

### Imperialism in Southeast Asia and the Pacific

The thrust of imperialism did not confine itself to Africa and India, but extended to the territories of Southeast Asia. The centuries-old European interest in Indian Ocean trade now expanded to include the Pacific Islands, because of their strategic location as potential supply stations. Great Britain would establish a trading post in Singapore; the French would continue a prolonged period of influence in Indochina, Germany would claim the Marshalls, Solomons, and New Guinea; and the United States would gain the Philippines and the Hawaiian Islands.

The Dutch had established their hold in Indonesia in the 1600s. Interested in the oil, tin, and rubber that Indonesia could provide, by the early 1800s the Dutch dominated all of Indonesia, which they renamed the Dutch East Indies. Large numbers of Dutch settlers migrated to Indonesia to set up plantations and trading posts. The British acquired the busy port of Singapore off the coast of the Malay Peninsula, and also Malaysia and Burma; these areas were rich in tin, rubber, and teak (which is wood used in shipbuilding). Chinese workers were encouraged to migrate to the area, eventually forming a Chinese majority.

Since the nineteenth century the French have been active in Southeast Asia, which became known as French Indochina. Rubber became a key crop. Rice, originally grown by subsistence farmers, now became a major crop whose production decreased the amount of rice available to the Vietnamese people. The French agricultural and export policies started causing resentment among the Vietnamese people.

As a result of the Spanish-American War, the United States acquired Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines. Filipinos under the leadership of Emilio Aguinaldo immediately declared their independence from the United States, causing the United States to fight the Filipinos. After defeating the Filipinos in 1902, the United States promised to prepare the Filipinos for self-rule. Despite the health and educational improvements by the United States, American business interests persisted in setting up large sugar plantations that prevented sufficient cultivation of basic food crops.

American businesses had also set up sugar plantations on the Hawaiian Islands, achieving significant political power in the process. When new tariff laws reduced the profits on the importation of sugar to the U.S, American planters began pushing for the annexation of Hawaii to the U.S. This proposal was strengthened in 1893 when Queen Liliuokalani of Hawaii attempted to increase political power of the Hawaiians at the expense of the American sugar planters. In 1898, five years after the overthrow of the Hawaiian queen, Hawaii was annexed to the U.S.

1. What was the primary motive for all imperialist countries in Asia and the Pacific?
2. What did they expect to gain?
3. What happened to the peoples that fought back?