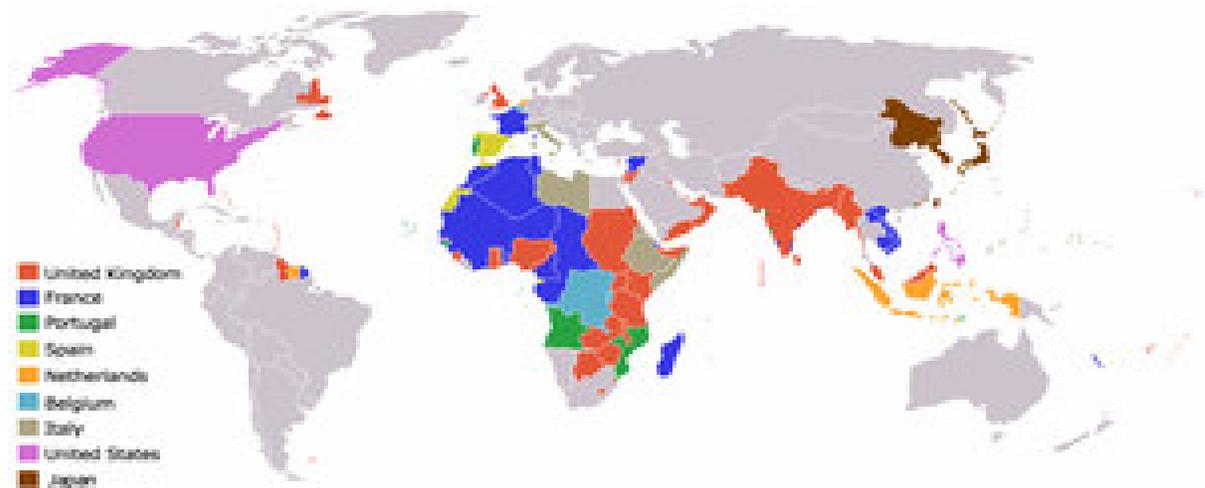


# Colonialism



World map of colonialism at the end of the Second World War in 1945.

**Colonialism** is the extension of a nation's sovereignty over territory beyond its borders by the establishment of either settler colonies or administrative dependencies in which indigenous populations are directly ruled or displaced. Colonizers generally dominate the resources, labor, and markets of the colonial territory and may also impose socio-cultural, religious and linguistic structures on the conquered population. The term also refers to a set of beliefs used to legitimize or promote this system, especially the belief that the mores(customs) of the colonizer are superior to those of the colonized. Though colonialism is often used interchangeably with imperialism, the latter is broader as it covers control exercised informally (via influence) as well as formally.

## Types of colonialism

**Settler colonies**, such as the the original thirteen states of the United States of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Argentina arose from the emigration of peoples from a metropole, or mother country, and involved displacement of the indigenous peoples to their permanent detriment. Settler colonies may be contrasted with **dependencies**, where the colonizers did not arrive as part of a mass emigration, but rather as administrators over existing sizeable native populations, exercising control by use or threat of force. Examples in this category include the British Raj, Egypt, the Dutch East Indies and the Japanese colonial empire. In some cases large-scale colonial settlement was attempted in substantially pre-populated areas and the result was either an ethnically mixed population (such as the mestizos of the Americas), or racially divided, such as in French Algeria or Southern Rhodesia. A fourth category may be considered for **plantation** colonies such as Barbados, Saint-Domingue and Jamaica where the white colonizers imported black slaves who rapidly began to outnumber their owners, leading to minority rule, similar to a dependency. **Trading posts**, such as Macau, Malacca, Deshima and Singapore constitute a fifth category, where the primary purpose of the colony was to engage in trade rather than as a staging post for further colonization of the hinterland.

## Impact and evaluation of colonialism

Given that colonialism involves the rule or taking of territory of one people by another and without their consent, it is a highly emotive subject. Debate about the perceived positive and negative aspects of colonialism has occurred for centuries, amongst both colonizer and colonized, and continues to the present day.

Advocates of colonialism argue that colonial rule benefits the colonized by developing the economic and political infrastructure necessary for modernization and democracy. They point to such former colonies as the United States of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Singapore as examples of post-colonial success. These nations do not, however, represent the normal course of colonialism in that they are either *settler societies*, or *tradeport cities*.

Dependency theorists such as Andre Gunder Frank argue that colonialism leads to the net transfer of wealth from the colonized to the colonizer, and inhibits successful economic development. Critics such as Frantz Fanon and Aime Cesaire argue that colonialism does political, psychological, and moral damage to the colonized as well. Indian writer and political activist Arundhati Roy likened debating the pros and cons of colonialism to "debating the pros and cons of rape".

Critics of the alleged abuses of economic and political advantages accruing to developed nations via globalised capitalism have referred to them as **neocolonialism**, and see them as a continuation of the domination and exploitation of ex-colonial countries, merely utilizing.