Robert W. Strayer

Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources
Second Edition

Chapter 18
Colonial Encounters in Asia and Africa, 1750–1950

The Imperial Durbar of 1903
Topham/The Image Works
Chapter 18, *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History*, Second Edition and
    Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources, Second Edition
Copyright © 2013 by Bedford/St. Martin's
Page 602 (page 878, *With Sources*)

1. Describe the event depicted here.

This picture shows a ceremonial procession called a *durbar*. In it, the Indian state assembles dignitaries and presents them to the public with displays of splendor and wealth in order to demonstrate power and success of the state. This particular durbar marked the coronation of the British monarch Edward VII in 1907.

2. What blends of British and Indian culture do you see here?

Most notable are the officials walking alongside the elephants. Their red dress is reminiscent of British uniforms, and the parade sticks in their hand are topped with a symbol for the British crown.

3. Who in this painting holds the highest social standing? How can you tell?

The man in the British uniform on top of the first elephant would have the highest social standing, followed by the woman in English dress next to him. Their place on top of the elephant, shielded from the sun by a parasol held by a servant behind them, suggests their importance. As English leaders among Indian natives, they undoubtedly enjoyed the highest social status in India under the British Empire.

I. Industry and Empire

A. Colonies as suppliers of raw materials and food
B. Colonies as markets
C. Colonies as investments
D. Nationalism and imperial expansion

I. Industry and Empire

A. Colonies as suppliers of raw materials and food: As the British and other European economies began to specialize in industrial production, they had an increased demand for specific raw materials from the tropical world such as metals, oils, and cotton or rubber. Colonies would serve as captive and cheap sources of these commodities.

B. Colonies as markets: Conversely, colonies could be captive markets for European exports such as British cotton textiles. Indeed, when the British began importing mass-produced cotton textiles to India, they reversed a centuries-long trade imbalance: A previously poor Europe had been desirous of Asian goods with little to offer in return.

C. Colonies as investments: As Western industrialization in the nineteenth century was closely tied to a new and expanding phase of capitalism, colonies naturally served as sources for investment.

D. Nationalism and imperial expansion: With the rise of nationalism in Europe, average citizens suddenly felt they had a stake in imperial expansion. Viewing the struggles of European empires in Africa and Asia as a great game, they felt pride in acquiring more territories and hated seeing real estate go to a rival empire.

I. Industry and Empire

E. The tools of empire: Technological advances made new imperial expansions possible. Faster steamships, better guns, and global communication networks gave Europeans a marked tactical advantage over pre-industrial societies. Medical developments, such as using quinine to prevent and treat malaria, allowed the fragile European body to enter and (hopefully) survive in the tropics.

F. Technological superiority as racial superiority: For many European observers, the idea that technological superiority indicated some sort of larger racial superiority was axiomatic. A variety of pseudo-scientific theories were developed to explain the power differential between the industrial West and the pre-industrial East and South.

G. Social Darwinism: Racist justifications of empire hijacked and bastardized the work of Charles Darwin, arguing that competition among white nations and people of color was a natural occurrence and the victors should not feel guilty.

II. A Second Wave of European Conquests

A. New European players in Asia and Africa
B. European military superiority
C. Slow imperial creep in India and Indonesia
D. The Scramble for Africa and rapid expansion elsewhere

II. A Second Wave of European Conquests

A. New European players in Asia and Africa: The first wave of European colonialism saw the Iberian expansion in the Americas, followed by English, French, and Dutch colonization in the region. In the second wave, Germany, Belgium, Italy, the United States, and Japan joined the competition to annex lands in Asia, Africa, and Oceania.

B. European military superiority: Central to any imperial expansion is military power. Thanks to industrialization, Europeans enjoyed a major technological advantage with weapons such as the Maxim gun, an early machine gun used against lightly armed Africans and Asians.
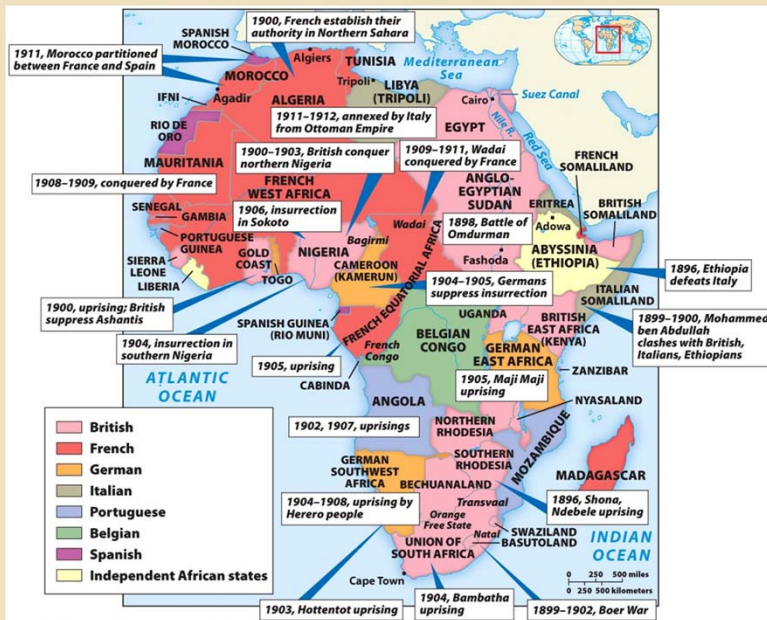
C. Slow imperial creep in India and Indonesia: In South Asia and the islands of Southeast Asia, the older East India engaged in a slow and unplanned but steady expansion of territory that culminated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Millions of Asians in vast stretches of real estate were brought under the control of the British Raj and the Dutch East Indies.

D.The Scramble for Africa and rapid expansion elsewhere: In Africa and certain Asian colonies, the European invasion and conquest was unexpected, sudden, and devastating. Unable to understand European motives and techniques, various kingdoms were completely overwhelmed by the imperial invaders. Yet in other places, such as in the French conquest of Samori Toure's empire in West Africa, it took

many years of difficult fighting to subdue a state.

Map 18.1 Colonial Asia in the Early Twentieth Century

Chapter 18, *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History*, Second Edition and *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources*, Second Edition
Copyright © 2013 by Bedford/St. Martin's
Page 610 (page 886, *With Sources*)

6

1911, Morocco partitioned between France and Spain

1900, French establish their authority in Northern Sahara

SPANISH MOROCCO

TUNISIA

Algiers

Tripoli

LIBYA (TRIPOLI)

Mediterranean Sea

Cairo

Suez Canal

MOROCCO

IFNI   Agadir

ALGERIA

1911–1912, annexed by Italy from Ottoman Empire

RIO DE ORO

EGYPT

Nile R.

Red Sea

MAURITANIA

1900–1903, British conquer northern Nigeria

1909–1911, Wadai conquered by France

FRENCH SOMALILAND

1908–1909, conquered by France

FRENCH WEST AFRICA

ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN

ERITREA

BRITISH SOMALILAND

SENEGAL   GAMBIA

1906, insurrection in Sokoto

Wadai

1898, Battle of Omdurman

Adowa

PORTUGUESE GUINEA

NIGERIA

Bagirmi

ABYSSINIA (ETHIOPIA)

1896, Ethiopia defeats Italy

SIERRA LEONE

GOLD COAST

CAMEROON (KAMERUN)

Fashoda

LIBERIA

TOGO

1904–1905, Germans suppress insurrection

ITALIAN SOMALILAND

1900, uprising; British suppress Ashantis

SPANISH GUINEA (RIO MUNI)

UGANDA

BRITISH EAST AFRICA (KENYA)

1899–1900, Mohammed ben Abdullah clashes with British, Italians, Ethiopians

1904, insurrection in southern Nigeria

French Congo

BELGIAN CONGO

GERMAN EAST AFRICA

1905, uprising

CABINDA

ZANZIBAR

ATLANTIC OCEAN

ANGOLA

1905, Maji Maji uprising

NYASALAND

1902, 1907, uprisings

NORTHERN RHODESIA

GERMAN SOUTHWEST AFRICA

SOUTHERN RHODESIA

MOZAMBIQUE

MADAGASCAR

BECHUANALAND

1904–1908, uprising by Herero people

Transvaal

Orange Free State

1896, Shona, Ndebele uprising

SWAZILAND

Natal

BASUTOLAND

INDIAN OCEAN

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Cape Town

0   250   500 miles

0   250 500 kilometers

1903, Hottentot uprising

1904, Bambatha uprising

1899–1902, Boer War

Legend:
- British
- French
- German
- Italian
- Portuguese
- Belgian
- Spanish
- Independent African states

Map 18.2 Conquest and Resistance in Colonial Africa
Chapter 18, *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History*, Second Edition and
  Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources, Second Edition
Copyright © 2013 by Bedford/St. Martin's
Page 611 (page 887, *With Sources*)

II. A Second Wave of European Conquests

E. Settler colonialism and mass death in the Pacific
F. American and Russian expansion
G. Japanese colonization in Taiwan and Korea
H. Defiant Ethiopia and diplomatic Siam

II. A Second Wave of European Conquests

E. Settler colonialism and mass death in the Pacific: In Australia, New Zealand, and Hawaii, isolated populations were invaded by white settlers and their diseases. Within a few generations, the indigenous population became impoverished and displaced minorities in their own lands.

F. American and Russian expansion: The United States of America and the Russian Empire both engaged in expansion across vast stretches of continental land, displacing indigenous Native Americans and Central Asians or Siberians, respectively. The United States would also expand into the Caribbean and Pacific Ocean, seizing Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and the Philippines as part of the Spanish-American War.

G. Japanese colonization in Taiwan and Korea: In East Asia, a newly industrialized Japan flexed its muscle by annexing the island of Taiwan and the Korean peninsula and then engaged in a style of colonialism similar to the European examples.

H. Defiant Ethiopia and diplomatic Siam: The two leading exceptions to the wave of imperialism were the East African nation of Ethiopia, which defeated Italy at the 1896 Battle of Adowa and Siam (presently Thailand), which used diplomacy and accommodation to avoid imperial annexation.

III. Under European Rule

A. Cooperation and Rebellion
1. Soldiers, administrators, and local rulers
2. A small Western-educated elite
3. Indian Rebellion, 1857–1858

1. Soldiers, administrators, and local rulers: With relatively few Europeans in the tropical colonies, the empires had to rely on various groups of collaborators. Soldiers, often recruited from groups deemed to be "martial races," were essential for conquests, pacification, and putting down revolts. The colonial bureaucracy increasingly used "native" clerks in its lower administration. Various local rulers from Indian rajas to African chiefs served as a key source of exercising indirect power over colonial societies. Each of these collaborating groups expected some form of reward for their service and loyalty to the conquerors.

2. A small Western-educated elite: An essential, but often frustrated segment of society, was the small percentage who attained a Western education. While they were much needed to run the colony, the colonizers often viewed them with suspicion and disdain and the colonized might view them as having thrown their lot in with the conquerors.

3. Indian Rebellion, 1857–1858: Colonial rule was characterized by numerous revolts, both small and large. One of the most important was the Indian Rebellion of 1857 when large numbers of Sepoys (Indian troops fighting for the Raj) mutinied. While the spark that set off the conflagration was the use of bullets greased with cow and pig fat (offensive to both Hindus and Muslims), there were a wide variety of grievances that motivated the rebels. The revolt was brutally crushed within a year, but bitter memories remained, and the British hardened racial boundaries between colonizer and colonized.

III. Under European Rule

B. Colonial Empires with a Difference

1. Racial boundaries: Unlike earlier forms of colonialism, the nineteenth and twentieth century used "scientific racism" to justify the firm racial barriers between colonizer and colonized. There were substantially fewer interracial unions in this era than in the Iberian colonial world.

2. Settler colonialism in South Africa: In South Africa and other settler colonies where there were larger populations of white settlers, more elaborate systems of racial exclusion were developed to institutionalize racial separation and white access to cheap native labor in mines and farms. In South Africa, this eventually evolved into the system known as Apartheid.

3. Impacts on daily life: Unlike previous forms of colonialism, there was a much more profound impact on the daily life of the colonized subjects. More efficient means of tax collecting, transportation, and communication, as well as more invasive changes to landowning, economic systems, administration, and public health, meant that the foreign presence was felt much stronger than in earlier forms of empire.

III. Under European Rule

B. Colonial Empires with a Difference

4. "Traditional India" and "tribal Africa": In an effort to understand and to control their colonized peoples, the colonial empires developed systems and sciences such as anthropology to study, organize, and control colonial societies. This process served to create an idealized version of the society in question and to condemn other variations. In India, the result was the British creation and support for an understanding of India as a classical and unchanging society structured by Brahminism and the caste system. Forms of modernity were scorned as inauthentic. In Africa, the colonial system looked for and supported "chiefs" as the ideal tribal rulers. This condescending strategy allowed them to look down upon much of Africa as barbaric and politically simple and to pursue divide-and-rule tactics, which pitted tribe against tribe.

5. Gendering the empires: This era saw a great importance placed upon gender. White men were to be virile and hyper-masculine, while colonized men were typically effeminized unless they fit into a useful category of "martial race." White women were placed on an elite pedestal and had to be protected from the assumed sexual threat of "native" men.

6. Political contradictions and hypocrisies: As all the European powers, but especially France and Britain, were becoming increasingly democratic at home they ruled the colonies as dictatorships. The colonizers were also loathe to modernize and thus potentially destabilize the societies they governed; hence, they preferred what they understand as tribal, traditional, and rural

communities. The result was a sharp contrast between governmental practice and ideology at home and in the colonies.

IV. Ways of Working: Comparing Colonial Economies

A. Economies of Coercion: Forced Labor and the Power of the State

1. Unpaid required labor on public works: The colonial states regularly required the colonized population to supply unpaid labor to road- and rail-building projects. This labor tax was greatly resented and conditions were often cruel.

2. King Leopold II's Congo Free State: Also known as the Belgian Congo, this was the worst case of forced labor and cost millions of African lives. State-backed private companies used a variety of abusive tactics, including mutilation, to force the local population to collect ivory and rubber. Eventually the abuses became public, and the Belgian government took control of the colony in 1908.

3. Cultivation system in the Dutch East Indies: In the islands of Southeast Asia such as Java and Sumatra, the Netherlands forced peasants to devote 20 percent of their land to cash crops such as coffee and sugar and to sell them at a low fixed price to government contractors. The Dutch made huge profits by selling these crops on the global market for much higher prices. The system indebted many peasants to moneylenders and resulted in a series of famines in what was a very productive land.

4. Resistance to cotton cultivation in East Africa: In German East

Africa and Portuguese Mozambique, the colonial state tried to force cotton cultivation. However, there was widespread resistance and the projects never succeeded despite the heavy use of force.

Colonial Violence in the Congo
Courtesy, Anti-Slavery Organization, London
Chapter 18, *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History*, Second Edition and
  Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources, Second Edition
Copyright © 2013 by Bedford/St. Martin's
Page 618 (page 894, *With Sources*)

1. Who are these two boys, and where do they live?

These two boys are from the Congo Free State, ruled personally by the Belgium King Leopold II until 1908. The chair on which the older boy sits—together with the wooden fence in the background—suggest that this picture might be taken on the grounds of a European facility (a mission or a hospital, for instance) concerned about the fate of the Congolese.

2. Why are the hands of the two boys in this image missing?

These boys were part of a large group of Congolese forced to collect rubber for private companies, which would then use this raw material for bicycle and automobile tires in Europe. They had failed to collect the amount of rubber demanded by the private European companies and were punished by having their right hands chopped off.

3. What does this tell us about European colonialism in Africa?

The picture suggests that European colonial rule in Africa was often brutal, and infractions were punished with unspeakable cruelty. European colonization of Africa left scars on both individuals and the region as a whole.

IV. Ways of Working: Comparing Colonial Economies

B. Economies of Cash-Crop Agriculture: The Pull of the Market
1. Encouragement of existing cash cropping
2. Rice in the Irrawaddy and Mekong deltas
3. Cacao in the Gold Coast

IV. Ways of Working: Comparing Colonial Economies

B. Economies of Cash-Crop Agriculture: The Pull of the Market

1. Encouragement of existing cash cropping: In many colonies, there were centuries-old systems of cash cropping that the colonial state sought to encourage with expanding markets, public works, and labor migration.

2. Rice in the Irrawaddy and Mekong deltas: In British Burma, the lower Irrawaddy became a major rice exporter thanks to public works and immigration from India and upper Burma. Burma saw several decades of a rising standard of living. In French Vietnam, the expansion of rice fields in the Mekong Delta had a negative impact on various fish and shellfish and hurt the local diet.

3. Cacao in the Gold Coast: In West Africa, cacao farmers took the initiative and expanded production to meet new market demands. However, the labor shortage resulted in immigration from the north, which caused ethnic conflicts.

IV. Ways of Working: Comparing Colonial Economies

C. Economies of Wage Labor: Migration for Work

1. Internal migrations to plantations, mines, and cities: The establishment of European-run enterprises in the colonies created large movements of laborers in search of employment. Perhaps after losing their land or facing heavy taxes or loans, workers would leave their homes for work in mines, plantations, or construction sites in the cities. Others might try to earn a living as servants or clerks. Life for the lower rungs of colonial society in the mines, plantations, and cities was difficult with low wages and often brutal managers.

2. International migrations of Indians, Chinese, Japanese, and others: Filling the labor void after the end of slavery, some 29 million Indians left their homeland to work as plantation laborers and miners in British colonies from East Africa to Jamaica. A smaller wave of South Asians made a living as merchants, especially in British East Africa. In addition to movement within a colony or within a specific colonial empire, large numbers of Asians moved into the colonial world by crossing international boundaries. Some 19 million Chinese sought a new life in Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean Basin, and the Pacific region. Malaysian rubber plantations and tin mines were staffed primarily with Chinese and some Indian workers.

3. "Native" labor in settler colonies: In colonies with significant white settler communities such as Algeria, South Africa, and the Kenyan highlands, the local population was frequently pushed off the land as the colonial state gave vast tracts of real estate to the Europeans. Many of these "natives" were directed toward reservation-style settlements where they could seek out work on European farms or mines. Others tried to stay on their land, but were viewed as squatters and not given full protection of the law.

IV. Ways of Working: Comparing Colonial Economies

D. Women and the Colonial Economy: Examples from Africa

1. Men grew cash crops while women grew food: While there was much variation in the colonial economies of Africa, some patterns can be discerned. Frequently men would turn to growing more prestigious cash crops for the market, leaving women to handle subsistence food production.

2. Work separated husbands and wives: Labor migrations to mines, cities, or farms often separated families for lengthy periods.

3. Women became heads of households: Without the male head of the household, many women became the head of the household, giving them new- found agency and some independence.

IV. Ways of Working: Comparing Colonial Economies

E. Assessing Colonial Development

1. Jump-start or exploitation?: There remains much debate on the role of colonialism in the world's economic development. Proponents and apologists argue that it set key processes in motion while critics point to exploitation and uneven development. Despite the debates, three points remain clear.

2. Global integration: For better or worse, colonialism did speed up global economic integration.

3. Some elements of modernization: Various degrees of modernity did trickle into the colonial world.

4. No colonial breakthrough to modern industrial economy: No colony developed a complete industrial transformation as Japan did.

V. Believing and Belonging: Identity and Cultural Change in the Colonial Era

A. Education
1. The door to opportunities
2. Adopting European culture
3. Modernity?
4. Colonial glass ceiling

V. Believing and Belonging: Identity and Cultural Change in the Colonial Era

A. Education

1. The door to opportunities: Western education provided a variety of new opportunities and privileges for those that were lucky enough to receive schooling. Wealth, employment, and a higher status came with literacy in the colonizers' language.

2. Adopting European culture: Many educated elite adopted various aspects of European culture, including dress, speech, marriage ceremonies, and housing.

3. Modernity?: Some saw collaboration with the European conquerors as a path toward modernity for their societies and a way to eliminate injustices and abuses enshrined as traditional.

4. Colonial glass ceiling: Unfortunately, many willing colonial collaborators found that Europeans would not treat them as equals. Racism and a condescending view of "native" culture as primitive and backwards ensured that they were never equal partners.

> # V. Believing and Belonging: Identity and Cultural Change in the Colonial Era
>
> ## B. Religion
> 1. Christian missionaries in Africa and the Pacific
> 2. Religious conflicts over gender and sexuality
> 3. Colonial definition of Hinduism
> 4. Colonial identification with Islam

V. Believing and Belonging: Identity and Cultural Change in the Colonial Era

B. Religion

1. Christian missionaries in Africa and the Pacific: In New Zealand and other Pacific islands and in non-Muslim Africa, Christian missionaries made dramatic gains with large-scale conversions. In Africa, 50 million people identified as Christian in the 1960s.

2. Religious conflicts over gender and sexuality: Conversion to Christianity was not with out its cultural conflicts. Debates over gender roles, sexual practice, and traditions such as female "circumcision" produced serious disputes. Missionaries were concerned about Christians who practiced pagan and tribal traditions and saw them as "backsliders."

3. Colonial definition of Hinduism: In India, the British were overwhelmed by the varieties of religious practice and sought to establish a clear and codified definition of the local faiths as a single religion. The scholars and missionaries who studied South Asian religion promoted the idea of an orthodox form of Hinduism. Some Indians adopted this definition of theory and ritual as a way of reforming their faith.

4. Colonial identification with Islam: In India, the British also did much to inadvertently forge a sense of Muslim unity. By establishing two laws of inheritance, one for Hindus and one for Muslims, the colonial state put the diverse Muslim community into a situation of self-identifying as Muslim and NOT Hindu. Furthermore, as early nationalists began to speak of India as a Hindu nation, some Muslims felt defensive about their minority status. This set in motion a process that would grow throughout the twentieth century.

V. Believing and Belonging: Identity and Cultural Change in the Colonial Era

C. "Race" and "Tribe"
1. Rise of an African identity
2. Pan-Africanism
3. Colonial creation of "tribes"

V. Believing and Belonging: Identity and Cultural Change in the Colonial Era

C. "Race" and "Tribe"

1. Rise of an African identity: Prior to the Scramble for Africa, few people saw themselves as Africans. Rather, they were part of a village, a kinship group, a language group, a city, a kingdom, or an empire. Yet the shared experience of European colonialism and racism led some to see themselves as part of a larger continental community. This led some scholars to argue for the existence of African traditions and the influence of Africa on the rest of the world.

2. Pan-Africanism: With colonial systems of transportation, Africans and those of African descent in the Americas came into contact with each other. Some such as W. E. B. Dubois and Marcus Garvey argued for a pan-African identity that transcended the white boundaries of colony and nation-state.

3. Colonial creation of "tribes": As the Europeans conquered the continent, they found linguistic and material similarities between various communities, leading them to define and group them as tribes. While often a European creation, many African communities adopted the tribal identity as their own and used it as a communal identity.

V. Reflections: Who Makes History?

A. Colonizers' efforts to shape the colony
**B. Colonized people's agency**
C. "History from below"

A. Colonizers' efforts to shape the colony: Those who argue that the winners make history might point to the colonizers who conquered and tried to rebuild colonial societies according to their vision.

B. Colonized people's agency: Yet the colonized people interacted with what the colonizers brought and often made it their own, seen in the Africanization of Christianity.

C. "History from below": By examining colonial history from the perspective of the colonized, in addition to the colonizer, we can get a fuller and more complete understanding of the colonial encounter.
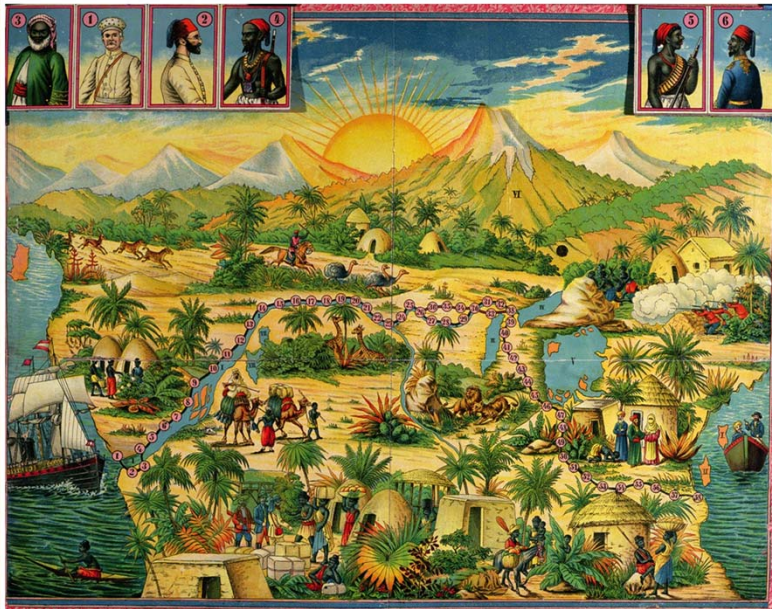
Visual Source 18.1 Prelude to the Scramble
Private Collection/Archives Charmet/The Bridgeman Art Library
Chapter 18, *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources*, Second Edition
Copyright © 2013 by Bedford/St. Martin's
Page 923

Visual Source 18.2 Conquest and Competition
Alinari/Art Resource, NY
Chapter 18, *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources*, Second Edition
Copyright © 2013 by Bedford/St. Martin's
Page 925

23

THE RHODES COLOSSUS
STRIDING FROM CAPE TOWN TO CAIRO.

Visual Source 18.3 From the Cape to Cairo
The Granger Collection, NY
Chapter 18, *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources*, Second Edition
Copyright © 2013 by Bedford/St. Martin's
Page 926

Visual Source 18.4 British and French in North Africa
History Pictures/Instructional Resources Corporation
Chapter 18, *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources*, Second Edition
Copyright © 2013 by Bedford/St. Martin's
Page 927

Visual Source 18.5 The Ethiopian Exception
Chapter 18, *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources*, Second Edition
Page 928