
IMPERIALISM, WAR AND REVOLUTION

The great colonial empires

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The great colonial empires

- The British Empire was the largest empire in the world. Its most valuable possession was India, and this influenced British strategic thinking. The British took control of the Suez Canal to secure the route to India, and they also conquered Asian territories. In Africa, Britain tried to link together its colonies in southern Africa, eastern Africa and along the Nile. Britain also possessed Canada and much of Oceania.
- The French Empire was the second largest in the world. In Africa, France conquered Algeria and Tunisia and created a protectorate in Morocco. France later acquired territories in central and western Africa. In Asia, France occupied Indochina.
- Germany and Italy began their imperialist expansion later, and acquired a few colonies in Africa.
- Belgium acquired the Congo.
- Russia conquered Siberia. The frontiers of the Russian Empire reached China in the east and the Himalayas and India in the south.
- The United States of America defeated Spain in 1898, and occupied the Philippines and Puerto Rico, later gaining control over Cuba. The USA also created strict economic dependence among Latin American countries.
- Japan entered into conflict with Russia and China. It conquered Formosa (Taiwan) and Korea, and established its control over the Chinese region of Manchuria.

The Berlin Conference

Colonial expansion led to conflict among the great powers, who met at the Berlin Conference (1884-1885) in order to resolve their disputes. At this meeting, the great powers divided up nearly the entire African continent.