

Directions: This question is based on the five accompanying documents. The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise.

In your response you should do the following.

- Respond to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.
- Support an argument in response to the prompt using at least four documents.
- Use at least two additional pieces of specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument about the prompt.
- For at least two documents, explain how or why the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience is relevant to an argument.
- Use evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the prompt.

Evaluate whether the new imperialism of the late 1800s and early 1900s was caused primarily by political motivations or by economic motivations.

Document 1

Source: Prince Leopold, heir to the Belgian throne, letter to one of his advisors, December 1861.

Surrounded by the sea, the Netherlands, Prussia and France, our frontiers can never be extended in Europe. . . . [But] the universe lies in front of us; steam and electricity have made distances disappear, all the unappropriated lands on the surface of the globe may become the field of our operations and of our resources. . . . Since history teaches that colonies are useful, that they play a great part in that which makes up the power and prosperity of states, let us strive to get one in our turn . . . and prove to the world that Belgians also are an imperial people capable of dominating and enlightening others.

Document 2

Source: Jules Ferry, Prime Minister of France, speech delivered before the French parliament, March 28, 1884

Gentlemen, in today's Europe, we see many rivals rising up around us, some made powerful by military or naval improvements, and some because of a constantly growing population. In this environment, deciding to withdraw or abstain from involvement is simply impossible! In our time, nations are great because of their actions, not because their institutions spread peace and light. Spreading light without acting, without taking part in the affairs of the world, keeping out of all European alliances and seeing as a trap, an adventure, all expansion into Africa or Asia—if a great nation lives this way, it abdicates its power, and, in less time than you may think, will sink from the first rank to the third and fourth.

Document 3

Source: Joseph Chamberlain, British industrialist, politician, and reformer, speech delivered to the London Chamber of Commerce, May 14, 1888

We have suffered much in this country from depression of trade. We know how many of our fellow-subjects are at this moment unemployed. Is there any man in his senses who believes that the crowded population of these islands [the British Isles] could exist for a single day if we were to be cut adrift from our great territories which now look to us for protection and which are the natural markets for our trade? . . . If tomorrow it were possible, as some people apparently desire, to reduce by a stroke of the pen the British Empire to the dimensions of the United Kingdom, half at least of our population would be starved.

Document 4

Source: Political cartoon published in the conservative daily French newspaper, *Le Petit Journal*, January 16, 1898, captioned “China, the cake of kings and emperors”



Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom and Emperor William II of Germany fight over a section of pastry labeled “China.”

Document 5

Source: Resolution of the German Social Democratic Party, issued at its annual party meeting, September 1900

World and colonial policy is pursued for the purpose of capitalist exploitation and for displaying military force.... [I]t corresponds first and foremost to the greedy desire of the bourgeoisie for new opportunities to invest its ever-increasing capital which is no longer content with exploiting the home market, and to the desire for new markets which each country tries to usurp for itself.