Colonialism](#)
- [Belgian Congo](#)