

Name: _____

APWH: Imperialism 1750-1900

Analyzing Sources from the Age of Imperialism

Source analysis: J.A. Hobson, *Imperialism*, 1902

Although the new Imperialism has been bad business for the nation, it has been good business for certain classes and certain trades within the nation. The vast expenditure on armaments, the costly wars, the material and moral damage (even to the victor), the grave risks and embarrassments of foreign policy, the stoppage of political and social reforms within Great Britain, though fraught with great injury to the nation, have served well the present business interests of certain industries and professions...

...The aggressive Imperialism which we seek to understand is not in the main the product of blind passions of races or of the mixed folly [foolishness] and ambition of politicians. It is far more rational than at first sight appears. Irrational from the standpoint of the whole nation, it is rational enough from the standpoint of certain classes in the nation. A completely socialist State which kept good books and presented regular balance-sheets of expenditure and assets would soon discard Imperialism; an intelligent *laissez-faire* democracy which gave proportionate weight in its policy to all economic interests alike would do the same. But a State in which certain well-organized business interests are able to outweigh the weak, diffused interest of the community is bound to pursue a policy which accords with the pressure of the former interests.

1. Why does Hobson claim imperialism is “irrational?” What does he claim is the real driving force behind it?
2. If imperialism is irrational, then why, according to him, did nations like England have imperialist policies?

Using the [case studies](#) we explored yesterday, you are going to practice contextualizing and analyzing written documents and political cartoons from the Age of Imperialism. Need help? Check out the examples [here](#).

Written Sources (pick 3)

Source/Doc	What is the historical context of the document? What historical event or imperialist practice is this referencing that helps us <u>contextualize</u> the document?	What is the author's perspective or message? What are they trying to say about the historical event or imperialism in general?	How could a historian use this source in trying to analyze the age of imperialism and its effects (on a regional or global scale)? (remember, sources always <u>include and omit</u> information for a reason)

Cartoons (pick 3)

Source/Doc	What is the historical context of the cartoon? What historical event or imperialist practice is this referencing that helps us <u>contextualize</u> the cartoon?	What is the author's perspective or message? What are they trying to say about the historical event or imperialism in general?	How could a historian use this source in trying to analyze the age of imperialism and its effects (on a regional or global scale)? (remember, sources always <u>include and omit</u> information for a reason)