

PART TWO: The European Scramble for Africa

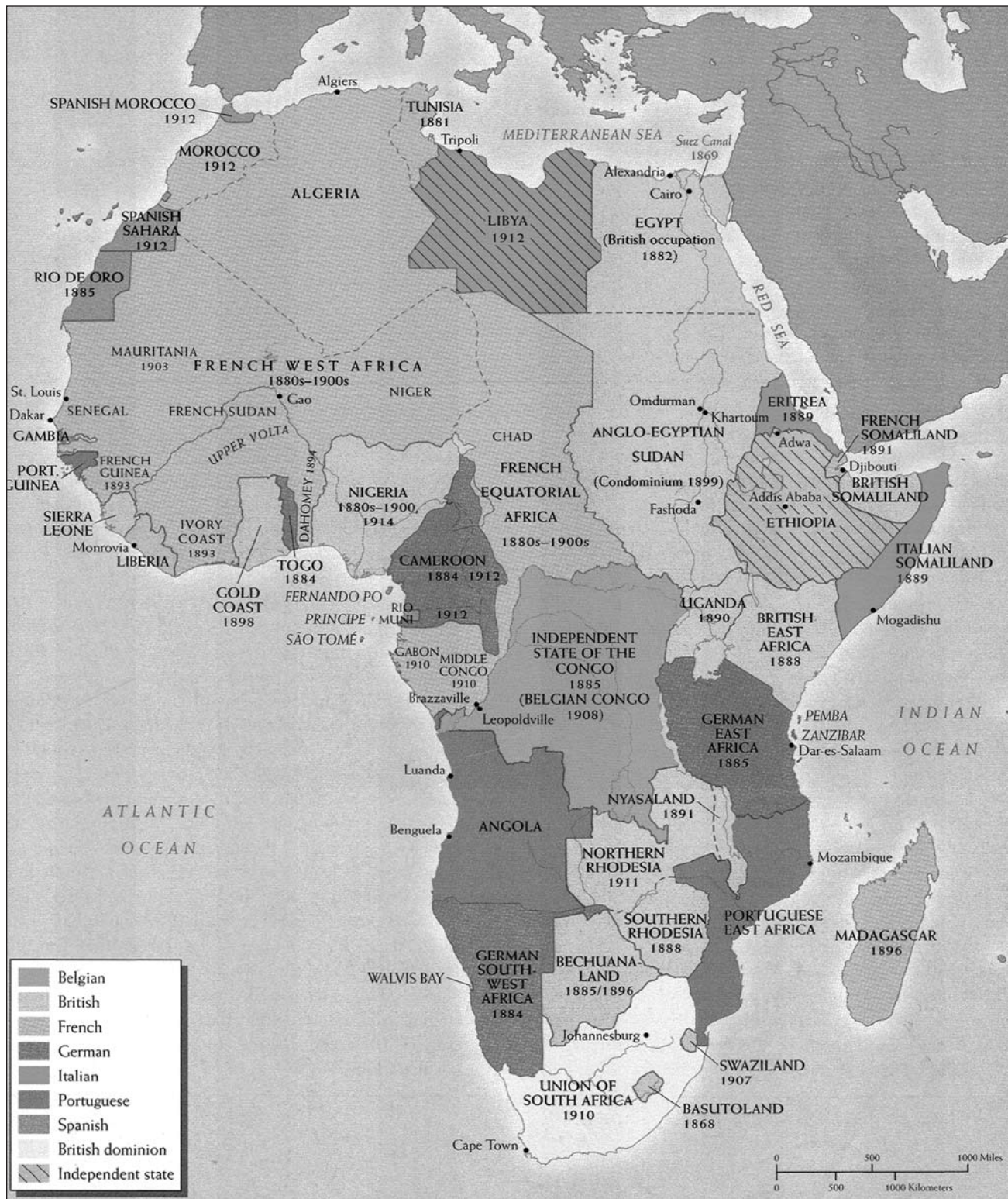


IMAGE 3: Colonial Africa

The Industrial Revolution helped many western nations achieve unmatched economic and political power. In 1884, leaders of the European powers held an international conference in Berlin to discuss

the partition of Africa. Without much knowledge of or regard for traditional African ethnic communities and territorial boundaries, Europeans drew their own borders and agreed to recognize the colonial acquisi-

tions of any other European power. Within just 30 years, almost all of Africa—a continent four times as large as Europe—was under European political control.

MAP ACTIVITY

You will need different colored pens or magic markers for this exercise.

1. Look at the map of Africa on the previous page (from 1914). Which countries held colonies in Africa?
2. Using a different-colored marker for each of the European nations you listed in Question #1, color in that nation's colonial territories.
3. Which two countries held the most land in Africa?
4. According to this map, how many African nations managed to resist colonization (as of 1914)?

Circle them on your map.

BRITISH IMPERIALISM

The cartoon below shows Cecil Rhodes, a ruler in British colonial Africa. Use the picture to answer the following questions:

1. How is Cecil Rhodes dressed?
What items is he carrying?



IMAGE 4: Cecil Rhodes stretches across Africa

2. What is he standing on?
3. Based on this picture, how do you think Cecil Rhodes viewed the continent of Africa? Why?
4. Rhodes was once quoted as saying, "I would annex the planets if I could." What do you think he meant by this?

PART FOUR: Different Motives of the New Imperialism
(The “White Man’s Burden”)

Some westerners felt that it was their responsibility to help “civilize” the “savage” inhabitants of colonial lands in order to make them more “modern” and European. The English writer Rudyard Kipling, for example, displayed such an attitude in his 1899 poem entitled “The White Man’s Burden,” the first stanza of which is printed to the right.

*Take up the White Man’s Burden—
Send forth the best ye breed—
Go bind your sons in exile
To serve your captives’ need;
To wait in heavy harness
On fluttered folk and wild—
Your new-caught, sullen peoples
Half-devil and half-child.*

1. Which line in the poem describes non-white people?
2. Why do you think the author uses these words?

THE "WHITE MAN'S BURDEN" IN ADVERTISING

Before the advent of radio and television, companies relied heavily on

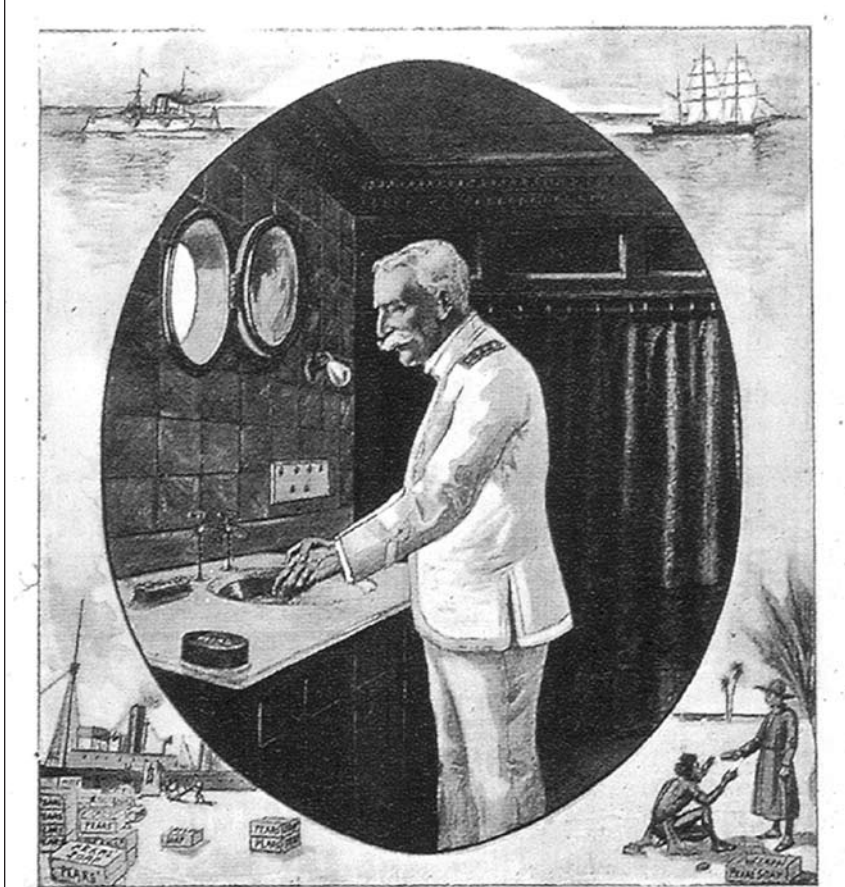
posters like this to advertise their products. In this ad, the Pears' Soap com-

pany equates the use of its product with fulfilling "The White Man's Burden."

The advertisement claims that

Pears' soap is a potent factor in brightening the dark corners of the earth as civilization advances...

What do you think the phrase "dark corners of the earth" refers to? Why?



The first step towards lightening
The White Man's Burden
is through teaching the virtues of cleanliness.

Pears' Soap

is a potent factor in brightening the dark corners of the earth as civilization advances, while amongst the cultured of all nations it holds the highest place—it is the ideal toilet soap.

IMAGE 7: Imperialism in advertising—Pears' Soap

GROUP ACTIVITY

Imagine that you are an African businessman/woman in the early 1900s, whose company is manufacturing soap for African consumers:

1. Give your product a name:
2. Design an advertisement (including a slogan) for an African audience.

Draw your soap advertisement here:



PART FIVE: Different Motives of the New Imperialism (Social Darwinism)

Some scholars applied Darwin's theories of evolution—such as the notion of “survival of the fittest”—to human societies. According to the pseudo-science of Social Darwinism, Europe's economic and political strength was proof of the superiority of the European “race.” This idea served as a justification for imperialism, as (white) Europeans claimed it was their mission to bring “civilization” to the “savage” people in their colonies, often in the form of new products and technology. Imperial images also played an important role in building national pride at home.

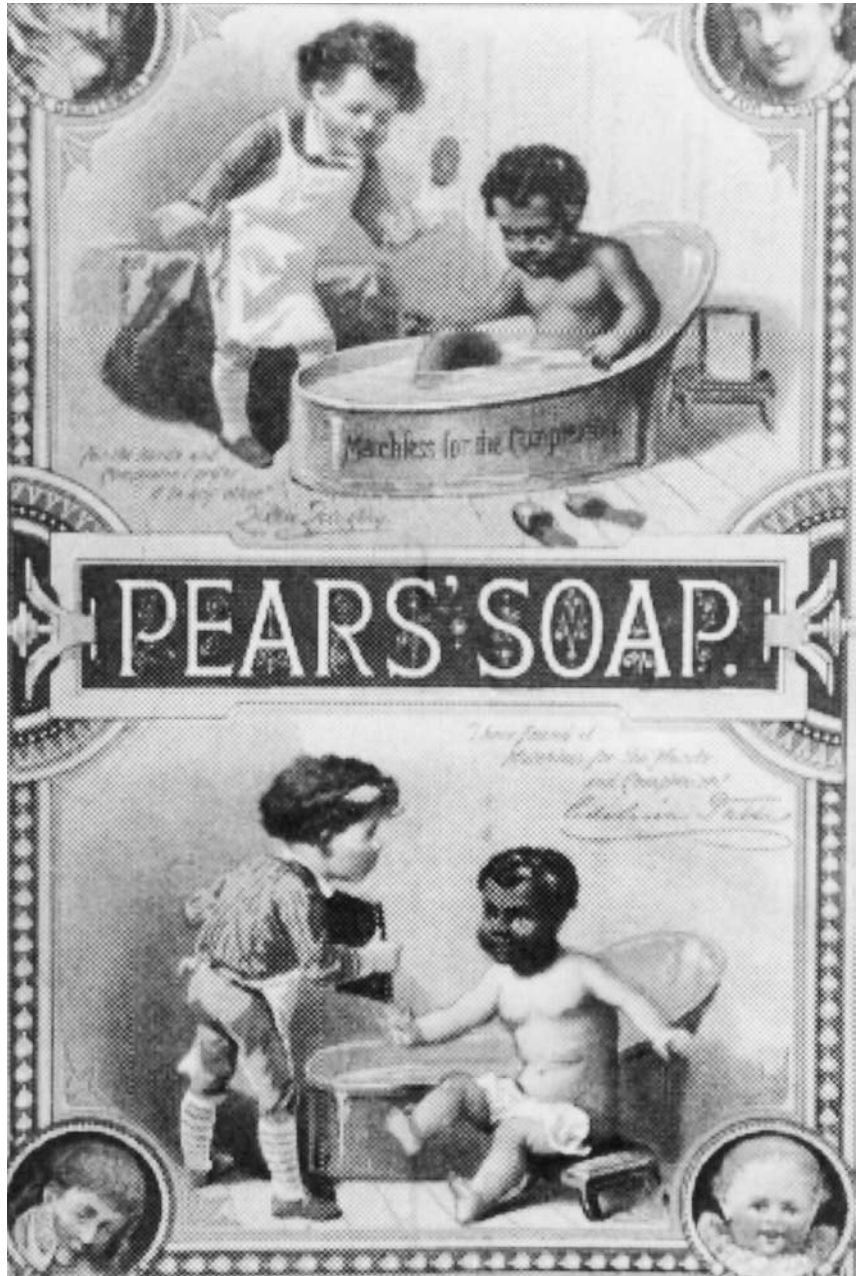


IMAGE 8: Social Darwinism in advertising

Above is another advertisement for Pears' Soap from the early 1900s. Answer the questions on the next page. Then, share your examples with your classmates.

1. What is the advertisement's message?
2. This poster is missing a caption. *Design your own caption to accompany it:*
3. How does this advertisement for Pears' Soap display Social Darwinist ideas?
4. Would you be surprised to see this advertisement (or a similar one) in a store today? Why? Why not?
5. Can you think of any commercials that are racially insensitive, or play on racial stereotypes?
6. Can you think of any commercials or television shows today that contain Social Darwinist ideas?
7. Can you think of any examples of Social Darwinist thinking in sports and sports journalism?
8. How might the distinction between the "work ethic" versus "natural ability," for example, reflect the ideas of Social Darwinism?