

I.F.14

The Development of Modern States

Neo-Imperialism in Russia, China and Turkey – Bringing Back the Golden Age?

Ein Beitrag von Dr. Henning Kulbarsch



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Russland, die Türkei und China – drei sehr unterschiedliche Länder, die auf unterschiedliche Weise eine imperiale Vergangenheit haben. Heute stehen die drei Staaten wieder im Rampenlicht der internationalen Beziehungen. Welche Rolle spielt die imperiale Vergangenheit für die Außenpolitik der drei Länder in der globalisierten Welt? Welche neo-imperialistischen Bestrebungen gibt es heute in ihnen? Und welche Folgen haben diese für die jeweiligen Nachbarstaaten und die Welt insgesamt? Die vorliegende Reihe gibt Antworten auf diese Fragen.

KOMPETENZPROFIL

Klassenstufe: 10

Dauer: 8-9 Unterrichtsstunden

Kompetenzen: Unterschiede zwischen Nationalstaat und Imperium herausarbeiten, imperiale Vergangenheit und Gegenwart Russlands, der Türkei und Chinas analysieren, neoimperialistische Außenpolitiken der drei Staaten verstehen

Thematische Bereiche: Russische, türkische und chinesische Geschichte, Nationalstaat, Imperialismus, Neoimperialismus, Kolonialismus, Außenpolitik, internationale Beziehungen, Ukraine-Krieg, Neue Seidenstraße

Medien: App Woodclap

Auf einen Blick

1. Stunde

Thema: Empire vs. Nation State

M 1 **What Is an Empire?**

M 2 **What Is a Nation State?**

Inhalt: Die Schülerinnen und Schüler unterscheiden Imperialismus von Nationalstaatlichkeit und setzen sich mit den Wesensmerkmalen der beiden Staatsformen auseinander.

Benötigt: Internetzugang für Online-Recherche

2./3. Stunde

Thema: Example 1: Russia

M 3 **Imperial Russia – From Ivan IV to the Soviet Union**

M 4 **An Example of Neo-Imperialism: The Russia of Putin**

M 5 **Ukraine – Russia’s Latest Victim of Imperial Aggression**

Benötigt: Smartphones und Internet zum Auffinden von Quellen in M 3.

Inhalt: Die Lernenden beschreiben Geschichte und Ausbreitung des Russischen Reichs. Sie analysieren neo-imperialistische Elemente in der gegenwärtigen Außenpolitik Russlands.

4./5. Stunde

Thema: Example 2: Turkey

M 6 **The Ottoman Empire – From Europe’s Worst Nightmare to the Sick Man at the Bosphorus**

M 7 **Modern Turkey – In the Footsteps of the Ottoman Empire**

Inhalt: Die Lernenden beschreiben Geschichte und Ausbreitung des Osmanischen Reichs. Sie analysieren neo-imperialistische Elemente in der gegenwärtigen Außenpolitik der Türkei.

Benötigt: Internetzugang für Online-Recherche





6./7. Stunde

Thema:	Example 3: China
M 8	The China of the Qing Dynasty – Imperial Country or Victim of Imperialism?
M 9	China's Foreign Policy – A New Form of Imperialism?
M 10	Hong Kong and the Uyghurs – Imperialism at Home?
Benötigt:	Smartphones und Internet zum Aufrufen der Karte in
Inhalt:	Die Lernenden beschreiben Geschichte und Ausdehnung des chinesischen Kaiserreichs. Sie analysieren neo-imperialistische Elemente in der gegenwärtigen Außen- und Innenpolitik der Volksrepublik China.

8. Stunde

Thema:	Hearing
M 11	Hearing: How Should We Deal with Russia, Turkey, China?
Inhalt:	In einer methodisch angeleiteten Experten-Diskussion tauschen sich die Schülerinnen und Schüler darüber aus, welche Konsequenzen die neo-imperialen Bestrebungen der drei Länder jeweils für die diplomatischen Beziehungen zu Deutschland und seine Verbündeten haben könnte.
Benötigt:	Gruppentisch für Gruppenarbeitsphase, ggf. App „Wooclap“ samt Endgeräten und Internetzugang für finale Abstimmung

Erklärung zu den Symbolen

	Dieses Symbol markiert differenziertes Material. Wenn nicht anders ausgewiesen, befinden sich die Materialien auf mittlerem Niveau.
	leichtes Niveau
	mittleres Niveau
	schwieriges Niveau

What Is an Empire?

M 1

You may have heard terms like “imperialism”, “empire” or “imperialist”. But what do these terms actually mean? What is an empire? And who is an imperialist?

Tasks

1. Discuss in class: What is an empire?
2. Fill in the gaps in the text with the words in the box below.
3. What historical empires do you know? Research online.

Empires and Imperialism

An Empire is a certain type of _____. It consists of two parts: A _____ or “core” and the periphery¹, which consists mostly of _____. These areas are controlled by the centre. The process of gaining and ruling over colonies is also called _____ or, because this is so typical for empires, _____. An empire is thus a political unit where a centre rules over _____ which lie outside of its original _____. The periphery is often inhabited by foreign _____. Because most people do not want to be ruled by a foreign power, the _____ often uses _____ to suppress² these people's wish for freedom and _____. The people who live in the colonies are not treated _____ to the people who live in the centre. They usually do not have the same rights or any of the advantages that come with _____. The imperial power can rule its empire either in a direct or an indirect way. When there is direct rule, the imperial power usually sends _____ and _____ to control the colony. In case of indirect rule, the imperial power can force the local rulers (like mayors, kings or princes) to _____ with the centre. An example of direct rule was the Spanish conquest of _____. An example of indirect rule was the British rule over _____. An empire can be a single, connected territory like the Ottoman Empire or a group of loosely connected territories in different parts of the world, like the _____ Empire.

Missing words

citizenship – centre – cooperate – British – soldiers – violence – India – colonies – imperialism – equally – colonialism – state – Latin America – borders – territories – peoples – imperial power – independence – administrators³ – ideology

¹ **periphery:** Peripherie, abgelegene Gebiete

² **to suppress:** unterdrücken

³ **administrator:** Verwaltungsangestellter, Beamter

Ukraine – Russia’s Latest Victim of Imperial Aggression

M 5

Tasks

1. Look at the images below. Discuss: What do you recognize? Which feelings do you have regarding the images and the war itself? How does Russia’s war on Ukraine affect you?
2. Read the text on Ukrainian history as well as the excerpt from Putin’s essay. What are Putin’s two main arguments and what would you answer based on the information in the text?



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Chart: Turkey and its "Neo-Ottoman" Foreign Policy



Syria

- Turkey plays a role in the Syrian Civil War
- Since 2011, Turkey supports rebels who fight against the dictator Bashar al-Assad
- In 2016, Turkey began to send soldiers to Northern Syria to fight against the **Kurds**¹
- Turkey also established and finances a Turkish-controlled caretaker government² (**SIG**³) which controls parts of Northern Syria
- The SIG even named some of its military units after Ottoman sultans

The Balkans

- Balkan states like Bulgaria, Albania, Bosnia and Kosovo have large Muslim populations
- Turkey considers itself an Islamic nation and uses "**soft power**"⁴ in other these countries by financing mosques and preachers
- In Kosovo, Turkey also established airports, telecommunications, energy supplies etc



Caucasus

- Turkey is allied with Georgia and Azerbaijan
- A Turkish gas pipeline runs through Georgia and Azerbaijan to Turkey
- Turkey is an old opponent of Armenia since the **Armenian genocide**⁵ in 15/16.
- In 2020, Turkey supported Azerbaijan in its war against Armenia, especially with drones. Azerbaijan's victory boosted Turkey's power

Libya and Eastern Mediterranean

- In the Libya Civil War, Turkey supports the Libyan government against the rebels
- Turkey sends drones, fighters and money
- Turkey wants to be allied to Libya because it has huge gas fields in the Mediterranean
- Turkey's "blue homeland" ideology means the country wants to control the Black Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean



Karten erstellt mit [mindchart.net](https://www.mindchart.net/) SA 4.0

¹ The **Kurds** are a people in the Middle East. They have been enemies of Turkey for a long time. Many wars have been fought between the two groups.

² **caretaker government**: Übergangsregierung

³ **SIG** is short for "Syrian Interim government", the name of the caretaker government.

⁴ The term "**soft power**" is the opposite of "hard power" like economic strength or the military. Soft power means cultural influence to win the hearts and minds of other people.

⁵ **genocide**: Genozid, Völkermord. The Turkish **genocide of the Armenians** happened mostly during World War One. Until today, the Turkish government denies the fact that this genocide has happened.

The China of the Qing Dynasty – Imperial Country or Victim of Imperialism?

M 8

China is not only the country with the most inhabitants of the world, but also a nation with a long history. Its roots date back more than 4,000 years. Between 1644 and 1912, China was ruled by the Qing dynasty. During this phase, the country expanded massively, but was also itself the object of foreign imperial aggression.

Tasks

1. Read the text and take a look at the map.
2. Briefly summarize China's territorial evolution until 1759.
3. In what regard was China imperialist?
4. Why was China also a victim of imperialism?

The Development of China

The history of China begins with the Xia dynasty roughly 2,100 years B.C.E. The Xia dynasty was followed by many other dynasties until in 1368 the Ming dynasty came to power. During these roughly 3,500 years, China became a large country with hundreds of millions of inhabitants. China survived many crises, wars and divisions. Between 1368 and 1912, China experienced times of economic and cultural heyday¹. The Ming dynasty was also responsible for the construction of the famous Great Wall. In 1644, the last Chinese dynasty came to power, the Qing dynasty.

The Qing (or Manchu) dynasty and its emperors governed China until 1911. During this dynasty, China expanded to the North and West. In 1720, Chinese troops entered Tibet, in 1755 the region of Xinjiang. Tibet became a protectorate² of China but was not a part of China itself. In 1759, China held more territory than it ever had and than it would ever hold again. During this time, even Korea, Nepal and large parts of Burma were part of China.

China thus had been an imperial power for hundreds of years. Chinese emperors conquered foreign lands and suppressed their peoples. Chinese emperors and intellectuals called their country the "Middle Kingdom" – the centre of the world. Chinese leaders thought of other peoples (including Europeans) as "barbarians" who had no culture and history. This ideology is called Sinocentrism – the idea that China is the centre of the world. According to the idea of "Tianxia" ("everything under the heaven"), China and its emperors stood in the centre of humankind. Other peoples and their countries were organized around this centre. Many Asian states like Vietnam or Korea had to pay tributes³ to China. In return, their merchants⁴ were allowed to trade with China. Furthermore, Chinese imperialism also meant that Chinese people in conquered territories had to "become" Chinese and lose their own culture and language.

However, during the 19th century, China more and more changed from an imperial power to a victim of imperialism. European powers and Japan began to conquer territories in China's tributary states. The British wanted to trade opium⁵ with Chinese merchants to gain silver which they needed

¹ **heyday:** Blütezeit

² **protectorate:** A state which is formally independent but de facto controlled by another state. The protector helps to defend the protectorate but expects tributes or other help (like slave work) in return.

³ **tribute:** A payment to another country, usually to larger allies or protectors.

⁴ **merchant:** Kaufmann, Kauffrau

⁵ **opium:** a highly addictive drug that causes psychological and physical illnesses.

How to Conduct a Hearing	
Step 1 Opening	The moderator opens the hearing and introduces the expert groups. They also state and explain the main question of the hearing.
Step 2 Statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The three expert groups give their opinion / assessment of the situation. • Each group’s opening statement should be 3–5 minutes. • The experts should also try to use rhetorical devices such as facial expressions, tone and gestures to express their opinion. • The audience takes notes.
Step 3 Discussion	The audience asks their follow-up questions, the experts answer them. The scenarios in the boxes below can serve as inspiration
Step 4 Vote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will now vote on the proposed handling of each of the three countries separately. • The options include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Friendship (i. e., continue trade and going on like before) 2. Distancing (i. e., increasing military and having less trade) 3. Compromise between options 1 and 2 (must be discussed in detail). • For an anonymous vote, use the app Woodclap.

Possible Scenarios to Discuss		
Chinese attack on Taiwan	Public mass killings of Uyghurs by China	
Nuclear attack on Ukraine by Russia	British genocide of Kurds in Northern Syria	Russian invasion of Georgia, Moldova, Finland or Estonia

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