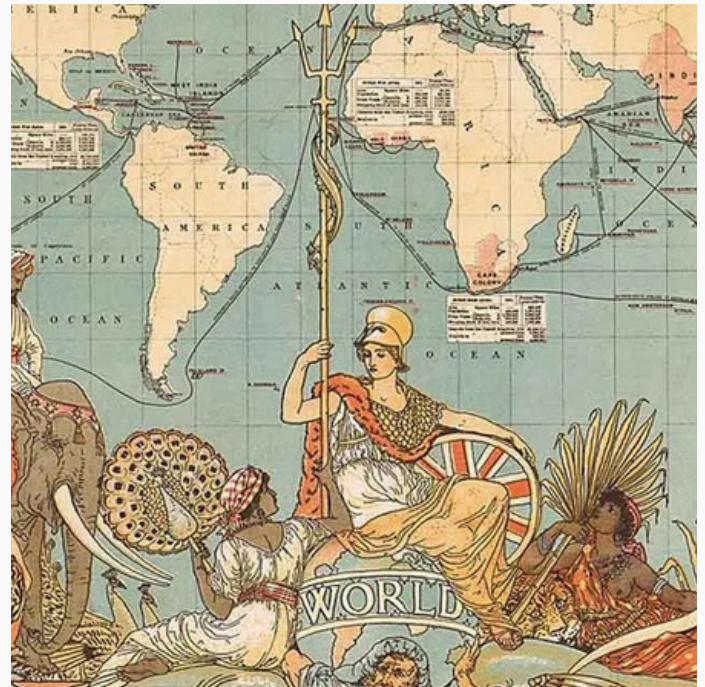
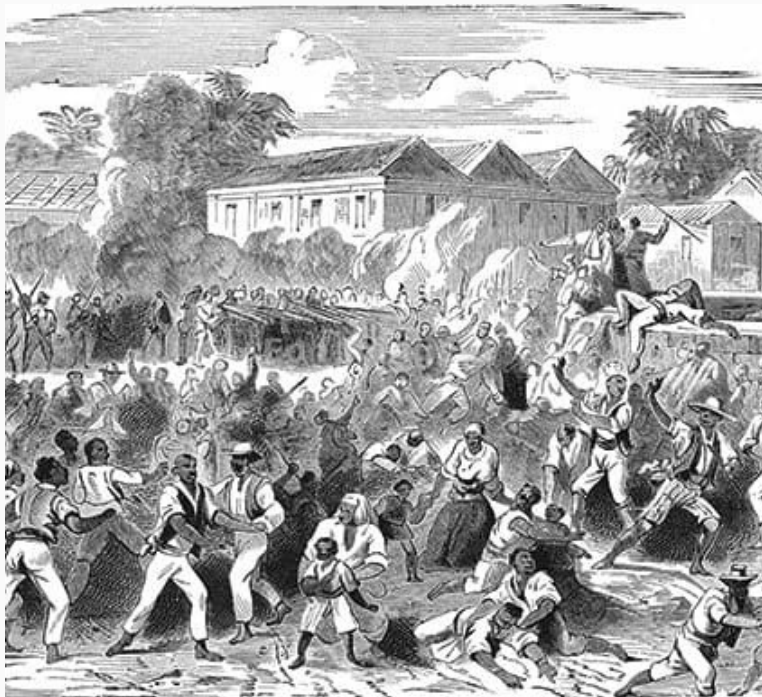


THE BRITISH EMPIRE

What was the impact of the British Empire?



Empire brought cohesion and prosperity to Ireland

Source 1: Extract from “The Historical Dimension of Ireland’s Road to Modernisation and Europeanisation.” by Brian Girvin, in *Nordic Irish Studies*, 2010

Despite this failure to create a British identity among the Catholic Irish, the process of modernisation and integration within the United Kingdom had a significant impact on Ireland. The twin poles of attraction for the Irish continued to be the United States or Britain. Economically Ireland had benefited significantly from the relationship. Though one of the poorer regions of the UK (which itself was the richest state in Europe), Ireland was one of the wealthier regions of Europe. Bielenberg and O'Mahony have argued that working class consumption in Ireland was broadly comparable to that in other parts of the UK.²⁸ More significantly and counter-intuitively, perhaps, Irish GDP per capita, though approximately two-thirds of the UK average, was close to a wide range of other European states such as Denmark, France and Sweden. It has also been recognised that Irish urban wage levels in the twentieth century have been close to, and at times higher than, those prevailing in British urban centres

Empire brought cohesion and prosperity to Ireland

Source 2: Extract from the Belfast Telegraph for May 1914, showing the rival militias that were developing in Ireland. On the left is a picture of the nationalist Irish Volunteers marching, and on the right is the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) standing to attention with rifles over the shoulders



British Imperialism suppressed and depopulated Ireland

Source 3: Ireland wrestles with famine, while Mr. Balfour (the British Chief Secretary of Ireland) plays golf, a political cartoon by John D. Reigh from United Ireland, 23 August 1890



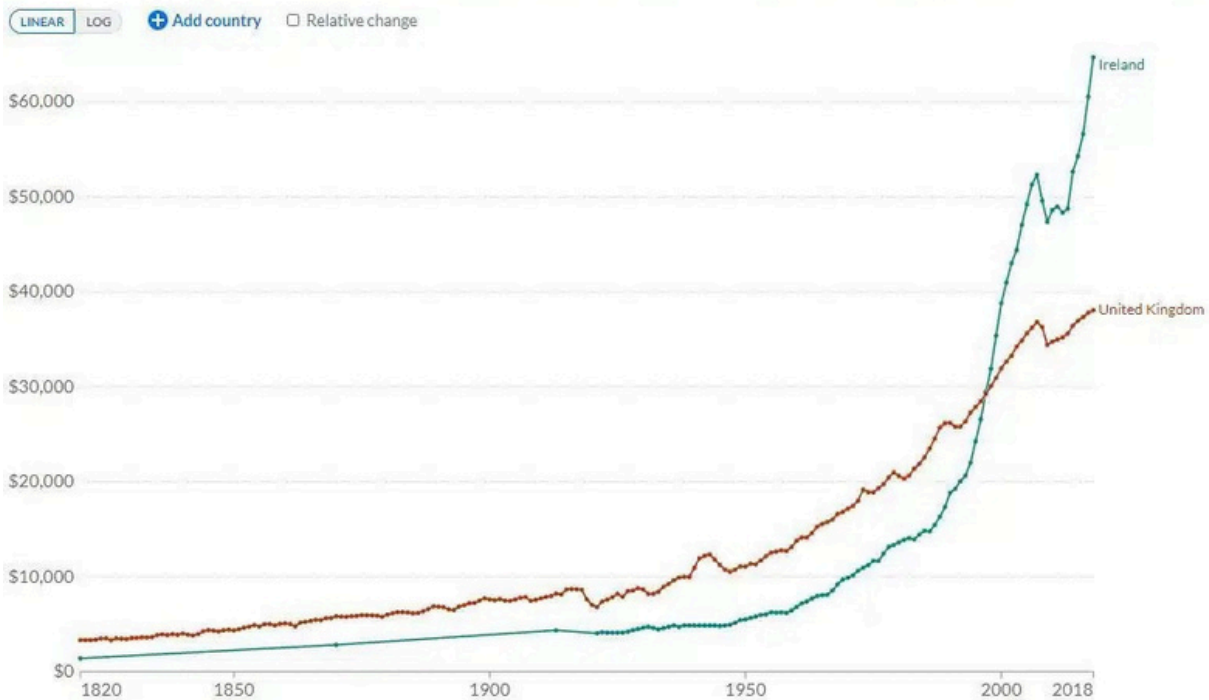
British Imperialism suppressed and depopulated Ireland

Source 4: A comparison of Irish and British GDP (measure of all the goods and services that their economies produce) from 1820 to 2018. Ireland gained independence in 1922

GDP per capita, 1820 to 2018

GDP per capita adjusted for price changes over time (inflation) and price differences between countries – It is measured in international-\$ in 2011 prices.

Our World
in Data

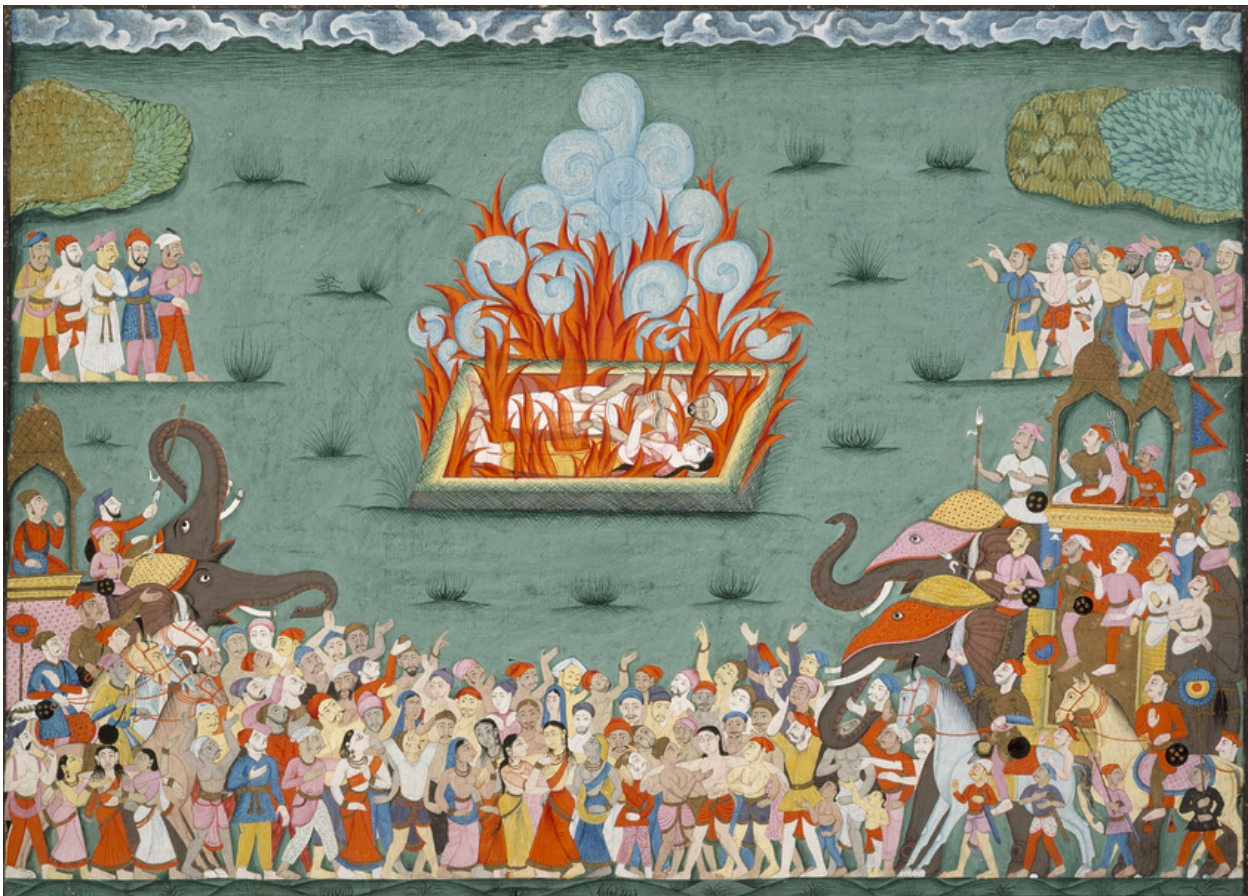


Source: Maddison Project Database 2020 (Bolt and van Zanden (2020))

OurWorldInData.org/economic-growth • CC BY

Empire brought order and progress to India

Source 5: The Cremation of Peshwa Madhavrao I (officialled 1761-1772) and the Sati of his Wife Ramabai by Maharashtra, Pune (Poona), circa 1772-1775. Sati was the ritual burning of widows when their husband died. It was banned by the British authorities in 1829



Empire brought order and progress to India

Source 6: Extract from an article in British magazine 'The Spectator', 29 January 2023

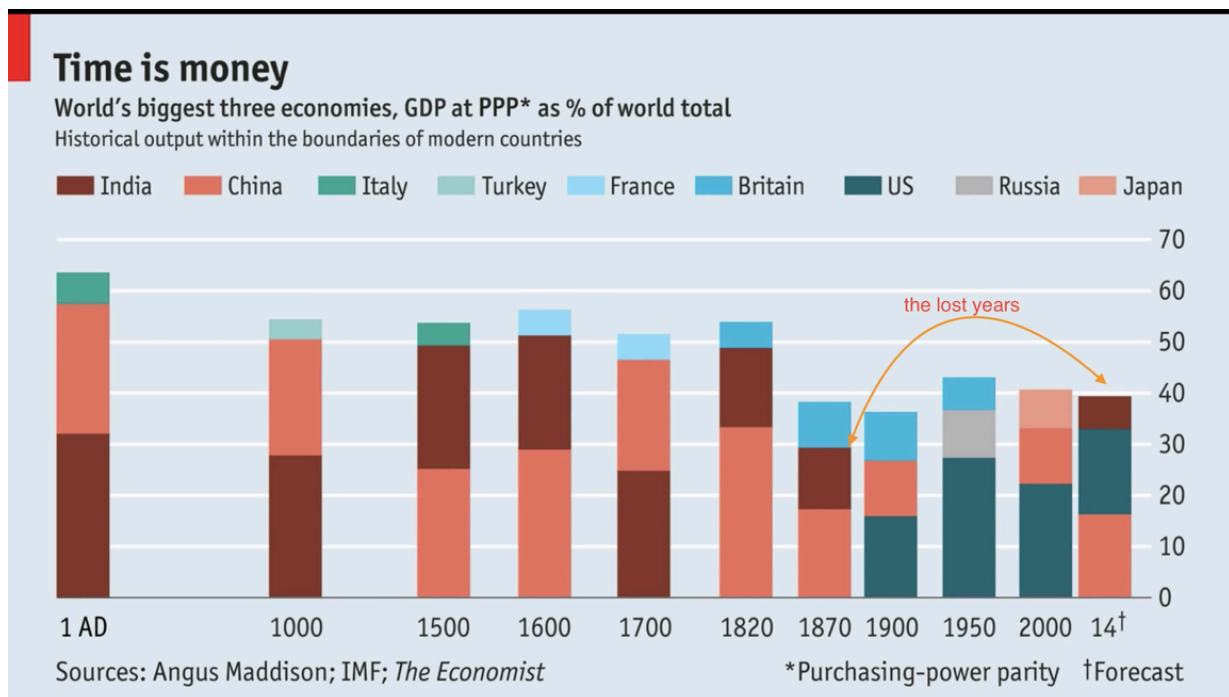
it therefore may come as a surprise to learn that it was British Orientalists who in fact rediscovered India's classical history and heritage and made it available to the rest of the world.

Sir William Jones, a brilliant polymath, contributed more than any other individual to India's national renaissance. Alongside his day job as a judge in Calcutta, Jones mastered Sanskrit, translated Indian classics and used it to unlock the glories of India's long forgotten Hindu and Buddhist past.

...Unlike ancient Greece and Rome, India's classical past had left behind no written histories, so it had to be reconstructed from ruins and buried treasures. In 1784, with the patronage of the first British Governor-General, Warren Hastings, Jones founded the Asiatic Society to take on this giant task. It became the beacon for a huge volunteer army of amateur antiquarians across the subcontinent. They were enthusiastic British civil and military officers who scoured the *mofussil* (countryside) for ruins and artefacts, wrote articles about them and sent their findings to be studied in the cities

Racist imperial rule impoverished and divided India

Source 7: Graph of the world's three largest economies through history



Racist imperial rule impoverished and divided India

Source 8: Indians long resisted British rule. 'Suppression of the Indian Revolt by the English', which depicts the execution of Indian mutineers by the British Army by blowing them from a gun.

A painting by Russian artist Vasily Vereshchagin c. 1884



Empire brought prosperity and democracy to the islands

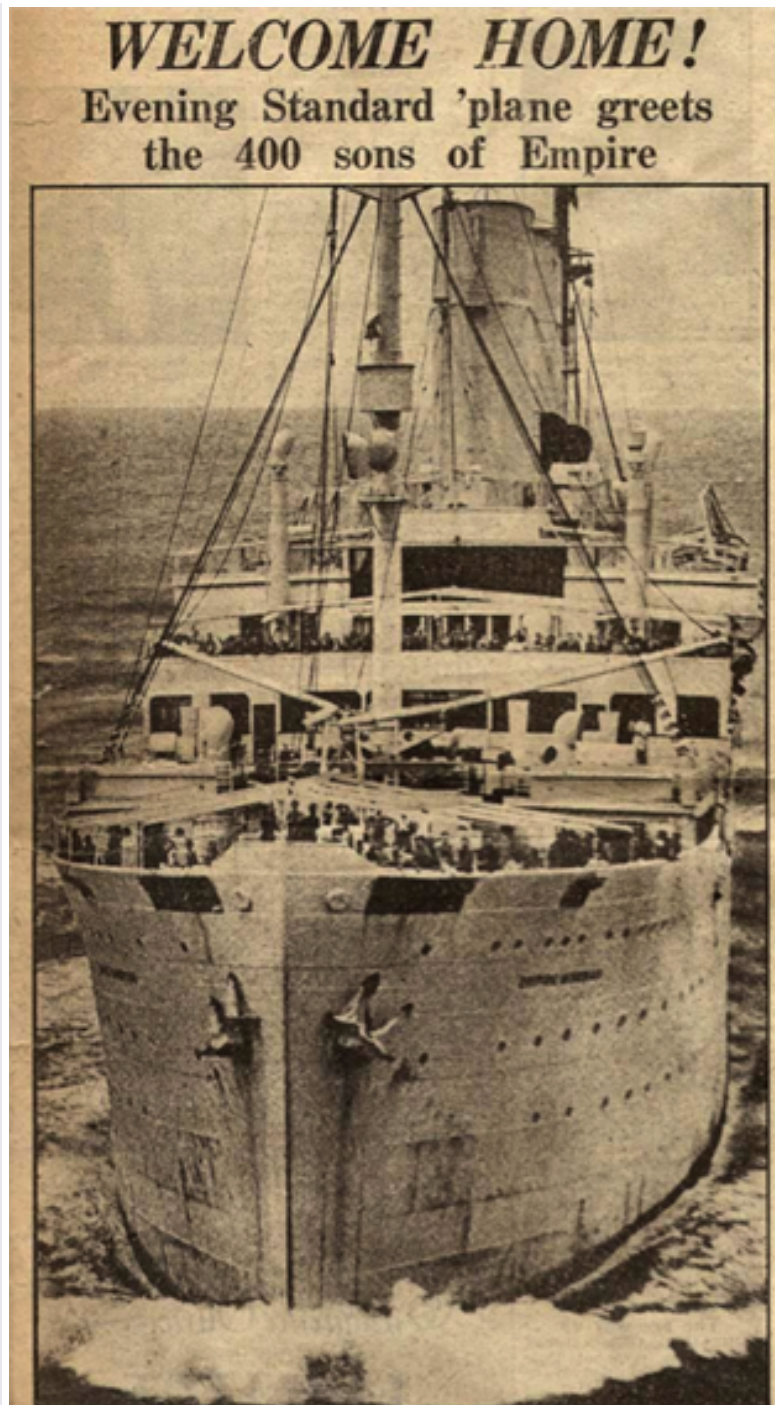
Source 9: An extract from the article 'The British Empire on Trial' in British history magazine 'The Historian' by Gregory Gifford, 2021

The contribution of colonial troops in both World Wars was for too long underrepresented....These were volunteers, not conscripts. Their motivations varied from the promise of a wage, to advancing the cause of Indian independence. Nonetheless it is striking so many were willing to fight with Britain. It should not be overlooked either that in 1940 the British Empire was the last major combatant left opposing Nazi domination (European allies being occupied; the USA and USSR neutral). RAF pilots included Canadians, Barbadians and Jamaicans.

Empire brought prosperity and democracy to the islands

Source 10:

Extract from the front page of the British newspaper, The Evening Standard, welcoming people from the Caribbean coming to Britain, 21 June 1948



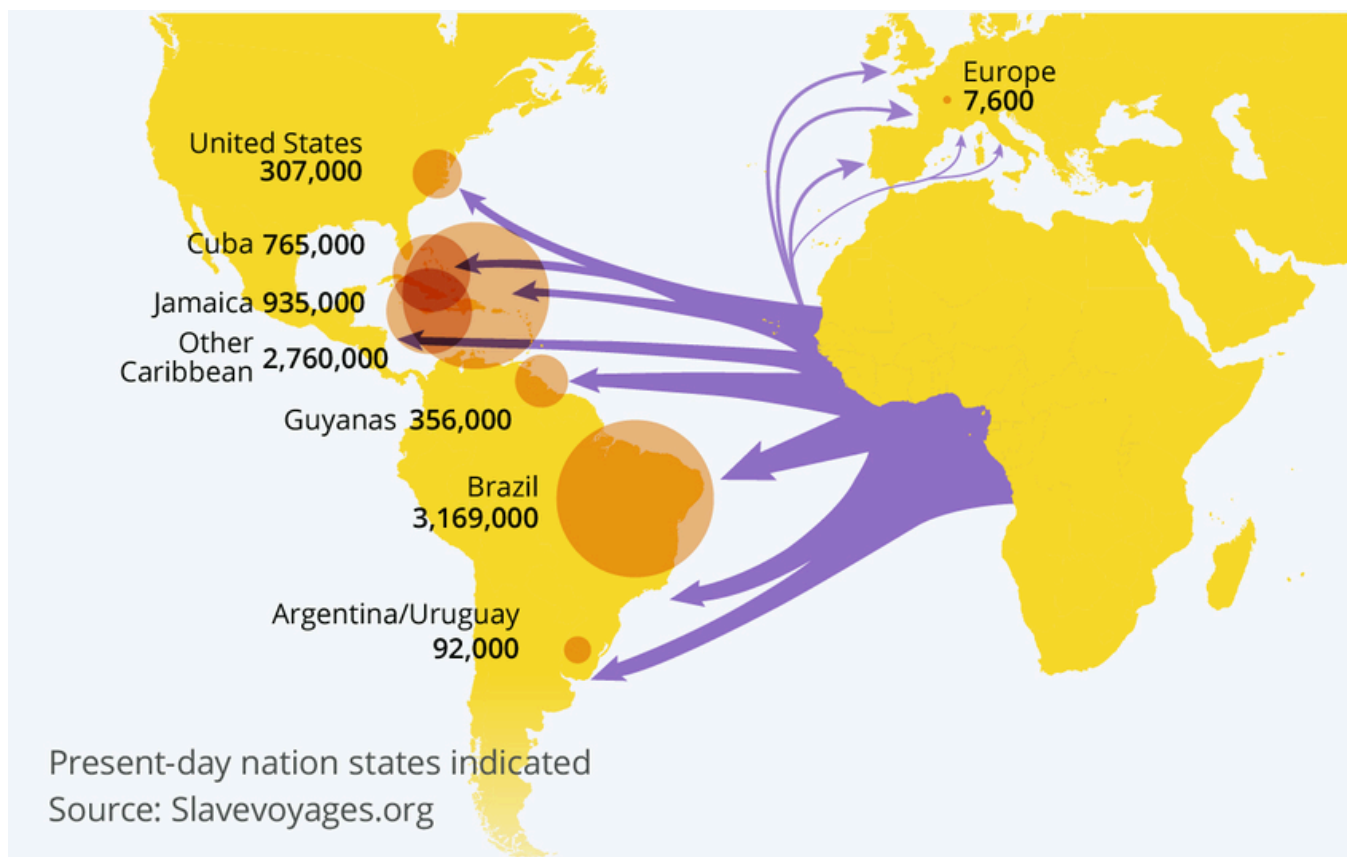
Imperialism brought extermination, enslavement and exploitation to the islands

Source 11: 'Carib Attack on a Settlement', published in 'The West Indies and the Spanish Main' by John Rodway, 1896



Imperialism brought extermination, enslavement and exploitation to the islands

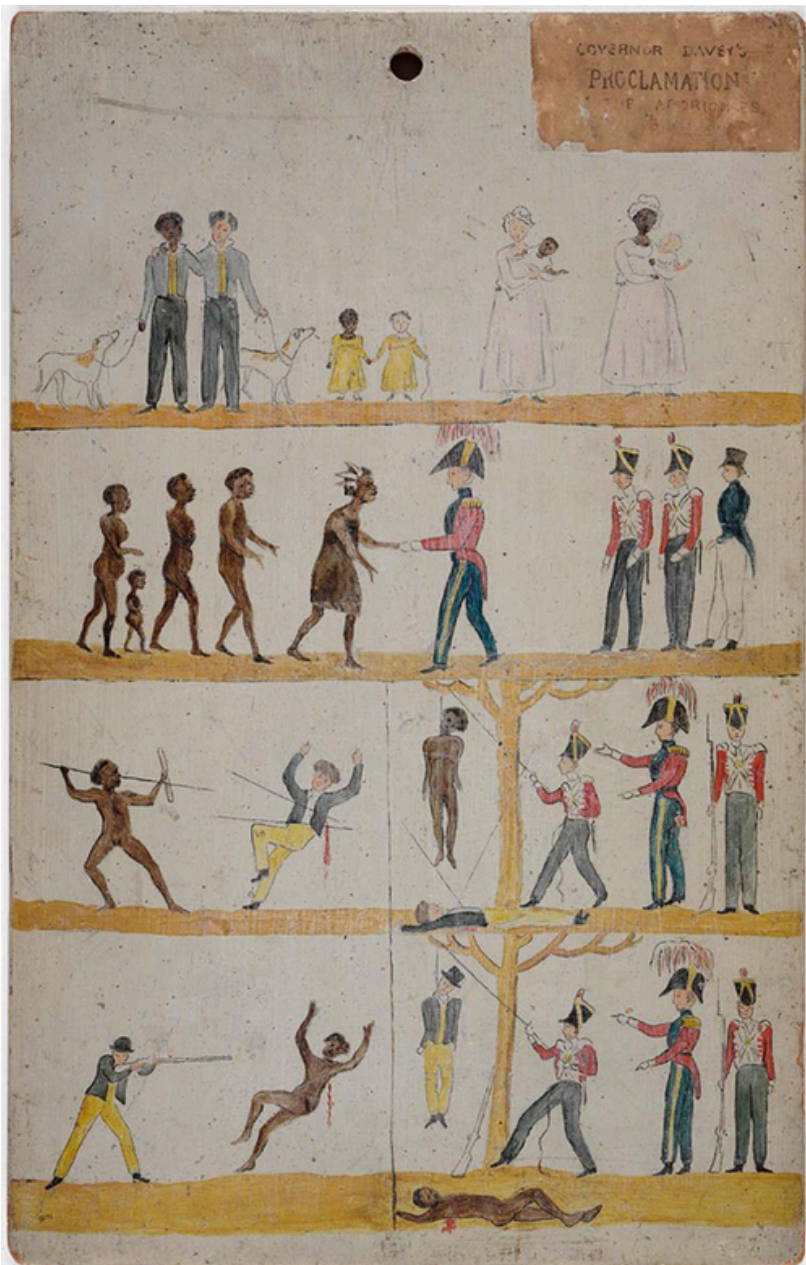
Source 12: Number of enslaved Africans arriving on the American continent, including the Caribbean from 1514 to 1866



Empire brought modernity and rule of law to Australia

Source 13:

Governor Arthur's Proclamation to the Aborigines, c.1828-30, which shows how the Rule of Law will be enforced using pictures, to overcome the language barrier between the British and the native Australians



Empire brought modernity and rule of law to Australia

Source 14: Extract from the Australian Register UNESCO Memory of the World Programme, which summarises Australian history, published in 2015

Australia is one of the world's oldest democracies – an unexpected achievement perhaps in a group of British colonies whose foundation settlements were in effect prisons. Nevertheless, by the late 1850s several Australian colonies had adopted constitutions that were the most advanced in the world. A second period of democratising followed in the 1890s, and in 1901 the federated Australian nation was created on the assumption of universal suffrage. The three documents inscribed in the Australian Register of the Memory of the World Program exemplify these two decisive decades in Australia's democratic transition.

When the first Australian colonies were created between 1788 and 1836 the notion of democracy, or rule by the people, was generally seen as a radical, even a dangerous concept – but not by all. The colony of South Australia, whose founders in 1836 included many with liberal, even radical sympathies, sought self-government from the very beginning, and a *South Australian Act* passed in 1842 by the British Parliament actually allowed for the creation of a parliament with an elected lower house. This early attempt at democracy was thwarted by the conservative Governor Grey, who also resisted several other attempts at reform, including a petition to the British government in 1844 seeking the right to elected representation.

Imperialists massacred indigenous Australians and ransacked natural resources

Source 15: Extract from 'Australia's coloured minority: its place in the community', by A.O. Neville, a former Chief Protector of Aborigines and Commissioner of Native Affairs in Western Australia, 1947



THREE GENERATIONS
(Reading from Right to Left)

1. Half-blood—(Irish-Australian father; full-blood Aboriginal mother).
2. Quadroon Daughter—(Father Australian born of Scottish parents; Mother No. 1).
3. Octaroon Grandson—(Father Australian of Irish descent; Mother No. 2)

It is not always wise for people of widely diverse races to intermarry, especially races having different cultures and temperaments. That, however, cannot be said of people already allied to us by association, consanguinity, and ancestry. The young half-blood maiden is a pleasant, placid, complacent person as a rule, while the quadroon girl is often strikingly attractive with her oft times auburn hair, rosy freckled colouring, and good figure, or maybe blue eyes and fair hair. In both cases the lads who have been properly cared for are well set up and often good looking. As I see it, what we have to do is to elevate these people to our own plane...

Imperialists massacred indigenous Australians and ransacked natural resources

Source 16: Extract from 'Indigenous Peoples and Mining: A Global Perspective' by Ciaran O'Faircheallaigh, 2023

...the impact of mining on Indigenous livelihoods was dramatic and often irreversible. This occurred because of the devastating effect of diseases introduced by miners; the destructive impact of extensive placer mining on land and waters that were essential to Indigenous survival; and the widespread depletion of wild flora and fauna by miners who often lacked access to other sources of fresh food. Mining's impact in this regard is illustrated by contemporary accounts from the Australian state of Victoria, where Aboriginal people were able to participate actively in gold mining and large-scale organized killings were rare. One traveller described how 'The diggers [miners] seem to have two especial propensities, those of firing guns and felling trees ... every tree is felled ... every feature of Nature is annihilated' (cited in Cahir 2012: 118). The colonial government board responsible for Aboriginal administration warned of 'vast quantities of fish destroyed annually by netting and the swivel gun ... Both fish and game are ruthlessly killed in such a manner as to injure, not only the interests of the blacks but those of the colonists generally' (cited in Cahir 2012: 118). Numerous contemporary sources attest to the disappearance of Aboriginal people from their traditional lands as these were damaged by gold mining and as wild game was exterminated (Cahir 2012: 119)...