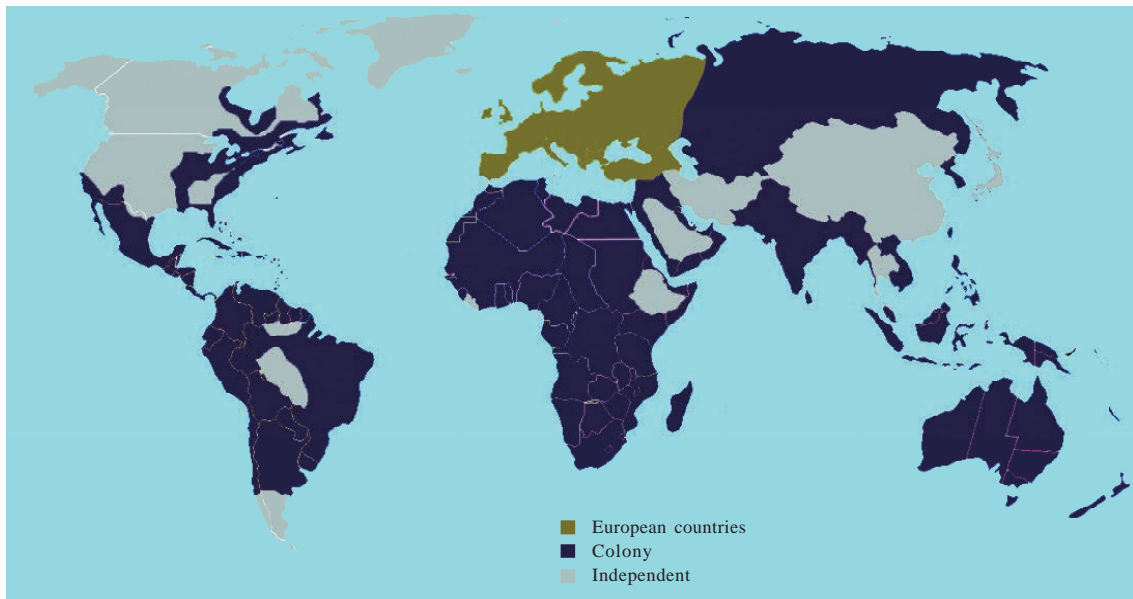


10

Colonialism

August 15, 1947 is a historic day for us. This was the day India gained freedom from British rule. On July 4, 1776, America gained independence from Britain. So every year, the Americans celebrate July 4 as their Independence Day. Many countries in the world celebrate their independence day to mark the winning of freedom from colonialism. Look at the map below. It shows that except for Europe, most of the countries in the other continents of the world were colonised by some other country in the past 200 years.

Map 10.1 The countries of the world over which the Europeans established their control between 1750-1914



The map shows that European countries established their rule in many countries of Asia, Africa and America.

How did the European countries conquer countries located thousands of kilometres away? Why did they want to establish their rule over these countries? What were the other countries in the world doing when the Europeans were conquering these countries? What impact did European rule have on the colonies? How did the colonies gain their freedom?

If we wish to answer these questions, we must first understand two concepts in the social sciences – imperialism and colonialism. When a country establishes its control over another country and exploits that country's resources for its own benefit, it is called an imperialist nation. The country it controls is called a colony. For example, India was ruled by Britain. So Britain was an imperialist country and India was a colony.

An imperialist nation reorganises the economy of the colony and restructures its society to freely exploit it. This exploitation impoverishes the colony. As a result, the colony does not have enough capital to invest in its own economic development. Hence its growth and progress are stunted. This is not all. The imperialist nation tries to change the way the people in the colony think so that they accept their colonial situation without protest. But when the colony realises the problems created by the exploitation of its resources, it struggles to throw off the colonial yoke and become independent.

World history in the last 300 years is all about how the developed countries of Europe established their colonies in Asia, Africa, Australia and America and how these colonies fought for their freedom. In this chapter, we shall study the process of colonisation and its impact on a global scale. We will first learn how Europe established its dominion over South America. Then we will compare the European conquest of South America with the process of colonisation in south and south-east Asia, China and India.

Locate the countries listed below in the world map and write the names of the continents they are situated in. Which of these countries do you think were imperialist nations and which were colonies? Write your answer in the third column.

Country	Continent	Imperialist/Colony
India		
China		
Argentina		
Portugal		
Brazil		
Indonesia		
France		
England (Britain)		
Japan		
South Africa		
Mexico		
Nigeria		
Germany		
Laos		
Vietnam		
Chile		

Locate the Atlantic Ocean, Pacific Ocean, Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Sea on the map.

10.1 Colonialism and Nationalism in South America

The Discovery of the 'New World'

The Spanish navigator Christopher Columbus sailed with three ships across the Atlantic Ocean in 1492 to find a sea route to India. He reached some islands off the coast of America. He thought he

had reached India. He named the islands the Indies and called its inhabitants Indians. Today, these islands are called the West Indies. Later, it was discovered that the new continent was not India but even today the native people of America are called Indians.

10.1.1 The Conquest of South America

Within a few years of Columbus' voyage, European sailors explored the entire eastern coast of the new continent that was named America. The Spanish '*conquistadors*' – professional soldiers and explorers – wanted to explore and conquer the 'new world'. They sought fame and fortune. They raised their armies and took permission from the Spanish king to embark on expeditions to conquer the new world. They wanted to claim large territories in America in the name of the Spanish crown so that they could farm the land and raise cattle. In those days, Europe's population was rising rapidly and people did not have land for farming. So what better option did they have than to settle in a new continent and get as much land as they wished?

America held an additional attraction. Gold and silver were scarce in Europe in those days and the rumour spread that the new world had vast treasures of gold and many gold mines. The conquistadors and their armies set out for America in the hope of capturing untold booty.

There was one more compelling reason for these explorers to venture into unknown lands besides the lure of land and gold. They wanted to spread the Christian faith among the uncivilised natives. The Roman Catholic Church despatched its missionary priests to accompany the conquistadors and convert the local people.

What were the reasons for English traders' coming to India? Compare their reasons to the reasons why the Spanish conquistadors went to America.

In those days, there were two mighty empires in America. The first was the Inca Empire, which stretched from Peru to Chile in the Andes mountain range of South America. The second was the Aztec Empire in Mexico in Central America. As these civilisations were cut off from the rest of the world, their technological development was quite different. They did not use iron nor did they have vehicles with wheels or horses or cattle or cannons and guns. They did not plough their fields but used hoes for tilling, growing different kinds of food-grain such as maize and vegetables like chilli, tomato, pumpkin, potato, etc. They lived in small villages in which most people were related to one another. They had to do corvee labour (forced labour) for the king and the elite class whenever the need arose. The priests played an important role in Inca society. They worshipped the sun god and offered animal and human sacrifices.

A conquistador named Cortes ravaged and destroyed the Aztec Empire with his Spanish army in 1519. The Aztec king lived in an impregnable fort in Mexico. He welcomed Cortes and his soldiers into the fort, thinking they were gods who had come in peace. (The Aztecs believed that their gods would come from the east from across the seas.) But Cortes imprisoned the king in his own palace and his soldiers went on a rampage of plunder and bloodshed.

The Aztec warriors were easily overpowered by the Spaniards. Their spears and arrows were no match for Spanish horses, guns and cannons. Also, most of the Aztecs were afflicted by European diseases like smallpox



Figure 10.1 Hernando Cortes

that were unknown in the country. So they couldn't fight. Cortes declared the Aztec Empire as a Spanish province. The Aztec people were forcibly converted to Christianity and made to do forced labour.

A similar story was repeated in the Inca Empire, with the Spanish conquistador Pizarro conquering the Inca capital in 1533. The Spanish king declared both empires to be provinces of Spain and appointed his trusted governors to rule them.

Like Columbus, many Portuguese navigators also embarked on expeditions, reaching the coast of Brazil. But Brazil was inhabited by hunting-gathering tribes and did not have any local kings or kingdoms. The Portuguese claimed these territories in the name of their king. A wave of Portuguese people then began settling in the new colony to farm the land.

How did a handful of Spaniards overcome such large empires so swiftly and easily? What were the reasons for their success? Why do you think England could not defeat the Mughal emperors so easily in India?

10.1.2 Conquest, Colonisation and the Slave Trade

Spain conquered more land and acquired more natural resources than were available in the whole of Spain itself. The forests in the colonies were cleared and people began cultivating the land. They also opened mines to exploit the mineral resources of their new lands, especially gold and silver. The Spanish rulers encouraged their subjects and people from other European countries to settle in the new colonies.

Many European settlements soon came up along the eastern coast of America. Most of the European settlers were small peasants or landless labourers who left their homes in search of a better life. It required a lot of hard work to clear the forests and make the land suitable for farming. The settlers needed more labour. They forced the native people to work on their farms. Every village had to send batches of young people to work on the farms and mines for many months at a stretch.

Most of these native people could not survive the European invasion. Thousands died because of the wars, epidemics and forced labour. They had never been exposed to European and Asian diseases so they had no immunity to these diseases. The



Map 10.2 Latin America (Spanish/Portuguese)

How did Latin America get its name?

South America was mostly colonised by Spain, Portugal and France while North America was mostly colonised by England. Latin is the root language of Spanish, Portuguese and French, hence they are called Latin languages. Since Latin languages were the major cultural influence in South America, the continent was called Latin America. The English language and its culture were the dominant influences in North America.



Figure 10.2 Mining for silver – an illustration from 1596

smallpox epidemics almost exterminated the local population. Mexico's indigenous population was around 250 lakh in 1519. It shrunk to 26 lakh by 1592. Similarly, Peru's indigenous population fell from 90 lakh in 1532 to 13 lakh in 1568. That means out of every 100 people living in the villages, only 10-15 survived.

As a result, the colonies faced a shortage of human labour to clear the forests for farming and to open new mines. This shortage was met by bringing slaves from Africa. The slave trade across the Atlantic Ocean grew as the Europeans colonised new regions of the continent. From 1451 until 1870, 100 lakh slaves were brought to America from the African continent. Of this

total, Spanish America accounted for 16 lakh, Brazil for 36 lakh, the United States of America and the British colonies for 20 lakh, and the French Caribbean region for 16 lakh.

In this way, the American continent became home to a mixed population that included the native Indians, African slaves and European settlers. Many of the Europeans tried to maintain their racial distinctness, but over time cultures and races mingled in South America. The native people mostly accepted the Catholic faith but many of them retained their traditional customs and rituals.

The Spanish monarch divided the territory under his control into large '*haciendas*' or estates on which the native people had to forced labour. He distributed these haciendas as rewards to his victorious generals and also to the elite class for their pleasure and enjoyment. The hacienda owners got African slaves, native tribals and immigrant small peasants and shepherds from Spain to farm the land. Agriculture and cattle rearing grew rapidly as a result of the hard work of the slaves and tribals. The region soon began exporting sugar and meat to Europe.

The mining industry also developed rapidly. Large silver mines were opened and copper and tin were also mined. Big cities sprang up in the vicinity of these mines.

10.1.3 The Structure of Government and Society

The Spanish Empire was controlled by a Council in Spain that advised the Spanish monarch. The Council sent high-ranking officers belonging to the elite class to administer the American colonies. They came on short tenures, so their sole interest was to make as much money as they could while they were posted in the colonies. They did not pay much attention to the problems of the Spanish, African and tribal people living there. So the people were unhappy with these officials.

The people of Spanish descent, most of them born in Latin America, formed the largest component of the colonial society. This section included landowners and other social groups. They were called Creoles. They mostly followed occupations such as farming, cattle rearing, trade, artisanal crafts, industry, etc. They were not given high political positions in the colonial administration.

Below them in the social ranking were the Mestizos. They were the mixed offspring of Europeans and the native tribals. Below them in the ranking were the Mulattos, who were the mixed offspring of the Europeans and African slaves. They were mostly labourers.

The native tribes came next in the social hierarchy. They had no position in the administration, had their own lands but also had to do forced labour on the farms of big landowners and in mines and pay heavy taxes to the government.

At the bottom of the social hierarchy were the African slaves. They had to do all kinds of hard physical labour and had no rights. Their owners treated them like chattel.

The Creoles were the most educated and wealthy among the colonial people and provided leadership to the colonial society.

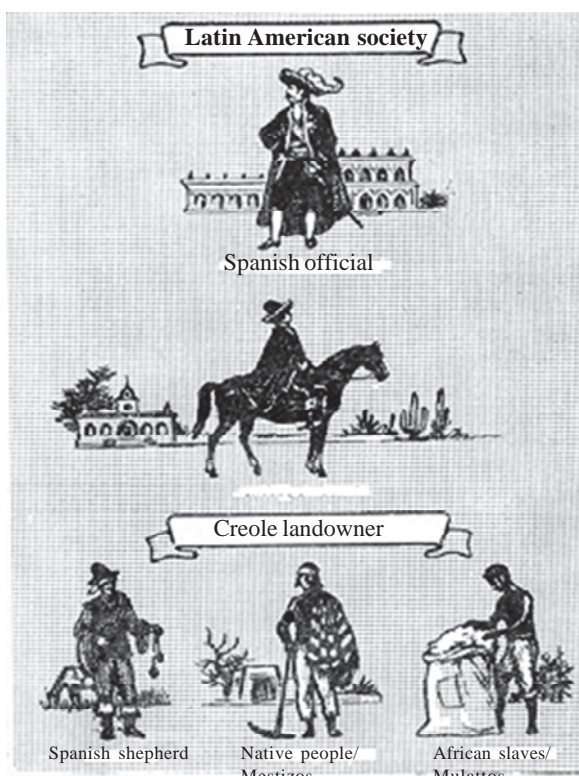


Figure 10.3 Latin American society

What complaints do you think the Creoles may have had with the colonial administration?

Why were the African slaves and the native people given no place in the colonial administration? Can you think of a reason?

10.1.4 The Exploitation of the American Colonies by Spain

We learnt that the Council of Spain ruled the Spanish colonies in Latin America. Its main objective was to systematically exploit the natural resources to benefit Spain's economy.

The peasants and landowners in America grew commercial crops like sugarcane. The Council made them sell their produce only to authorised Spanish merchants at a fixed rate that was kept low. So they earned only small profits. They never had enough capital to invest in improving their farms. As a result, agriculture in the region could not be modernised.

The Spanish monarch owned the output of the American mines – gold, silver and minerals. They were exported to Spain, the minerals being used in Spanish factories. Hence, no industries were allowed to develop in the colonies. All their needs for manufactured goods were met from Spain.

Imagine you are a native tribal in colonial America. Imagine you are a Spanish rancher who rears animals to sell meat in the market. Imagine you are an African slave who works on the farm of a Spanish landowner. What complaints would you have against the Spanish administration in each of these three roles?

10.1.5 The Revolt Against Spanish Colonialism

There were many revolts and struggles against Spanish rule, particularly by the native tribes and African slaves, but they were all unsuccessful. Every section of colonial society was unhappy with the Spanish administration. The people of European descent were familiar with democratic and nationalist

ideas. The countries of Latin America were also influenced by the American Revolution in 1776 and the French Revolution in 1789. So they stepped up their efforts to gain freedom.

Haiti: The first successful insurrection in Latin America was in Haiti Island, a French colony, in 1791. Inspired by the French Revolution, about 100,000 African slaves rose in revolt. A former slave, Toussaint Louverture, led the successful rebel army. All the slaves were freed, thus eliminating the practice of slavery. But Napoleon's military commanders arrested and imprisoned Louverture by deceit, deporting him to France, where he later died. The Haitians, however, continued their revolt, declaring independence in 1804. Independent Haiti was the world's first successful slave insurrection.



Figure 10.4 Toussaint Louverture

Latin America's War of Independence: After the Haitian insurrection, revolts began brewing in Spanish Latin America in 1811 under the leadership of the Creoles. As you know, the Creoles were the least exploited social group in Latin America. Many of them were educated in European universities and were familiar with modern democratic ideas. The most prominent among the Creole revolutionaries were Simon Bolivar and José Martin.

Bolivar assembled an army of Creoles, African slaves and small peasants to raise the banner of revolt against Spain in 1811. He faced many defeats but continued to wage war against Spanish rule. Eventually, in 1819, he gained independence for what is Colombia today. Two years later in 1821, he gained independence for present-day Venezuela. He then went south to Ecuador, where he joined forces with the other great Latin American revolutionary José Martin.

Martin led the freedom struggle in the southern part of Latin America – what is called Argentina today. He gained independence for both Argentina and Chile. In 1824, the combined forces of Bolivar and Martin threw out the Spanish army from Peru. At the same time, the people of Brazil declared their independence from Portugal. In this way, the whole of Latin America was freed from Spanish rule.

Bolivar is known as the revolutionary 'liberator' of all of South America. Wherever he achieved success, he first abolished slavery and forced labour, so the African slaves and Indian tribes joined him in his revolutionary campaign. He vowed to divide the haciendas into small holdings and distribute them among the small peasants but he could not fulfil his promise in the face of opposition from Creole landowners.

Which leader of India's freedom struggle would you compare with Simon Bolivar?

What were the similarities and differences between the freedom struggles in Haiti and South America?

10.2 Colonialism in Asia

European traders came to Asia to buy cotton, silks, spices, etc. The merchants from Western Europe sought a sea route to India. Eventually, the Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama sailed around the tip of the African continent to reach India in 1498. This opened the way to reach India and China by sea. The European navigators who sailed to America did not have to face any tough military resistance. But in Asia, there were many kingdoms that were larger than any European kingdom of the time and

also more formidable. The European powers could not hope to defeat these powerful kings in a direct military confrontation.

The Portuguese established their naval and trade outposts in many Indian Ocean ports – such as Goa in India, Hormuz in West Asia and Malacca in South-east Asia. They used armed force to prey on trade ships plying across the Indian Ocean, forcing them to pay a protection tax. They were thus able to establish a vast sea empire. Their monopoly was broken only after merchants from Britain, Holland and France established their own trade and naval outposts in the Indian Ocean and challenged Portugal's supremacy.



Figure 10.5 Simon Bolívar crossing the mighty Andes with his army

10.2.1 The Colonisation of Indonesia by Holland

The trading companies from European nations like France, England and Holland joined the Portuguese in the highly profitable trade with countries of South-east Asia and the Far East. The Dutch succeeded in breaching the supremacy of the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean region, successfully establishing their colonies in South-east Asia. (The people living in Holland, also called the Netherlands, were known as the Dutch because they spoke the Dutch language.)

The Dutch established the Dutch East India Company in 1602 to trade with Asia. The company had to wage many wars against the Portuguese to break their trade control. The Portuguese had their base in Malacca at the time. The Dutch eventually established their control over parts of the island of Java in Indonesia. Their company tried to take over the entire spice trade in Indonesia so that it could control prices in Europe and earn huge profits.

The Dutch had no intention of establishing their rule in Indonesia. Java was ruled by the Mataram dynasty in the 17th century. The sultan tried to oust the Dutch from their base but did not succeed. The island was, thus, under dual control – some parts under the control of the Dutch and the rest under the control of the sultan. The sultan granted many concessions to the Dutch East India Company, including monopoly rights to the spice trade.

The company put pressure on the local people to clear the forests and establish plantations to grow sugarcane and spices. It systematically developed the spice plantations to establish its monopoly on the spice trade by 1700. This gave the company total control of not just the trade but the cultivation of spices as well.

In 1800, the Dutch monarch took over the governance of Indonesia from the Dutch East India Company. By 1830, Dutch rule was established over the entire island of Java. The peasants were compelled to grow coffee, rubber and spices and sell the produce to the Dutch at low rates. The Dutch, in turn, sold the produce in the international markets, earning huge profits. Even the small peasants were forced to

grow these crops in place of cereals. As a result, Java faced a famine situation as food-grain became scarce. The people rose in revolt but their protests were put down with force. This situation continued until 1870.

The Plantation Economy

The Dutch invested a lot of capital in developing the plantations after 1870. They cleared thousands of acres of forests and grew mono-crops – rubber, coffee, tea, pepper and sugarcane – over vast tracts.

Factories were set up on the

plantations to process the produce. Hundreds of wage labourers worked day and night on these plantations, living there with their families.

Many plantations were established on other Indonesian islands. The country soon became the main exporter of cocoa, tea, coffee, rubber etc. The plantation owners were mostly Europeans but the workers were either local people or were brought from China and India. Thus, a heterogeneous society developed in Indonesia.



Figure 10.6 A tea plantation in Java

You learnt about plantations in class VI. Try to recall what you learnt.

Are there any plantations like the Java plantations in your state?

Which crops are grown in plantations in India today and in which states? Find out about them.

The European nations could not establish their rule in Asia in the 15th and 16th century. What do you think was the reason?

What did the Portuguese and Dutch do to establish their monopoly on the spice trade?

The Portuguese established a sea empire. What do you think this means? How would it have affected the Asian traders?

What impact did the Dutch agricultural policy have on the peasants of Indonesia between 1830 and 1890?

The equatorial forests of Indonesia were cleared on a large scale to develop plantations. What impact would this process have had on the lives of the local people?

10.2.2 Colonialism in China

China in the 19th century

In the 17th century, China was the biggest country in the world in terms of size and population. The Manchu (Qing) dynasty ruled the country during this time. The Chinese empire extended over the entire country under their regime and included Mongolia, Tibet and other regions as well. Imperial

China's suzerainty also extended to Korea, Vietnam and other countries of East Asia. These vassal (tributary) states paid a tribute to the Chinese emperor.

The Manchu empire was run by a well-established bureaucracy. Officials had to pass a qualifying examination that was open to all. However, since preparing for the examination was both difficult and expensive, only the wealthy class managed to appear for it. China was basically a peasant society. Most of the people depended on farming for their livelihood. The main source of income for the state was the tax paid by the peasants. A vast army of officials was deployed to collect the land rents.

Apart from agriculture, the manufacturing and mining were also well developed in the country. There were extensive tin, salt, silver and iron mines. In addition, mineral ores were available in sufficient quantities for indigenous use. China was always famous for its porcelain ware and silks, with merchants coming from all over the world to purchase these goods. Tea was consumed as a medicinal herb and became very popular in Europe during the 18th century. European merchants also started trading in tea.

It can be said that in those days China had everything to cater to its needs. In a way, it was a self-sufficient economy.

The Chinese rulers wanted to shield the country from all foreign influences. That's why they exercised strict control over foreign trade. The country had three authorised ports for foreign trade – Canton, Macau and Ningbo. European merchants were allowed to disembark only in these ports. Local trading guilds called Co Hong had a monopoly on trade with foreigners. They would despatch foreign goods to all corners of China from these ports and also supply all the goods the foreign traders wanted. These ports also had European trade settlements.

The English Trade and the Opium Wars

European traders were keen to establish trade ties with China. The first to achieve some success was the Dutch company. When the English traders began trading with China, they sought trade concessions but they achieved no success until 1830.

The biggest problem the European companies faced in trading with China was that they had no goods they could sell in the country. This forced the traders to carry silver and gold to China to pay for the goods they bought. Hence, the trade balance was always in China's favour. During this time, the English established their rule in India. They began buying opium in India and selling it in China, using the money they received to buy tea, silks and other goods from China. In this way, they no longer had to



Figure 10.7 A Chinese painting of the Opium War

use gold and silver as bullion. They tried to sell as much opium as they could in China to earn the maximum profits.

The opium trade was illegal and was mostly carried out by smugglers. The corrupt officials and local traders at Canton port would buy the opium and reach it to other parts of China. The supply of opium to the interior regions of China soon led to large numbers of Chinese becoming opium addicts.

When the Chinese government came to know of what was happening, it cancelled the trading rights of the English merchants and passed an order banning them from Canton port. This led to a war between England and China, which was known as the First Opium War. The war raged between 1839-42, ending in China's defeat. The emperor was forced to sign a humiliating treaty in 1842 called the Treaty of Nanking.

The treaty gave the English traders the right to trade across the whole of China without hindrance. The English also got the right to establish their trade settlements on Chinese soil where only English law applied. So the settlements were outside the purview of Chinese law. In addition, China had to pay a considerable sum to Britain as compensation. One more clause included in the treaty stated that if any European company received any trade concession from China, the English traders would automatically qualify for the same concession.

Growing Foreign Influence in China

The defeat in the Opium War exposed the weaknesses of the Chinese military to the world. Other European powers also tried to gain a foothold in China. In 1844, China signed treaties similar to the Nanking treaty with France and America, which gave both many trade concessions. Similar unequal treaties were signed with other European countries like Germany, Russia, etc. As a result, different countries established their spheres of influence along the Chinese coast.

Among them was Japan, a small country situated to the east, which attacked and defeated China in 1895. Japan, too, forced China to enter into a treaty similar to those signed with the European countries. In this way, a large part of China came under the influence of the European and Asian imperialists.

Open door policy

The United States of America had been trading with China for many years. It was worried that if the European countries divided China into their spheres of influence, American trade would be affected. So it opposed this division and announced an open door policy as an alternative. Under the open door policy, all countries would be free to trade with China and no country could establish its defined sphere of influence. After some initial bickering, all the countries accepted this new treaty.



Figure 10.8 A cartoon depicting the division of China by the Europeans and the Japanese

But why was all this happening? By 1850, France, Germany and America had industrialised and wanted to capture every potential new market to sell their goods. We had read earlier that China had the largest population in the world at the time. A huge population meant a huge market. That's why all the industrialised countries of the world wanted to bring China within their sphere of influence.

Another important reason was that the industrialised countries had accumulated large amounts of capital. They were looking for new ways to invest this capital. The European countries wanted to invest their money in laying new railway lines and opening new mines in their colonies.

Why do you think the industrialised countries wanted to invest in laying new railway lines and opening new mines in their colonies? Why didn't they want to establish new factories?

If they had invested capital in China in this way, how would it have affected the Chinese economy and society?

The Opposition to Foreign Control

We saw how the European countries got what they wanted without directly capturing Chinese territory. Chinese rule was still in the hands of the Manchu emperor. But his authority did not extend over large territories that were the spheres of influence of the foreign traders. Also, he had to pay large sums in compensation. As a result, the tax burden on the people increased.

The people were feeling a sense of hopelessness and despair and were looking for change following the humiliating treaties China was forced to sign. Many of them turned against the emperor because he had failed to control the foreign powers. As a result, there were many uprisings between 1850 and 1900. The Chinese government took the help of foreign powers to suppress the people.

One group of Chinese officials tried to take China on the path of modernisation. They felt the European powers were successful because of their superior armies and weapons. They tried to establish modern armament factories in China. But their efforts were not very successful.



Figure 10.9 Boxer warriors captured by the international force

The poor peasants and workers formed a secret organisation called the 'Society of the Righteous and Harmonious Fists' to oppose the special rights granted to the foreign powers. This society, which was popularly called the 'Boxer' society, believed that people could become invincible and even withstand bullets in battle if they did some special physical exercises. The Boxers surrounded the European district in Peking (now called Beijing) in 1900. Shouting slogans like 'Hang the foreign devils', they surrounded the capital city for several months. In August 1900, an international force launched an attack on Peking to suppress the uprising. The soldiers indulged in rampant looting, killing people indiscriminately and mercilessly, with the Chinese ruler looking on as a mute spectator.

The Boxer rebellion may have failed, but it gave birth to a strong nationalist streak in the Chinese people. As a result, the rule of the Manchu dynasty came to an end in 1911 and China was declared a republic. However, China eventually got its freedom in 1949 after a hard-fought revolution.

Why was China not interested in trading with any other country?

The European nations colonised other regions of the world, establishing their direct control over them. But in China they did not do this. Instead, they tried to establish their influence in different ways. Why do you think their approach differed in the case of China?

What do you understand by an 'open door' policy? Why did America favour an open door policy with China?

10.3 The Colonisation of Africa

We had earlier read about America bringing African slaves to work in the plantations. The colonisation of Africa by the European nations began towards the middle of the 19th century. In 1878, only 10% of the entire African continent was controlled by the Europeans. But, 36 years later in 1914, almost the entire continent was colonised by different European nations.

How do you think the European nations gained control over Africa in such a short period? Why did they want to establish their colonies there? How were the people living in Africa affected by this rapid invasion?

10.3.1 The Slave Trade

Africa was mostly inhabited by various tribes in the middle of the 19th century. Their main sources of livelihood were animal herding, farming, collecting forest produce and hunting. The African continent was already well-known during the Middle Ages as the main source of slaves in Europe, West Asia and India. The tribes sold the prisoners they captured during their incessant inter-tribal battles as slaves to merchants.

After 1500, the slave trade from Africa expanded rapidly as the demand for slave labour on the plantations of North and South America increased. Many European nations entered this lucrative human



Map 10.3 Africa in 1913. With the exception of Ethiopia, the rest of the African continent was under the control of European nations. The largest expanse of territory was under the British

trade and earned enormous profits, supplying lakhs of Africans. This trade continued for more than 300 years, gradually coming to an end between 1800 and 1900. Ironically, the European nations, the main slave traders, now began saying they needed to rule Africa to put an end to the slave trade. That started the ‘Scramble for Africa’.

10.3.2 The Industrial Revolution, Imperialist Competition and Africa

The first nations to industrialise, such as Britain, captured the raw material sources for their factories across the world, especially in Asia. They also captured markets for their industrial products. Germany, France and Italy began industrialising 100 years later. By that time, Africa was the only continent left for these nations to gain control over raw materials and markets.

Racist Ideologies

Colonisation was seen as a symbol of national strength so the European nations felt a sense of national pride in expanding their colonies. But certain other ideas were gaining popularity across Europe at this juncture that were making them see colonisation as a national duty. One such belief that was gaining credence was that the world is divided into races and the European race is superior to all the other races. This ideology that one race is superior to the other is called racism. Racists believe that the superior race has a natural right to rule over and exploit the inferior race.

The Europeans had settled in the southern regions of the continent, such as South Africa, Zimbabwe, etc. Many people from India had also settled there. They all believed they were superior to the black tribal people who were the natives of Africa, so they demanded and got some special privileges. They also tried to prevent intermingling of races and therefore adopted a policy of racial segregation. This institutionalised racial segregation on the basis of ethnicity and skin colour is called ‘apartheid’. It was only as recently as 1994 that this policy came to an end.

Another concept that gained popularity during the colonial period was the ‘white man’s burden’. This concept was based on the perception that the people of other continents were uncivilised and backward and it was the ethical responsibility of the European people to civilize them. According to this worldview, it was the duty of the European nations to show the other countries in the world the true path of knowledge and religion. Inspired by this mission, many people went to Africa to propagate the Christian religion or modern science and rationality.

France and other European nations also sought to develop a class of African people who spoke European languages, and adopted European culture, religion and ideologies. They established many universities and educational institutions with this objective in mind. The idea was that this class would help them to administer their colonies.



Figure 10.10 How is racism reflected in this photograph?

The Berlin Conference and the Division of Africa (1884-85)

After 1850, the newly industrialised nations of Europe aggressively pursued a policy of establishing their control in Africa. In a very short time, many of them succeeded in capturing control in different parts of the continent. But the fear now was that they would begin fighting among themselves. To eliminate the possibility of war, they called a conference to mutually divide the continent among themselves. Fourteen European nations attended the conference that was held in the German capital of Berlin. There was not a single representative of the African people.

The conference decided that any European nation that wanted to colonise any region in Africa must first inform the other nations before taking such a step. In this way, within a span of 30 years, the entire African continent was occupied by one European nation or the other. Each nation sought to exploit its colony to the utmost limit.

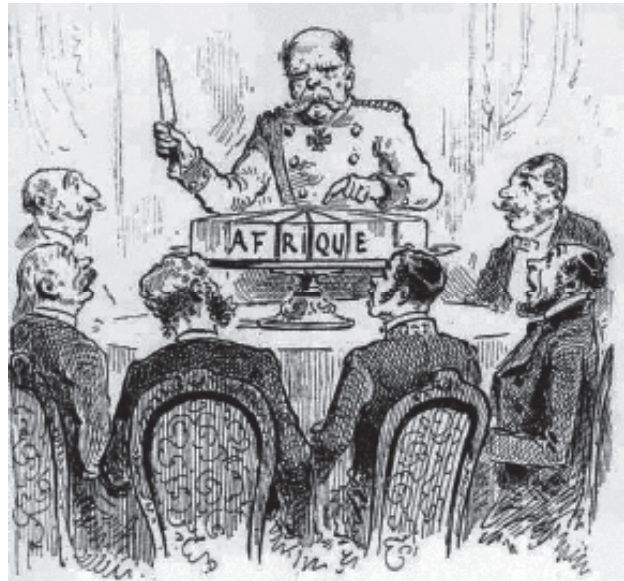


Figure 10.11 A cartoon of the division of Africa under the chairmanship of German chancellor Bismarck

Why were the European nations so keen to capture African territories?

Why was it so easy for them to establish their control over Africa?

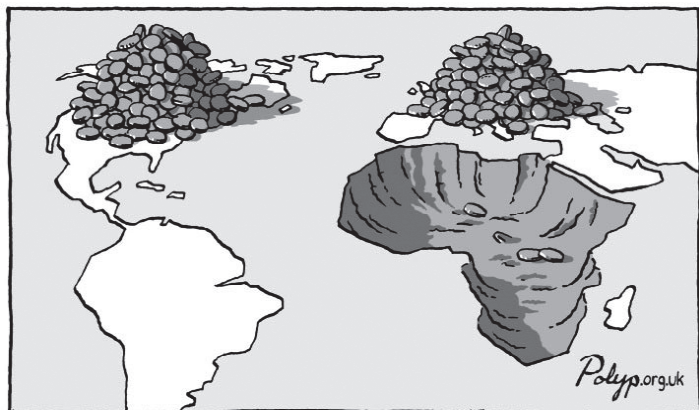
Make a comparative analysis of Figure 10.8 and Figure 10.11.

10.3.3 Colonialism and its Impact

Once the European nations gained control of Africa, they began to shape the continent according to their



Figure 10.12 In a gold mine



Map 10.4 What is being said in this map?

individual interests. These changes had a transforming impact on the life of the African people.

Colonialism and the Pastoral Societies: Before colonial rule, the Masai tribe lived a pastoral life, rearing cattle in the vast savannah grasslands. During the process of colonisation, Britain

and Germany demarcated an international boundary to divide the Masai territory into two regions. The two nations began encouraging farming in the savannah. As a result, the Masai were barred from grazing their cattle in around 60% of their traditional pastoral land. They were slowly pushed into the shrub-lands where the grass was sparse and the rainfall was scanty. Once even more prosperous than the farmers, the pastoral Masai were now reduced to penury by their changed circumstances. Pastoral societies in other parts of Africa were also facing such adverse changes.

The Mineral Revolution and Africa: The first diamond deposit was mined in what is present-day South Africa in 1867 and the first gold lode was discovered in 1886. Following the discovery, thousands of European prospectors flocked to the region to settle down and try their luck. Soon after diamonds were discovered, the British government confiscated the land of the native tribes living in the region as well as the land of the original Boer settlers. The Boers were the Dutch farmers who had settled in the region in the 17th century.

Many workers were needed to mine diamonds. Until then, the native Africans were mostly pastoralists or farmers and had not done wage labour for a living. The colonial administration clamped a hut tax on them to force them to work as miners. It took an adult at least three months to earn enough money to pay the tax. As a result, a large percentage of the local population was forced to leave their farms and pastures to work in the mines.

The miners began living near the gold and diamond mines. Many Europeans who were doing administrative and sales work also started living in these settlements, which grew into towns. One of the towns near the gold mines was Johannesburg, which developed into South Africa's largest city. The cities had segregated settlements for the Europeans and Africans. They were governed by different rules. This segregation contributed to the discriminatory apartheid policies of the state.



Figure 10.13 Children and women with their hands cut off in the Congo

Rubber cultivation in the Congo and the genocide of local communities

King Leopold II of Belgium was keen to establish his own dominion in Africa. Between 1879-82, he deceived many tribal chiefs in the Congo to sign treaties that gave him control over 23 lakh square kilometres of land. This land area was around 80 times the size of Belgium. It became his private property.

Leopold ordered all the people living in the forests of the Congo to sell rubber, elephant tusks and other forest produce to the King's agents failing which the defaulters would be killed or have their hands cut off. Many companies were contracted to collect the produce on behalf of the king. These 'concessionaire' companies wrote a new chapter in the annals of human cruelty. The Africans who did not bring rubber in the specified quantity had their hands cut off. It is said that 100 lakh people

living in the Congo were killed in this human genocide. The concessionaire system was discontinued in 1908 when the Belgian parliament took over the reins of government in the Congo.

10.3.4 Colonialism and African Resistance

Despite their limited resources, the African people put up a spirited resistance against the European powers. But most of their protests met with failure. Edward Morel, a British journalist who spent some time in Africa, wrote a book about the pitiable plight of the African people titled 'The black man's burden'. Given below is an extract from the book:

'Nor is violent physical opposition to abuse and injustice ... possible for the African in any part of Africa. His chances of ... resistance have been ... dwindling with the increasing ... killing power of modern armament ... Thus the African is really helpless against the material gods of the white man ... embodied in ... imperialism, capitalistic exploitation, and militarism.'

Do you agree with what Edward Morel has written – that the African people were helpless against the European powers?

The Maji Maji rebellion

Germany controlled East Africa. The German government put pressure on people living in this region to grow commercial crops like cotton instead of cereals for consumption. The cotton was mainly to supply to the German mills. In 1905, a rumour suddenly spread that if Africans sprinkled magical holy water on their body, the German bullets would turn to water. Around 20 tribes joined hands to fight against German rule. They believed their god had ordered them to wage war and their ancestors would protect them in battle. This rebellion is known as the Maji Maji rebellion. But when the tribal warriors attacked the German troops with their spears, 75,000 of them were mowed down by the German machine guns. Twice that number later died in the famine that ravaged the land because of the severe food-grain shortage caused by cultivating cotton instead of cereals.

Ethiopia's Successful Rebellion

Ethiopia was the only African country that successfully resisted against European colonial rule. Menelik II was the Ethiopian ruler in 1889. After the Berlin Conference, the British, French and Italians tried to extend their spheres of influence in Ethiopia. Menelik cleverly used one European nation against the other. During this time, he made big purchases of guns and ammunition from Russia and France.

Italy signed a treaty with Menelik in 1889. Separate documents were prepared for the bilingual treaty. Ethiopia said the Ethiopian version ceded a portion of its territory to Italy, but the Italians said their version backed their claim to take over the entire country as its 'protected state' (protectorate). The Italian forces advanced into North Ethiopia. Menelik declared war against Italy. The Ethiopian army defeated the Italians in the Battle of Adwa in 1896 to write a new chapter in colonial history.

Take a close look at the boundaries of the different countries in the political map of Africa. In many places, the boundary appears to be a straight line. Can you suggest a reason why the boundaries are straight lines?

We read in this chapter that Africa did not have nation states in 1850. But we see the continent divided into many different countries in 1913. How did so many countries come into existence in a span of only 60 years?

What is the ideology of racism? Today, the whole world thinks racial discrimination is morally wrong. What do you think is wrong with the theory of racism?

Why did the Maji Maji uprising fail? Why were the Ethiopian people successful in their rebellion?

Do you think it was right or wrong for the European nations to divide Africa among themselves? Give reasons for your answer.

Did Italy's defeat at the hands of the Ethiopians have any impact on European supremacy?

10.4 Colonialism in India (1756-1900)

We learnt in class VIII that the English East India Company defeated the Nawab of Bengal in the Battle of Plassey in 1757. This marked the beginning of British imperialism in India. We also learnt how the whole of India was slowly subjugated by the British after that. In this chapter we shall try and understand how the colonial government tried to influence and mould Indian society.

Colonialism went through many phases in India after 1757. Each phase was shaped by Britain's changing needs and India's resistance. Colonial policies transformed India from a once-prosperous country into a poverty-stricken nation. But the resistance to foreign rule took India on the path to democracy and equality while forging the country into a modern nation. We read the story of India's struggle for democracy, equality and nationhood. We shall now learn about the colonial policies and their impact.

10.4.1 The Era of Monopoly Trade

British colonialism had two objectives in the initial phase. The first was to establish British monopoly over India's trade. The East India Company wanted to ensure that it had the sole right to sell Indian goods in the international market. It wanted to reap the maximum profit by buying the goods cheap from Indian peasants and artisans, then hiking the prices in the foreign markets.

The East India Company used its political power to establish its monopoly over Indian trade and handicrafts. It forced the established merchants to trade as its agents or shunted them out if they refused to comply. Indian craftsmen and weavers were, thus, forced to sell their products cheaply to the company. As a result, although trade expanded, the artisans did not get their rightful due.

The second objective of the East India Company was to control and use the revenue it earned to further Britain's interests. But to control the revenue, it had to first wage war to establish its supremacy in India. Fighting wars requires large finances. The company tried to cover the costs from its Indian revenues. To increase its revenues, it tried to conquer new territories and merge them into its British India Empire.

The company also introduced a new land revenue system in all the territories it controlled. The zamindars were recognised as owners of the land and were given the right to collect rent from the peasants. The colonial government increased its share of the tax collected to maximise its land revenue. The long term impact of this policy was that the peasants were impoverished and became the victims of unprecedented man-made famines. They took loans from moneylenders to pay the increasing land dues but were trapped in life-long bondage because they were unable to repay the loans.

10.4.2 The second phase: Industrial Revolution in England and Colonisation of India

The Industrial Revolution began in England in 1750-1800. The new industrialists did not want the East

India Company to have a monopoly on trade with India because it did not suit their interests. They did not want Indian textiles to be sold in Europe. On the contrary, they wanted India to buy textiles manufactured in their factories. They put pressure on the British government to end the control of the East India Company (which was only a traders' group). The British parliament responded by officially ending the company's monopoly in 1813. It began to take more interest in Indian affairs and, after the 1857 war of independence, it took over the administration of its Indian territories.

Many changes were effected in India's trade policies. Import taxes on British goods were either reduced or abolished to ensure that goods manufactured in British factories could sell in the Indian market. We learnt about these policies in the previous chapter and also discussed their impact on Indian weavers. Lakhs of weavers were rendered jobless. They turned to farming in the absence of any alternative livelihood. This increased the pressure on land. More people now had to earn a living from the same amount of land. This process of people shifting from industry to agriculture is known as the 'de-industrialisation' of India. It put the country in the ranks of the world's poor nations.

There was another reason for India's impoverishment – the transfer of India's wealth to England by various means. The booty looted from the treasuries of the kings, the salaries paid to British soldiers and officers were all sent to England. These payments were made in cash from the land revenue paid by the peasants.

British industrialisation required raw materials such as indigo, cotton and jute while the demand for agricultural produce like cereals, tea and sugar also increased. The colonial government wanted Indian farmers to produce these cheaply and supply to England at low costs. It placed the land revenue demand at a very high and this forced the Indian farmers to change the cropping pattern. In order to pay the high revenue they began growing more commercial crops which were being bought by traders for England.

The government launched many irrigation projects to supply water to the peasants so they could grow commercial crops. It also laid new railway lines to connect the major agricultural regions to the seaports. The British industrialists supplied most of the material needed to expand the railways. This benefited the British steel industry. In this way, Indian agriculture began serving the needs of England's industrialisation. The production of cash crops grew, taking the place of textiles in the export market.

What impact would commercial agriculture and high revenue demand have had on the life of the common people?

10.4.3 'Colonisation of the Mind'

We saw the impact of colonial policies on the economic system of the country. But colonialism goes beyond economic impacts. It influences the way people think. How does this happen? Let us look at an example.

During the time the British were establishing their rule in India, many English people became interested in India's culture, knowledge and history. They were deeply influenced by the country's culture, religion, etc. They urged the East India Company to patronise the study of traditional Indian knowledge and literature. Their efforts led to the opening of Sanskrit colleges and madrasahs. These people were called Orientalists – scholars of oriental (eastern) cultures.

However, the company's thinking on Indian culture and knowledge began to change after 1800. Many high-ranking company officials now felt that modern European knowledge was the only knowledge

people should learn and the way to learn was through the medium of English. They felt that traditional Indian knowledge had no utilitarian purpose so spending money on it was worthless. These people were called ‘Anglophiles’ – persons who admire English culture and education.

The Anglophiles were dominant at the time the British government was formulating its education policy for India. The most well-known among them was Thomas Macaulay, who presented his ‘Minute upon Indian education’ to the British parliament in 1830. Macaulay said:

“I have conversed both here and at home with men distinguished by their proficiency in the Eastern tongues ... I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia.”

Macaulay felt that the native literature could not compare with books on European poetry, history, science and philosophy. He advised the parliament to implement education in science, mathematics and western philosophy and culture. He said this would be to the advantage of Indians, freeing them from superstition and barbarity.

Macaulay’s plea was to give Indians an English education to create a class of Indians who would support British rule and teach their fellow countrymen. He said:

“We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern - a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population.”

The colonial education system was based on such thinking and ideas. What impact do you think English education had on the Indian people?

Colonialism – a comparative analysis

We saw how Latin America, Africa, Indonesia, China, India and other countries were subjected to and influenced by different kinds of colonialism. One kind was seen in Latin America. Large numbers of the native people of these countries were killed. Europeans settled there and forcing enslaved Africans to live in these countries. The European nations wanted to exploit these settled colonies for their own benefit. The people living in the colonies opposed them. Their freedom struggles successfully ended slavery, forced labour and colonial policies.

Colonialism in Asian countries like Indonesia and India was different from Latin America. The European nations established their government in these countries and changed the local economy to suit their needs. But there were differences between Indonesia and India as well. In Indonesia, the forests were cleared to establish plantations that were owned by the Dutch. In India, too, plantations were established in the hilly regions. But in the rest of the country, the peasants were subjected to high taxes and induced to grow commercial crops. Most important, industries were not allowed to develop in India. As a result, the local textile industry was destroyed.

China’s story was different from the rest. The Chinese emperor continued as the nominal ruler. But several European nations established their supremacy (spheres of influence) in different regions of

the country. They exploited the people and the country's resources without holding the reins of government.

The opposition to colonialism was also different in all these countries. We can compare the resistance in Latin America, China, India and Africa by answering the following questions:

How did the local people participate in the colonial system of governance? Explain in the context of South America and Africa.

How did the European nations behave with the local population? Explain in the context of the Congo, Spanish Mexico and Indonesia.

How were natural resources and human labour exploited in the colonial process? Explain in the context of mining in South America and Africa.

What changes occurred in the methods of colonial exploitation before and after the Industrial Revolution? Explain in the context of South America and India.

What is the difference between commercialisation of agriculture and investing capital in agriculture? Explain in the context of Indonesia and India.

EXERCISES

1. List the following events according to their timeline: the destruction of the Aztec Empire; Columbus reaches the West Indies; the Haiti uprising; the destruction of the Inca Empire.
2. Match the following:

Hernando Cortes	Conquest of the Aztec Empire
Toussaint Louverture	The Congo genocide
Leopold II	The Haiti uprising
Macaulay	Independence of Columbia and Venezuela
Francis Pizzaro	Conquest of the Inca Empire
José Martin	India's education policy
Simon Bolivar	Argentina's independence
3. What kind of social system developed after the Spanish conquest of Latin America?
4. How did the French Revolution influence the freedom struggles in Latin America?
5. Three categories of people lived in Spanish-ruled America – the people of Spanish descent, including administrative officials and common peasants; the native population; and the African slaves. Did these three categories have different rights under colonial rule? What were the differences?
6. What is commercialisation of agriculture? What were the reasons for commercialising agriculture in India?
7. How did trade monopoly affect the weavers in India?
8. Concepts like freedom, equality and democracy became popular in Europe. At the same time, the Europeans behaved barbarically with the people living in their colonies. How was this contradiction possible and what do you think of it?
