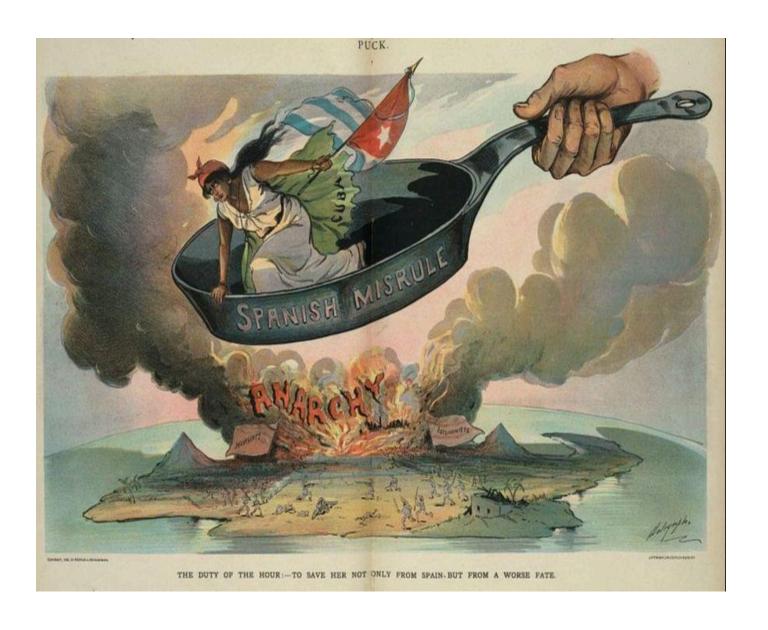
Understanding U.S. Imperialism Through Poetry

Directions: You will be given two poems that discuss themes related to American Imperialism. Read each poem carefully, paying attention to the language, imagery, and emotions conveyed. After reading each poem, answer the following questions in complete sentences (2-3).

Based on your readings and answers, explain what you understand about American Imperialism. Your final reflection questions at the end need a minimum of 5 sentences



Rudyard Kipling, The White Man's Burden, 1899

Take up the White Man's burden--Send forth the best ye breed--Go bind your sons to exile To serve your captives' need; To wait in heavy harness, On fluttered folk and wild--Your new-caught, sullen peoples, Half-devil and half-child. Take up the White Man's burden--In patience to abide, To veil the threat of terror And check the show of pride; By open speech and simple, An hundred times made plain To seek another's profit, And work another's gain. Take up the White Man's burden--The savage wars of peace--Fill full the mouth of Famine And bid the sickness cease: And when your goal is nearest The end for others sought, Watch sloth and heathen Folly Bring all your hopes to nought. Take up the White Man's burden--No tawdry rule of kings, But toil of serf and sweeper--The tale of common things. The ports ve shall not enter, The roads ye shall not tread, Go mark them with your living,

And mark them with your dead. Take up the White Man's burden--And reap his old reward: The blame of those ye better, The hate of those ye guard--The cry of hosts ye humour (Ah, slowly!) toward the light:--"Why brought he us from bondage, Our loved Egyptian night?" Take up the White Man's burden--Ye dare not stoop to less--Nor call too loud on Freedom To cloke your weariness; By all ye cry or whisper, By all ye leave or do, The silent, sullen peoples Shall weigh your gods and you. Take up the White Man's burden--Have done with childish days--The lightly proferred laurel, The easy, ungrudged praise. Comes now, to search your manhood Through all the thankless years Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom.

The judgment of your peers!

Guiding Questions According to Kipling, what is the "White Man's Burden?" Based on this poem, how did imperialists (people who supported annexation) think of the people in the countries they were taking over (i.e., Cuba, Philippines, etc.)? Kipling supported the U.S. annexation of the Philippines. What might someone who opposed annexation say about Kipling's argument in the "White Man's Burden?"

Pablo Neruda, "Banquet of the Tyrants"

There is a vile race of tenacious men Of themselves inflated, and made all, Everyone, from hair to foot, tooth and claw:

And there are others, like a flower, that exhale in the wind
In the love of man his perfume.
As in the forest there are turtledoves and beasts
And insectivorous plants and pure
Sensitive and carnation in the gardens.
Some feed on the soul of men:
The others give their soul to be nourished

And the gluttons perfume their teeth, Just like cold iron in the guts From the virgin who kills is heated.

Tyrants sit at a banquet
Where men are served; and those vile
That tyrants love, diligent
Brain and heart of men devour:
But when the bloody hand
Sink in the delicacy of the dead martyr
A light arises that terrifies them, flowers
Big as a sudden cross arise
And they flee, red muzzle, and terrified
To his black entrails the tyrants.

Those who love themselves: those who augusta

Reason to their greed and gluttony they put:

Those who do not display on the honorable forehead
That belt of light that the yoke melts
As the immense sun in embers breaks
The stars that rush to her bosom:
Those who do not carry human decorum
Decorated the healthy chest: the minors

And seconds of life, only
At your mean enjoyment and I grow
attentive
And not to the universal concert.

Dances, meals, music, harems, Never the approval of an honest man. And if perhaps without blood it can be done

On the highest fork of the road
In the middle of the villain's forehead,
To the great humanity traitors.
Like a relentless worker
That a bronze coffin nails,
those who with you
They bite the nation apart

Let it be... nail 'em, nail 'em

Guiding Questions

Analyze the contrasting imagery presented in the text. Who are the "vile race of tenacious men"

Discuss the significance of the banquet mentioned in the second stanza. How does it
reflect the relationship between the U.S. Imperialism and foreign countries?
Examine the last stanza. What is being disapproved by the tyrants, and how do the people who are oppressed react?

Final Reflections Questions
How do the poets convey the impact of American Imperialism on individuals or nations?

What insights do you gain from the poems about the consequences of imperial actions?
