

**In the About the Exam module you were introduced to the following question:  
Analyze the ways in which the formation of overseas colonial empires both benefited and harmed the interests of Europeans states in the period 1850-1914.**

**England:**

- Benefits:
  - Attained access to lucrative resources and land in India
  - Tax revenue from overseas territories helped to provide for development back home
  - Precious metals were discovered in colonies, which would prove valuable
  - Opium trade with China helped Britain to gain significant influence over China
  - Gained significant influence over the operation of Mediterranean trade routes despite geographical location
  - Powerful navy controlled trade routes world wide
  - Established one of the largest empires in world history
- Harms:
  - Seditious colonies proved costly to maintain due to the cost of military suppression of rebellion; some efforts failed, as was the case in the Americas a century prior
  - Britain became involved with many conflicts overseas involving either the colonial groups, rebels, or other involved global powers (involvement in China in the Opium War and Boxer Rebellion, dealing with rebels in India and Africa, etc.)
  - Cost of maintaining power and fleet made Britain was difficult to sustain and made Britain a target
  - Large, diverse Empire proved difficult to govern

**France:**

- Benefits:
  - French West Africa and other colonies proved important in giving access to the ivory trade, a very lucrative trade
  - Taxation of colonial possessions provided, similarly to England, the resources for development of the homeland or of other colonies
  - France was able to reassert global influence in the wake of disastrous upheaval and conflicts decades prior
  - France gained access to the trade of certain unique crops, such as rice and West African products such as cinammon
- Harms:
  - Colonial competition with Britain and Germany weakened France and caused it to be subject to certain losses to both countries
  - Faced many of the same issues as Britain in that seditious groups had to be dealt with
  - Colonies proved difficult to settle or maintain in many cases, or settlement led to conflict (Algeria)

**Netherlands:**

- Benefits:
  - Reasserted influence over global trade
  - Attained access to the trade of luxury goods, including spices and ivory
  - Gained control over resourceful and valuable holdings, such as Indonesia/Dutch East Indies
  - Gained control of Indonesian resources such as rubber and oil
  - Remained a relevant European state
- Harms:
  - Entered into conflict with European powers as a result of competition (conflict with Portugal)
  - Forced to deal with cost of dealing with rebellions in colonial holdings
  - Colonial holdings proved difficult to maintain; the Netherlands would resolve these situations through harsh ways
  - Did not prove endearing to other European powers

### **Germany:**

- Benefits:
  - Practically controlled the world supply of rubber thanks to influence over the Congo
  - Was able to greatly develop Germany and bring it onto equal footing with other European powers through usage of colonial resources
  - Became a prominent and powerful European state
  - Financial revenue from colonies proved beneficial
- Harms:
  - Often entered into diplomatic conflict with other European states for its 'trespassing' on other territory of the global economy and for the acts of Germany in its colonial holdings
  - German methods, worse than Dutch methods, of dealing with sedition were not endearing to the global community
  - Helped to promote German ideas relating to Social Darwinism, lebensraum, required resources, "state is an organism", etc.
  - Cost of maintaining colonies against rebellions and maintaining global military

### **Belgium:**

- Benefits:
  - Control of Belgian Congo gave Belgium many mineral and natural resources with which to gain a significant influence in the global economy
  - Management style of Belgian Congo proved simple, cheap, and effective for Belgium, making its slave-like labor good at extracting the resources Belgium desired
  - Gave Belgium greater power in Europe and greater respectability
- Harms:
  - Horrific acts of Belgium in its colonial territory proved abhorrent to European neighbors
  - Forced to commit acts of genocide and mass killings to maintain Belgian Congo