

# AP<sup>®</sup> EUROPEAN HISTORY

## 2015 SCORING GUIDELINES

### Question 4

Analyze the ways in which the formation of overseas colonial empires benefitted and harmed the interests of European states in the period 1850 to 1914.

#### 9–8 Points

- Thesis is explicit and analyzes how colonial empires benefitted and harmed the interests of European states from 1850 to 1914.
- Organization is clear and develops both the benefits and the harms to European states' interests.
- Essay is well balanced; it demonstrates both benefits and harms to the interests of European states.
- All major assertions about benefits and harms are supported by specific evidence; reference to European states may be generic or specific.
- May contain errors that do not detract from the argument.

#### 7–6 Points

- Thesis is explicit and discusses how colonial empires benefitted and harmed the interests of European states from 1850 to 1914.
- Organization is clear, but argument linkage between examples and European states may not be fully developed.
- Essay is balanced; it discusses benefits and harms to European interests at least briefly.
- All major assertions are supported by some specific evidence, or a combination of some specific evidence and some generic evidence, but may offer more on benefits than on harms.
- May contain an error that detracts from the argument.

#### 5–4 Points

- Thesis is less developed and may deal superficially with benefits and harms to the interests of European states.
- Organization is basic; argument on benefits or harms may be superficial.
- Essay shows imbalance; may offer far more on benefits OR harms.
- Some of the major assertions are supported by references to European states, and the evidence offered may be more generic than essays scored a 6 or 7.
- May contain a few errors that detract from the argument.

#### 3–2 Points

- No explicit thesis or a thesis that merely repeats/paraphrases the prompt.
- Organization is ineffective.
- Essay shows serious imbalance, benefits OR harms to European states' interests may be mentioned.
- Little relevant evidence.
- May contain several errors that detract from the argument.

#### 1–0 Points

- No discernable attempt at a thesis.
- No discernable organization.
- Impact of benefits or harms is neglected.
- Minimal or no supporting evidence used.
- May contain numerous errors that detract from the argument.

Between 1850 and 1914, European states scrambled to ~~create~~ create colonial empires and assert their power.

These empires benefitted the European states because they obtained raw material wealth and power, but they harmed the interests of the European states because they had to invest many <sup>economic</sup> resources in the colonies, and the colonies could cause conflicts with other nations.

The overseas colonies of European states could be used both as a source of diplomatic power and of material wealth.

Germany was one country for whom the ~~large~~ overseas colonies in Africa had tremendous diplomatic benefits. Germany had only very recently been unified by Otto von Bismarck when Bismarck decided to use ~~the~~ Africa to gain power for Germany. Bismarck convened the Berlin Conference, ~~to~~ ~~to~~ ~~to~~ inviting other powerful European nations to come to Germany and discuss how to divide ~~of~~ colonies in the continent of Africa. Germany took few colonies for itself.

but still gained diplomatic prestige by initiating the discussion. In addition, Bismarck played the "honest broker" at the Berlin conference, playing other European powers like France and England off each other in order to gain power for Germany. Other nations, like Belgium, benefitted from the raw resources of the colonies. Technically, the Belgian Congo belonged to King Leopold II, not to the Belgian government, but Leopold used the money from his colony in the Congo to fund construction in Brussels. Using slave labor and brutal tactics, Leopold's forces forced natives to gather enormous amounts of rubber and ivory. The ivory was very valuable and beautiful, while the rubber was highly marketable in Europe given the rise of industrialism.

The colonies hurt European states because it was a significant investment to maintain control of them, and the colonies could cause

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tension with other countries. In order to maintain a colony, European ~~states~~ <sup>states</sup> needed to send officials to the colony and invest capital in ~~the colonies~~ infrastructure for the colonies so that they could harvest and transport resources. For example, the Belgian government invested ~~100 million~~ millions of dollars into Leopold's colony in the Congo, but lost significant funds, as it took Leopold several years to turn a profit. Other nations, like France, England, and Spain, spent a lot of money creating roads and canals to transport resources back to Europe, meaning they had fewer resources to give to their domestic economies. Also, nations got in disagreements over colonies, which could weaken traditionally powerful nations and upset the balance of power in Europe. France and England were such intense diplomatic rivals that they did not have any colonies right next to each other in Africa. This rivalry allowed other, ~~on less powerful,~~



nation to obtain colonies in Africa that France and England would not concede to each other. ~~Playing off the~~ Otto von Bismarck encouraged France and England to weaken each other, thereby upsetting the balance of power in Europe and opening a place for Germany to become a global power. The rise of Germany had significant impact in 1914, with the start of WWI, and beyond.

Although colonies were beneficial to European states after 1914, as many Africans fought for the colonizers and in World War I, ~~by~~ the economic investment and political unrest ~~in Europe~~ meant that by after WWI, colonies were no longer viable or beneficial.

The formation of overseas colonies by European states was both ~~to~~ beneficial ~~to~~ and harmful to their interests due to economic concerns. Competition between European states and various wars fought as a result of imperialism. Colonies created economic prosperity while simultaneously driving competition amongst European nations.

Despite the various competitions and wars that resulted from colonies between 1875 - 1914, there were also varied and important economic outcomes. Imperialism in places like Asia and Africa provided Europe with tremendous economic growth. The collection of raw materials of all kinds led to explosions in industry all across Europe. Extraction of metals from mines across Africa ~~led to~~ helped fuel the ~~the~~ growth of militarism and consumerism that gave Europe the ability to dominate the world. The colonies also created captive markets in which materials could be extracted and produced in a colony and then sold to the mother country for low prices. Similar practices were done in British India to create enormous amounts of wealth for the British. Colonies in Africa and Asia provided many economic opportunities that helped Europe prosper economically, leading to what was called "The age

of Optimism."

Another important product of Colonies ~~is~~ in the late 19th was the ever increasing competition between European States. Due to the limited land and resources available in the Colonies, European States faced extreme levels of competition while trying to establish colonies. This competition subsequently sparked a sharp rise in nationalist feelings during this period, as nation states struggled for supremacy in the colonies. The high levels of nationalism coupled with the sharp rise of industry in all ~~the~~ Western nations also created intense militarism as nations spent more and more time, money, and energy on creating the best weapons and armies. These factors, militarism, nationalism, and imperialism ~~are~~ among the most cited reasons for the outbreak of the first world war. Many ~~the~~ people contend that WWI was an explosion of these feelings, among other things.

~~Another~~ Despite the economic effects and rises in competition, there was also an outbreak



of several conflicts as a result of European colonies in Africa and Asia. As European nations exerted more and more power in the colonies, the native people ~~also~~ began to experience rising levels of nationalism that resulted in confrontations. Sometimes peaceful, sometimes violent, these exchanges hurt Europe's ability to fund the spread of industry.

~~and~~ A prime example of war as a result of colonies are the Opium wars between Britain and China. As British business men sold illegal opium into ~~the~~ China, the Chinese government became increasingly angry about this offense and colonial presence in the region in general. This prompted two wars in which Great Britain faced off against China for power in the region. In India, on the other hand, peaceful protests led by Mahatma Gandhi lead to Britain's withdrawal from the ~~East~~ and the loss of a major economic boom for the British economy. Both of these crises and others have common place as native peoples became sick of living in colonies. These uprisings hurt European states by forcing them to spend time and energy fighting off the rebellions and losing large amounts of money and resources.



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In Conclusion, European colonial presences in African and Asia lead to helpful rising in economic power while simultaneously provide harmful levels of competition and native uprisings.

The European states greatly benefitted by expanding colonially overseas mostly through bolstering their economies with new resources. But also affected themselves negatively by creating tension with native peoples and other European states.

Economically speaking, colonizing overseas proved to be a great move for European powers. Britain for example found massive success in India, receiving massive amounts of labor and resources that would help them survive during the first half of the next century. Africa being another major interest for Europeans also proved to be another great favorite location for European colonialism. With large sources of labor, strategic mining resources, luxury resources like ivory and diamonds, and many opportunities for expanding trade.

Politically, this movement in colonization created tension throughout the world. Part of the Congress of Vienna was to discuss the division of Africa between

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The powers, showing ~~the~~ rise in nationalistic and militaristic pride. <sup>initiating</sup> <sup>new</sup> <sup>nations</sup> <sup>and setting</sup> <sup>the stage for</sup> <sup>World War I</sup> Among the native populations of these colonies, most of the time, responded negatively to the Europeans. Europeans were often ignorant of native traditions and ~~often~~ sometimes treated them harshly. ~~There~~ ~~are~~ Numerous conflicts sparked in Africa between natives and Europeans, a notable one by the Zulu tribe against the British. In India the Boxer rebellion became a huge initiative for Indian independence from the British and in China thanks for the open door policy and both Opium wars the country had greatly fallen from its former glory.

~~The~~ ~~world's~~ Tensions rose significantly in the world due to European colonialism, both in the respective locations and throughout the world. The economic benefits may have been great but perhaps not enough to suffice for the multiple upcoming movements for independence and World Wars.

# AP<sup>®</sup> EUROPEAN HISTORY 2015 SCORING COMMENTARY

## Question 4

### Overview

The question was intended to assess students' ability to analyze the positive and negative impacts of overseas colonial empires (i.e., "new imperialism") on European states during the period between 1850 (after the Revolutions of 1848) and the onset of World War I.

### Sample: 4A

**Score: 9**

This essay has a strong thesis and does a great job addressing the entire time period of 1850–1914. The focus on Germany's role as a diplomatic broker under Bismarck is particularly strong. The discussion of the Belgian Congo is also well constructed and solid in detail. The section of the essay discussing harms is not quite as specific and contains an inaccuracy regarding borders in Africa, but this does not detract from the overall argument. The conclusion was also well written and nicely tied back to the thesis paragraph.

### Sample: 4B

**Score: 7**

The essay has a clear and acceptable thesis. There is an error and possibly some confusion in the section on the economics of imperialism, but that does not affect the essay's eligibility for a score of 7. It is stronger than an essay scored 6 due to its synthesis. The treatment of benefits, nationalism and imperialism, the civilizing mission and missionaries were done with strong linkage back to the thesis. The discussion of how colonies helped people boost national pride was more narrative than analytical, and there was some redundancy, keeping the essay from being scored an 8.

### Sample: 4C

**Score: 4**

The essay has an acceptable but relatively superficial thesis in the first paragraph. The essay demonstrates understanding of the concepts with some general statements regarding the British in India and more general statements about the Europeans in Africa. The discussion of specifics breaks down with substantial errors; it confuses the Congress of Vienna with the Congress of Berlin and misplaces the Boxer rebellion in India, but these errors do not detract from the overall argument, and the discussion of the Zulu and Opium wars is accurate.