

Decolonization

Decolonization (US) or **decolonisation** (UK alternative) is the undoing of colonialism: where a nation establishes and maintains its domination over one or more other territories. The term refers particularly to the dismantlement, in the years after World War II, of the colonial empires established prior to World War I throughout the world^[1]. However, decolonization not only refers to the complete "removal of the domination of non-indigenous forces" within the geographical space and different institutions of the colonized^[1], but it also refers to the intellectual decolonization from the colonizers' ideas that made the colonized feel inferior^[2].

The United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization has stated that in the process of decolonization there is no alternative to the colonizer allowing a process of self-determination^[3] but in practice decolonization may involve either nonviolent revolution or national liberation wars by pro-independence groups. It may be intramural or involve the intervention of foreign powers acting individually or through international bodies such as the United Nations. Although examples of decolonization can be found as early as the writings of Thucydides, there have been several particularly active periods of decolonization in modern times. These include the breakup of the Spanish Empire in the 19th century; of the German, Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Russian Empires following World War I; of the British, French, Dutch, Japanese, Portuguese, Belgian and Italian colonial empires following World War II; and of the Soviet Union (successor to the Russian Empire)^[4] following the October Revolution.

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Methods and stages

Decolonization is a political process and vital internalization of the rejection of colonialist mindsets and "norms". In extreme circumstances, there is a war of independence, sometimes following a revolution. More often, there is a dynamic cycle where negotiations fail, minor disturbances ensue resulting in suppression by the police and military forces, escalating into more violent revolts that lead to further negotiations until independence is granted. In rare cases, the actions of the pro-independence movements are characterized by nonviolence, with the Indian independence movement led by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi being one of the most notable examples, and the violence comes as active suppression from the occupying forces or as political opposition from force representing minority local communities who feel threatened by the prospect of independence. For example, there was a war of independence in French Indochina while in some countries in French West Africa (excluding the Maghreb countries) decolonization resulted from a combination of insurrection and negotiation. The process is only complete when the *de facto* government of the newly independent country is recognized as *the de jure sovereign state* by the community of nations.

Independence is often difficult to achieve without the encouragement and practical support from one or more external parties. The motives for giving such aid are varied: nations of the same ethnic and/or religious stock may sympathize with the people of the country, or a strong nation may attempt to destabilize a colony as a tactical move to weaken a rival or enemy colonizing power or to create space for its own sphere of influence; examples of this include British support of the Haitian Revolution against France, and the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, in which the United States warned the European powers not to interfere in the affairs of the newly independent states of the Western Hemisphere

As world opinion became more pro-independence following World War I, there was an *institutionalized collective effort* to advance the cause of decolonization through the League of Nations. Under Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, a number of mandates were created. The expressed intention was to prepare these countries for self-government, but are often interpreted as a mere redistribution of control over the former colonies of the defeated powers, mainly the German Empire and the Ottoman Empire. This reassignment work continued through the United Nations, with a similar system of trust territories created to adjust control over both former colonies and mandated territories.

In referendums, some colonial populations have chosen to retain their colonial status, such as Gibraltar and French Guiana. There are even examples, such as the Falklands War, in which an Imperial power goes to war to defend the right of a colony to continue to be a colony. Colonial powers have sometimes promoted decolonization in order to shed the financial, military and other burdens that tend to grow in those colonies where the colonial governments have become more benign.

Decolonization is rarely achieved through a single historical act, but rather progresses through one or more stages of decolonization, each of which can be offered or fought for: these can include the introduction of elected representatives (advisory or voting; minority or majority or even exclusive), degrees of autonomy or self-rule. Thus, the final phase of decolonization may, in fact, concern little more than handing over responsibility for foreign relations and security, and soliciting *de jure* recognition for the new sovereignty. But, even following the recognition of statehood, a degree of continuity can be maintained through bilateral treaties between now equal governments involving practicalities such as military training, mutual protection pacts, or even a garrison and/or military bases.



Comorians protest against Mayotte referendum on becoming an overseas department of France, 2009

History

Beginning with the emergence of the United States in the 1770s, decolonization took place in the context of Atlantic history, against the background of the American and French revolutions. Decolonization became a popular movement in many colonies in the 20th century, and a reality after 1945.^[5]

American Revolution

Great Britain's Thirteen North American colonies were the first to break from the British Empire in 1776, and were recognized as an independent nation by France in 1778 and Britain in 1783. The United States of America was the first set of European established colonies to achieve independence and establish itself as a nation, and was the first independent settler state in the Americas.^{[6][7]}

Haitian Revolution

The Haitian Revolution was a slave uprising that began in 1791 in the French colony of Saint-Domingue, on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola. In 1804, Haiti secured independence from France as the Empire of Haiti, which later became a republic.

Decolonization of Spanish America

The chaos of the Napoleonic wars in Europe cut the direct links between Spain and its American colonies, allowing for process of decolonization to begin.^[8]

With the invasion of Spain by Napoleon in 1806, the American colonies declared autonomy and loyalty to King Ferdinand VII. The contract was broken and the regions of the Spanish Empire had to decide whether to show allegiance to the Junta of Cadiz (the only territory in Spain free from Napoleon) or have a junta (assembly) of its own. The economic monopoly of the metropolis was the main reason why many countries decided to become independent from Spain. In 1809, the independence wars of Latin America begun with a revolt in La Paz, Bolivia. In 1807 and 1808, the Viceroyalty of the River Plate was invaded by the British, after their 2nd defeat a Frenchman called Santiague de Liniers was proclaimed new Viceroy by the local population, and later accepted by Spain. In May 1810 in Buenos Aires, a Junta was created, but in Montevideo it was not recognized by the local government who followed the authority of the Junta of Cadiz, the rivalry between the 2 harbors was the main reason for the distrust between the 2 cities. During the next 15 years, the Spanish and Royalist on one side, and the rebels fought in South America and Mexico. Numerous countries declared their independence. In 1824, the Spanish forces were defeated in the Battle of Ayacucho. The mainland was free and in 1898, Spain lost Cuba and Puerto Rico in the Spanish–American War, Puerto Rico became a Colony of the U.S.A. but Cuba was independent in 1902.



The Chilean Declaration of Independence on 18 February 1818

Decolonization of the Ottoman Empire

Cyprus

Cyprus was invaded and taken over by the Ottoman Empire in 1570. It was later relinquished by the Ottomans in 1878.^[9] The Cypriots expressed their true disdain for Ottoman rule through revolts and nationalist movements. The Ottomans only suppressed these revolts in the harshest of fashion but that only ended up fueling the revolts and desire for independence.^[10] The Cypriots desired to merge with Greece because they felt a close connection with Greece. They were tired of 3 centuries of Turkic rule and openly expressed their desire for enosis. The Cypriots would embrace Greek culture and traditions. They abandoned Ottoman architecture and showed little respect for Ottoman rule.^[11] All these acts of defiance could be attributed to decolonization. When the Cypriots made acts of nationalism, they were participating in a form of decolonization because they were attempting to remove all trace of Turkic and Muslim influence within their society.^[12] The Greek War of Independence had major affects on Cyprus and after the Ottomans had left, Cyprus continued to create a Greek culture they wished to be a part of. Cyprus would continue to create this imagined identity of Greek culture. This can also be a form of imagined human geography because Cyprus used this identity to justify its revolts and nationalist movements.^[13]

A number of people (mainly Christians in the Balkans) previously conquered by the Ottoman Empire were able to achieve independence in the 19th century, a process that peaked at the time of the Ottoman defeat in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78.

The Ottoman Empire had failed to raise revenue and a monopoly of effective armed forces.^[14] This may have caused the fall of the Ottoman Empire.

Egypt

In the wake of the 1798 French Invasion of Egypt and its subsequent expulsion in 1801, the commander of an Albanian regiment, Muhammad Ali, was able to gain control of Egypt. Although he was acknowledged by the Sultan in Constantinople in 1805 as his pasha, Muhammad Ali, and eventually his successors, were de facto monarchs of a largely independent state managing its own foreign relations.

However, despite this de facto independence, Egypt did remain nominally a vassal state of the Ottoman Empire obliged to pay a hefty annual tribute to the Sultan. Throughout the 'long 19th century', Muhammad Ali would send scores of Azhar scholars to France and other European countries to be educated in the empirical sciences (due to the heavy inferiority complex ingrained from French defeat); however, such scholars would unwittingly participate in their country's intellectual colonization throughout this century and establish the national public educational system on Secular Humanist (Enlightenment) philosophy and principles and Western culture in general to this day^[2]. Upon declaring war on Turkey in November 1914, Britain unilaterally declared the Sultan's rights and title over Egypt abolished and proclaimed its own protectorate over the country.



Russian and Bulgarian defence of Shipka Pass against Turkish troops was crucial for the independence of Bulgaria.

Greece

The Greek War of Independence (1821–1829) was fought to liberate Greece from a three centuries long Ottoman occupation. Independence was secured by the intervention of the British and French navies and the French and Russian armies but Greece was limited to an area including perhaps only one-third of ethnic Greeks, that later grew significantly with the Megali Idea project. The war ended many of the privileges of the Phanariot Greeks of Constantinople.



Greek War of Independence

Bulgaria

Following a failed Bulgarian revolt in 1876, the subsequent Russo-Turkish war ended with the provisional Treaty of San Stefano established a huge new realm of Bulgaria including most of Macedonia and Thrace. The final 1878 Treaty of Berlin allowed the other Great Powers to limit the size of

the new Russian client state and even briefly divided this rump state in two, Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia, but the irredentist claims from the first treaty would direct Bulgarian claims through the first and second Balkan Wars and both World Wars.

Romania

Romania fought on the Russian side in the Russo-Turkish War and in the 1878 Treaty of Berlin, Romania was recognized as an independent state by the Great Powers.^{[15][16]}

Serbia

Centuries^{[17][18]} of armed and unarmed struggle ended with the recognition of Serbian independence from the Ottoman Empire at the Congress of Berlin in 1878.



Romanian War of Independence

Montenegro

The independence of the Principality of Montenegro from the Ottoman Empire was recognized at the Congress of Berlin in 1878. However, the Montenegrin nation has been de facto independent since 1711 (officially accepted by the Tsardom of Russia by the order of Tsar Petr I Alexeyevich-Romanov). In the period 1795–1798, Montenegro once again claimed independence after the Battle of Krusi. In 1806, it was recognized as a power fighting against Napoleon, meaning that it had a fully mobilized and supplied army (by Russia, through Admiral Dmitry Senyavin at the Bay of Kotor). In the period of reign of Petar II Petrović-Njegoš, Montenegro was again colonized by Turkey, but that changed with the coming of Knyaz Danilo I, with a totally successful war against Turkey in the late 1850s ending with a decisive victory of the Montenegrin army under Grand Duke Mirko Petrović-Njegoš brother of Danilo I, at the Battle of Grahovac. The full independence was given to Montenegro, after almost 170 years of fighting the Turks, Bosniaks, Albanians and the French (1806–1814) at the Congress of Berlin.

After 1918

Western European colonial powers

The New Imperialism period of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which included the scramble for Africa and the Opium Wars, marked the zenith of European colonization. It also accelerated the trends that would end colonialism. The extraordinary material demands of the conflict had spread economic change across the world (notably inflation), and the associated social pressures of "war imperialism" created both peasant unrest and a burgeoning middle class.

Economic growth created stakeholders with their own demands, while racial issues meant these people clearly stood apart from the colonial middle-class and had to form their own group. The start of mass nationalism, as a concept and practice, would fatally undermine the ideologies of imperialism.

There were, naturally, other factors, from agrarian change (and disaster – French Indochina), changes or developments in religion (Buddhism in Burma, Islam in the Dutch East Indies, marginally people like John Chilembwe in Nyasaland), and the impact of the 1930s Great Depression.

The Great Depression, despite the concentration of its impact on the industrialized world, was also exceptionally damaging in the rural colonies. Agricultural prices fell much harder and faster than those of industrial goods. From around 1925 until World War II, the colonies suffered. The colonial powers concentrated on domestic issues, protectionism and tariffs, disregarding the damage done to international trade flows. The colonies, almost all primary "cash crop" producers, lost the majority of their export income and were forced away from the "open" complementary colonial economies to "closed" systems. While some areas returned to subsistence



Czechoslovak anti-colonialist propaganda poster: "Socialism opened the door of liberation for colonial nations."

farming (British Malaya) others diversified (India, West Africa), and some began to industrialise. These economies would not fit the colonial straitjacket when efforts were made to renew the links. Further, the European-owned and -run plantations proved more vulnerable to extended deflation than native capitalists, reducing the dominance of "white" farmers in colonial economies and making the European governments and investors of the 1930s co-opt indigenous elites – despite the implications for the future. Colonial reform also hastened their end; notably the move from non-interventionist collaborative systems towards directed, disruptive, direct management to drive economic change. The creation of genuine bureaucratic government boosted the formation of indigenous bourgeoisie.

United Kingdom

The emergence of indigenous bourgeois elites was especially characteristic of the British Empire, which seemed less capable (or less ruthless) in controlling political nationalism. Driven by pragmatic demands of budgets and manpower the British made deals with the nationalist elites. Across the empire, the general protocol was to convene a constitutional conference in London to discuss the transition to greater self-government and then independence, submit a report of the constitutional conference to parliament, if approved submit a bill to Parliament at Westminster to terminate the responsibility of the United Kingdom (with a copy of the new constitution annexed), and finally, if approved, issuance of an Order of Council fixing the exact date of independence.^[19]

After World War I, several former German and Ottoman territories in the Middle East, Africa, and the Pacific were governed by the UK as League of Nations mandates. Some were administered directly by the UK, and others by British dominions – Nauru and the Territory of New Guinea by Australia, South West Africa by the Union of South Africa, and Western Samoa by New Zealand.

Egypt became independent in 1922, although the UK retained security prerogatives, control of the Suez Canal, and effective control of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. The 1931 Statute of Westminster established full legislative independence for six dominions – Canada, Newfoundland, Australia, the Irish Free State, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa. Newfoundland ceded self-rule back to the UK in 1934. Iraq, a League of Nations mandate, became independent in 1932.

In response to a growing Indian independence movement, the UK made successive reforms to the British Raj, culminating in the Government of India Act (1935). These reforms included creating elected legislative councils in some of the Provinces of British India. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, India's independence movement leader, led a peaceful resistance to the British rule. By becoming a symbol of both peace and opposition to British imperialism, many Indian citizens began to view the British as the cause of India's problems leading to a newfound sense of nationalism among its population. With this new wave of Indian nationalism, Gandhi was eventually able to garner the support needed to push back the British and create an independent India in 1947.^[20]

Tropical Africa was only fully drawn into the colonial system at the end of the 19th century. In the north-east the continued independence of the Empire of Ethiopia remained a beacon of hope to pro-independence activists. However, with the anti-colonial wars of the 1900s (decade) barely over, new modernising forms of African Nationalism began to gain strength in the early 20th-century with the emergence of Pan-Africanism, as advocated by the Jamaican journalist Marcus Garvey (1887–1940) whose widely distributed newspapers demanded swift abolition of European imperialism, as well as republicanism in Egypt. Kwame Nkrumah (1909–1972) who was inspired by the works of Garvey led Ghana to independence from colonial rule.

United States

A former colony itself, the United States approached imperialism differently from the Great Powers and Japan. Much of its energy and rapidly expanding population was directed westward across the North American continent against Native Americans, English territorial pretensions, Spain, and Mexico. With eventual assistance from the British Navy, its Monroe Doctrine reserved the Americas as its sphere of interest, prohibiting other states (particularly Spain) from recolonizing the recently freed polities of Latin



A mural in Belfast depicting the Easter Rising of 1916

America. However, France, taking advantage of the American government's paralysis following the outbreak of the Civil War, intervened militarily in Mexico to consolidate a French-protected monarchy,^[21] and, for the same reason, Spain took the step to occupy the Dominican Republic and restore colonial rule. The end of the Civil War in 1865 prompted both France and Spain to evacuate those two countries. Spain also fought several wars against Chile and Peru for the guano deposits of their islands. Economic and political pressure, as well as assaults by filibusters, were brought to bear, but Northern fears of the expansion of slavery into new territories and the still strong Spanish Empire restrained the United States from early expansion into Cuba or Central America. America's only African colony, Liberia, was formed privately and achieved independence early. While the United States had few qualms about opening the markets of Japan, Korea, and China by military force, it advocated an Open Door Policy and opposed the direct division and colonization of those states even though Europeans kept doing it.

Following the Civil War and particularly during and after the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, direct intervention in Latin America and elsewhere expanded. The United States purchased Russian America from the tsar and accepted the offer of Hawaii from rebel expatriates and seized several colonies from Spain in 1898. Barred from annexing Cuba outright by the Teller Amendment, the U.S. established it as a client state with obligations including the perpetual lease of Guantánamo Bay to the U.S. Navy. The attempt of the first governor to void the island's constitution and remain in power past the end of his term provoked a rebellion that provoked a reoccupation between 1906 and 1909, but this was again followed by devolution. Similarly, the McKinley administration, despite prosecuting the Philippine–American War against a native republic, set out that the Territory of the Philippine Islands was eventually granted independence.^[22]

Britain's 1895 attempt to reject the Monroe Doctrine during the Venezuela Crisis of 1895, the Venezuela Crisis of 1902–1903, and the establishment of the client state of Panama in 1903 via gunboat diplomacy, however, all necessitated the maintenance of Puerto Rico as a naval base to secure shipping lanes to the Caribbean and the new canal zone. In 1917, "Puerto Ricans were collectively made U.S. citizens"^[23] via the Jones Act, and in 1952 the US Congress turned the territory into a commonwealth after ratifying the Constitution born out of United States Public Law 600.^[24] The US government then declared the territory was no longer a colony and stopped transmitting information about Puerto Rico to the United Nations Decolonization Committee. As a result, the UN General Assembly removed Puerto Rico from the U.N. list of non-self-governing territories. Dissatisfied with their new political status, Puerto Ricans turned to political referendums to let make their opinions known. Several internal plebiscites, non-binding upon the United States, proposing statehood or independence for the island did not garnish a majority in 1967, 1993, and 1998. As a result of the UN not applying the full set of criteria which was enunciated in 1960 when it took favorable note of the cessation of transmission of information regarding the non-self-governing status of Puerto Rico,^{[25][26]} the nature of Puerto Rico's relationship with the U.S. continues to be the subject of ongoing debate in Puerto Rican politics, the United States Congress^[27] and the United Nations.^{[28][29]}



Manuel L. Quezón, the first president of the Commonwealth of the Philippines (from 1935 to 1944)



Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands in Micronesia administered by the United States from 1947 to 1986

The Monroe Doctrine received the Roosevelt Corollary in 1904, providing that the United States had a right and obligation to intervene "in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence" that a nation in the Western Hemisphere became vulnerable to European control. In practice, this meant that the United States was led to act as a collections agent for European creditors by administering customs duties in the Dominican Republic (1905–1941), Haiti (1915–1934), and elsewhere. The intrusiveness and bad relations this engendered were somewhat checked by the Clark Memorandum and renounced by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Good Neighbor Policy." The end of World War II saw America producing 46% of the world's GDP,^[30] but pouring billions of dollars into the Marshall Plan and restoring independent (if anti-Communist) democracies in Japan and West Germany. The post-war period also saw America push hard to accelerate decolonialization and bring an end to the colonial empires of its Western allies, most

importantly during the 1956 Suez Crisis, but American military bases were established around the world and direct and indirect interventions continued in Korea, Indochina, Latin America (*inter alia*, the 1965 occupation of the Dominican Republic), Africa, and the Middle East to oppose Communist invasions and insurgencies. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the United States has been far less active in the Americas, but invaded Afghanistan and Iraq following the September 11 attacks in 2001, establishing army and air bases in Central Asia.

Japan

Before World War I, Japan had gained several substantial colonial possessions in East Asia such as Taiwan (1895) and Korea (1910). Japan joined the allies in World War I, and after the war acquired the South Pacific Mandate, the former German colony in Micronesia, as a League of Nations Mandate. Pursuing a colonial policy comparable to those of European powers, Japan settled significant populations of ethnic Japanese in its colonies while simultaneously suppressing indigenous ethnic populations by enforcing the learning and use of the Japanese language in schools. Other methods such as public interaction, and attempts to eradicate the use of Korean, Hokkien, and Hakka among the indigenous peoples, were seen to be used. Japan also set up Imperial universities in Korea (Keijo Imperial University) and Taiwan (Taihoku University) to compel education.



U.S. troops in Korea, September 1945

In 1931, Japan seized Manchuria from the Republic of China, setting up a puppet state under Puyi, the last Manchu emperor of China. In 1933 Japan seized the Chinese province of Jehol, and incorporated it into its Manchurian possessions. The Second Sino-Japanese War started in 1937, and Japan occupied much of eastern China, including the Republic's capital at Nanjing. An estimated 20 million Chinese died during the 1931–1945 war with Japan.^[31]

In December 1941, the Japanese Empire joined World War II by invading the European and US colonies in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, including French Indochina, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Burma, Malaya, Indonesia, Portuguese Timor, and others. Following its surrender to the Allies in 1945, Japan was deprived of all its colonies. The Soviet Union declared war on Japan in August 1945, and shortly after occupied and annexed the southern Kuril Islands, which Japan still claims.

France

After World War I, the colonized people were frustrated at France's failure to recognize the effort provided by the French colonies (resources, but more importantly colonial troops – the famous *tirailleurs*). Although in Paris the Great Mosque of Paris was constructed as recognition of these efforts, the French state had no intention to allow self-rule, let alone grant independence to the colonized people. Thus, nationalism in the colonies became stronger in between the two wars, leading to Abd el-Krim's Rif War (1921–1925) in Morocco and to the creation of Messali Hadj's Star of North Africa in Algeria in 1925. However, these movements would gain full potential only after World War II.

After World War I, France administered the former Ottoman territories of Syria and Lebanon, and the former German colonies of Togoland and Cameroon, as League of Nations mandates. Lebanon declared its independence in 1943, and Syria in 1945.

Central Europe

The Russian, German, and Austro-Hungarian empires collapsed at the end of World War I, and were replaced by republics. Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Czechoslovakia became independent countries. Yugoslavia and Romania expanded into former Austro-Hungarian territory. The Soviet Union succeeded the Russian empire in the remainder of its former territory, and Germany, Austria, and Hungary were reduced in size.

In 1938, Nazi Germany annexed Austria and part of Czechoslovakia, and in 1939, Nazi Germany and the USSR concluded a pact to occupy the countries that lie between them; the USSR occupied Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, and Germany and the USSR split Poland in two. The occupation of Poland started World War II. Germany attacked the USSR in 1941. The USSR allied with the

UK and USA, and emerged as one of the victors of the war, occupying most of central and eastern Europe.

After 1945

United Nations Trust Territories

When the United Nations was formed in 1945, it established trust territories. These territories included the League of Nations mandate territories which had not achieved independence by 1945, along with the former Italian Somaliland. The Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands was transferred from Japanese to US administration. By 1990 all but one of the trust territories had achieved independence, either as independent states or by merger with another independent state; the Northern Mariana Islands elected to become a commonwealth of the United States.

The emergence of the Third World (1945–)

The term "Third World" was coined by French demographer Alfred Sauvy in 1952, on the model of the Third Estate, which, according to Abbé Sieyès, represented everything, but was nothing: "...because at the end this ignored, exploited, scorned Third World like the Third Estate, wants to become something too" (Sauvy). The emergence of this new political entity, in the frame of the Cold War, was complex and painful. Several tentatives were made to organize newly independent states in order to oppose a common front towards both the US's and the USSR's influence on them, with the consequences of the Sino-Soviet split already at work. Thus, the Non-Aligned Movement constituted itself, around the main figures of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, Sukarno, the Indonesian president, Josip Broz Tito the Communist leader of Yugoslavia, and Gamal Abdel Nasser, head of Egypt who successfully opposed the French and British imperial powers during the 1956 Suez crisis. After the 1954 Geneva Conference which put an end to the First Indochina War, the 1955 Bandung Conference gathered Nasser, Nehru, Tito, Sukarno, the leader of Indonesia, and Zhou Enlai, Premier of the People's Republic of China. In 1960, the UN General Assembly voted the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The next year, the Non-Aligned Movement was officially created in Belgrade (1961), and was followed in 1964 by the creation of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) which tried to promote a New International Economic Order (NIEO). The NIEO was opposed to the 1944 Bretton Woods system, which had benefited the leading states which had created it, and remained in force until 1971 after the United States' suspension of convertibility from dollars to gold. The main tenets of the NIEO were:



Czechoslovak anti-colonialist propaganda poster: "Africa – in fight for freedom".

1. Developing countries must be entitled to regulate and control the activities of multinational corporations operating within their territory
2. They must be free to nationalize or expropriate foreign property on conditions favourable to them.
3. They must be free to set up associations of primary commodities producers similar to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries created on September 17, 1960 to protest pressure by major oil companies (mostly owned by U.S., British, and Dutch nationals) to reduce oil prices and payments to producers; all other states must recognize this right and refrain from taking economic, military or political measures calculated to restrict it.
4. International trade should be based on the need to ensure stable, equitable, and remunerative prices for raw materials, generalized non-reciprocal and non-discriminatory tariff preferences, as well as a transfer of technology to developing countries; and should provide economic and technical assistance without any strings attached

The UNCTAD however wasn't very effective in implementing this New International Economic Order (NIEO), and social and economic inequalities between industrialized countries and the Third World kept on growing throughout the 1960s until the 21st century. The 1973 oil crisis which followed the Yom Kippur War (October 1973) was triggered by the OPEC which decided an embargo against the US and Western countries, causing a fourfold increase in the price of oil, which lasted five months, starting on October 17, 1973, and ending on March 18, 1974. OPEC nations then agreed, on January 7, 1975, to raise crude oil prices by 10%. At that time, OPEC nations – including many who had recently nationalised their oil industries – joined the call for a New International

Economic Order to be initiated by coalitions of primary producers. Concluding the First OPEC Summit in Algiers they called for stable and just commodity prices, an international food and agriculture program, technology transfer from North to South, and the democratization of the economic system. But industrialized countries quickly began to look for substitutes to OPEC petroleum, with the oil companies investing the majority of their research capital in the US and European countries or others, politically sure countries. The OPEC lost more and more influence on the world prices of oil.

The second oil crisis occurred in the wake of the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Then, the 1982 Latin American debt crisis exploded in Mexico first, then Argentina and Brazil, which proved unable to pay back their debts, jeopardizing the existence of the international economic system.

The 1990s were characterized by the prevalence of the Washington consensus on neoliberal policies, "structural adjustment" and "shock therapies" for the former Communist states.

Decolonization of Africa

In 1945, Africa had four independent countries – Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia, and South Africa.

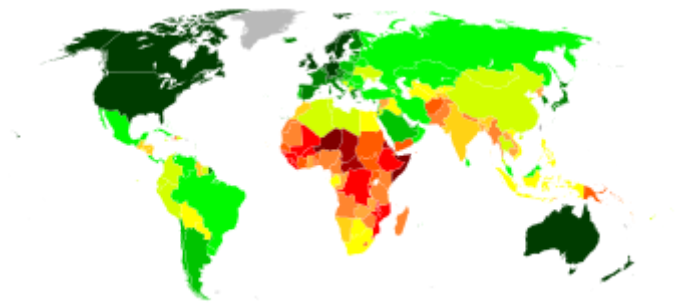
After Italy's defeat in World War II, France and the UK occupied the former Italian colonies. Libya became an independent kingdom in 1951. Eritrea was merged with Ethiopia in 1952. Italian Somaliland was governed by the UK, and by Italy after 1954, until its independence in 1960.

Although France was ultimately a victor of World War II, Nazi Germany's occupation of France and its North African colonies during the war had disrupted colonial rule. On October 27, 1946 France adopted a new constitution creating the Fourth Republic, and substituted the French Union for the colonial empire. However power over the colonies remained concentrated in France, and the power of local assemblies outside France was extremely limited. On the night of March 29, 1947, a nationalist uprising in Madagascar led the French government headed by Paul Ramadier (Socialist) to violent repression: one year of bitter fighting, 1,000–40,000 Malagasy died.

In 1956, Morocco and Tunisia gained their independence from France. In 1960 eight independent countries emerged from French West Africa, and five from French Equatorial Africa. The Algerian War of Independence raged from 1954 to 1962. To this day, the Algerian war – officially called a "public order operation" until the 1990s – remains a trauma for both France and Algeria. Philosopher Paul Ricœur has spoken of the necessity of a "decolonization of memory", starting with the recognition of the 1961 Paris massacre during the Algerian war, and the decisive role of African and especially North African immigrant manpower in the Trente Glorieuses post-World War II economic growth period. In the 1960s, due to economic needs for post-war reconstruction and rapid economic growth, French employers actively sought to recruit manpower from the colonies, explaining today's multiethnic population.

Independence for the United Kingdom's colonies in Africa began with the independence of Sudan in 1956, and Ghana in 1957. All of the UK's colonies on mainland Africa became independent by 1966, although Rhodesia's unilateral declaration of independence in 1965 was not recognized by the UK or internationally.

In 1975, Spain ceded administration of Western Sahara to Morocco and Mauritania. Mauritania later withdrew, and Morocco's claim to the territory is not internationally recognized.



The UN Human Development Index (HDI) is a quantitative index of development, alternative to the classic Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which some use as a proxy to define the Third World. While the GDP only calculates economic wealth, the HDI includes life expectancy, public health and literacy as fundamental factors of a good quality of life. Countries in North America, the Southern Cone, Europe, East Asia, and Oceania generally have better standards of living than countries in Central Africa, East Africa, parts of the Caribbean, and South Asia.

By 1977 European colonial rule in mainland Africa had ended. Most of Africa's island countries had also become independent, although Réunion and Mayotte remain part of France. However the black majorities in Rhodesia and South Africa were disenfranchised until 1980 in Rhodesia, which became Zimbabwe that year, and until 1994 in South Africa. Namibia, Africa's last UN Trust Territory, became independent of South Africa in 1990.

Most independent African countries exist within prior colonial borders. However Morocco merged French Morocco with Spanish Morocco, and Somalia formed from the merger of British Somaliland and Italian Somaliland. Eritrea merged with Ethiopia in 1952, but became an independent country in 1993.

Most African countries became independent as republics. Morocco, Lesotho, and Swaziland remain monarchies under dynasties that predate colonial rule. Egypt and Libya gained independence as monarchies, but both countries' monarchs were later deposed, and they became republics.

African countries cooperate in various multi-state associations. The African Union includes all 55 African states. There are several regional associations of states, including the East African Community, Southern African Development Community, and Economic Community of West African States, some of which have overlapping membership.

Decolonization in the Americas after 1945

-  United Kingdom: Newfoundland (nominally an independent dominion but under direct British rule since 1934) (1949, union with Canada); Jamaica (1962); Trinidad and Tobago (1962); Barbados (1962); Guyana (1966); Bahamas (1973); Grenada (1974); Dominica (1978); Saint Lucia (1979); St. Vincent and the Grenadines (1979); Antigua and Barbuda (1981); Belize (1981); Saint Kitts and Nevis (1983).
-  Netherlands: Netherlands Antilles, Suriname (1954, both becoming constituent countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands).
-  Denmark: Greenland (1979, became a constituent country of the Kingdom of Denmark).

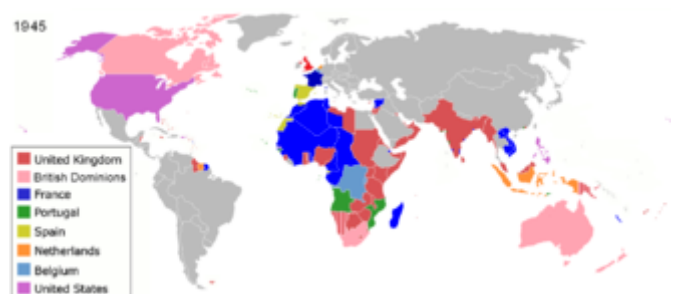
Decolonization of Asia

Japan expanded its occupation of Chinese territory during the 1930s, and occupied Southeast Asia during World War II. After the war, the Japanese colonial empire was dissolved, and national independence movements resisted the re-imposition of colonial control by European countries and the United States.

The Republic of China regained control of Japanese-occupied territories in Manchuria and eastern China. Taiwan was put under the post-war occupation of the Republic of China in accordance with the arrangement in General Order No. 1, however, the sovereignty of Taiwan has never been officially transferred to China. European countries and the United States ceded control of Treaty Ports in China, with the exceptions of Hong Kong and Macau.

The Allied powers divided Korea into two occupation zones, which became the states of North Korea and South Korea. The Philippines became independent of the US in 1946.

In 1946, the states of French Indochina withdrew from the French Union, leading to the Indochina War (1946–54). Ho Chi Minh, who had been a co-founder of the French Communist Party in 1920 and had founded the Vietminh in 1941, declared independence from France, and led the armed resistance against France's reoccupation of Indochina. Cambodia and Laos became independent in 1953, and the 1954 Geneva Accords ended France's occupation of Indochina, leaving North Vietnam and South Vietnam independent.



Western European colonial empires in Asia and Africa all collapsed in the years after 1945

Some of the United Kingdom's colonies in Asia were directly administered by British officials, while others were ruled by local monarchs as protectorates or in subsidiary alliance with the UK.

In 1947, British India was partitioned into the independent dominions of India and Pakistan. Hundreds of princely states, states ruled by monarchs in treaty of subsidiary alliance with Britain, were integrated into India and Pakistan. India and Pakistan fought several wars over the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. French India was integrated into India between 1950 and 1954, and India annexed Portuguese India in 1961, and the Kingdom of Sikkim in 1975.

The Netherlands recognized Indonesia's independence in 1949, after a four-year independence struggle. Indonesia annexed Netherlands New Guinea in 1963, and Portuguese Timor in 1975. In 2002, former Portuguese Timor became independent as East Timor.

The following list shows the colonial powers following the end of hostilities in 1945, and their colonial or administrative possessions. The year of decolonization is given chronologically in parentheses.^[32]

-  United Kingdom: Transjordan (1946), British India and Pakistan (1947); British Mandate of Palestine, Burma, Sri Lanka and Ceylon (1948); British Malaya and Ghana (1957); Nigeria (1960); Kuwait, Sierra Leone and Tanganyika (1961); Uganda (1962); Kingdom of Sarawak, North Borneo, Kenya and Singapore (1963); Maldives (1965); Trucial States (1971); Zimbabwe (1980); Brunei (1984); Hong Kong (1997).
-  France: French India (1954) and Indochina (comprising Vietnam (1945), Cambodia (1953), French African colonies, including Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Upper Volta (1960), Algeria (1962) and Laos).
-  Portugal: Portuguese India (1961); Guinea-Bissau (1974); Mozambique, Cape Verde, Sao Tome, Angola, Portuguese Timor (1975); Macau (1999).
-  United States: Philippines (1946)
-  Netherlands: Netherlands East Indies (1949); Netherlands New Guinea (1962, incorporated to Indonesia).
-  Belgium: Zaire (1960); Rwanda (1962).

Decolonization in Europe

The Soviet Union emerged as a victor in World War II, and controlled most of central and eastern Europe. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were incorporated into the USSR, together with portions of Finland, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania. Of the nations that comprised former Russian Empire, only Finland would remain independent throughout the Cold War. Other neighboring countries were dominated by the USSR, and integrated into Soviet-led military and economic organizations like the Warsaw Pact and Comecon. Most Western states did not formally recognize the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the USSR.

Italy had occupied the Dodecanese islands in 1912, but Italian occupation ended after World War II, and the islands were integrated into Greece. British rule ended in Cyprus in 1960, and Malta in 1964, and both islands became independent republics.

Soviet colonial policy was most famously marked by the use of violent repression against liberalization and dissent, including Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and the Prague Spring in 1968.^{[33][34]} The era of Soviet colonialism would ultimately end due to numerous anti-colonialism efforts of individuals such as Lech Walesa and alliances such as the Solidarity Movement. The Revolutions of 1989 ended of Soviet domination and Communist party rule in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany, Romania, and Bulgaria. Within the USSR, movements for democratization and self-government gained strength during 1990 and 1991. The Soviet coup d'état attempt in August 1991 began the breakup of the USSR, which formally ended on December 26, 1991. The Republics of the Soviet Union become sovereign states – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Byelorussia (later Belarus), Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Historian Robert Daniels says, "A special dimension that the anti-Communist revolutions shared with some of their predecessors was decolonisation."^[35] Moscow's policy was to settle ethnic Russians in the USSR's non-Russian republics. After independence, minority rights for Russian-speakers has been an issue; see Russians in the Baltic states^[36]

Challenges

Typical challenges of decolonization include state-building, nation-building and economic development

State-building

After independence, the new states needed to establish or strengthen the institutions of a sovereign state – governments, laws, a military, schools, administrative systems, and so on. The amount of self-rule granted prior to independence, and assistance from the colonial power and/or international organizations after independence, varied greatly between colonial powers, and between individual colonies.^[37]

Except for a few absolute monarchies, most post-colonial states are either republics or constitutional monarchies. These new states had to devise constitutions, electoral systems, and other institutions of representative democracy.

Nation-building

Nation-building is the process of creating a sense of identification with, and loyalty to, the state. Nation-building projects seek to replace loyalty to the old colonial power, and/or tribal or regional loyalties, with loyalty to the new state. Elements of nation-building include creating and promoting symbols of the state like a flag and an anthem, monuments, official histories, national sports teams, codifying one or more indigenous official languages, and replacing colonial place-names with local ones.^[38] Nation-building after independence often continues the work began by independence movements during the colonial period.



The **Black Star Monument** in Accra, built by Ghana's first president Kwame Nkrumah to commemorate the country's independence

Settled populations

Decolonization is not an easy matter in colonies where a large population of settlers lives, particularly if they have been there for several generations. This population, in general, was often repatriated, often losing considerable property. For instance, the decolonisation of Algeria by France was particularly uneasy due to the large European and Sephardic Jewish population (see also pied noir), which largely evacuated to France when Algeria became independent. In Zimbabwe, former Rhodesia, president Robert Mugabe has, starting in the 1990s, targeted white African farmers and forcibly seized their property. Other ethnic minorities that are also the product of colonialism may pose problems as well. A large Indian community lived in Uganda – as in most of East Africa – as a result of Britain colonizing both India and East Africa. As many Indians had considerable wealth Idi Amin expelled them for domestic political gain. In some cases, decolonisation is hardly possible or impossible because of the importance of the settler population or where the indigenous population is now in the minority; such is the case of the British population of the Cayman Islands or the European population of the United States of America^[39]

Economic development

Newly independent states also had to develop independent economic institutions – a national currency, banks, companies, regulation, tax systems, etc.

Many colonies were serving as resource colonies which produced raw materials and agricultural products, and as a captive market for goods manufactured in the colonizing country. Many decolonized countries created programs to promote industrialization. Some nationalized industries and infrastructure, and some engaged in land reform to redistribute land to individual farmers or create collective farms.

Some decolonized countries maintain strong economic ties with the former colonial power. The CFA franc is a currency shared by 14 countries in West and Central Africa, mostly former French colonies. The CAF franc is guaranteed by the French treasury.

After independence, many countries created regional economic associations to promote trade and economic development among neighboring countries, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Effects on the colonizers

John Kenneth Galbraith argues that the post–World War II decolonization was brought about for economic reasons. In *A Journey Through Economic Time*, he writes:

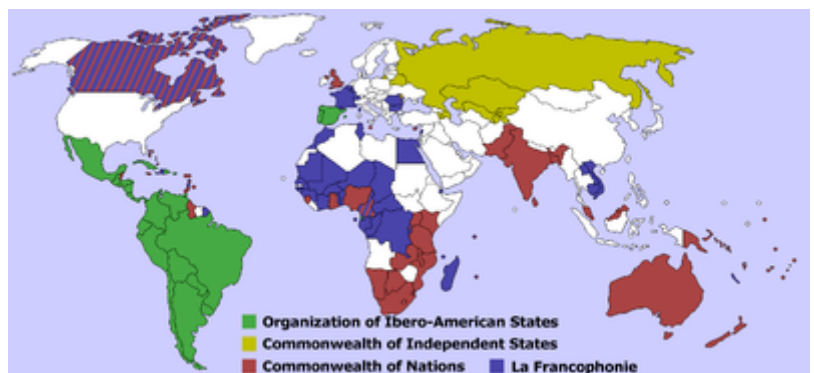
"The engine of economic well-being was now within and between the advanced industrial countries. Domestic economic growth— as now measured and much discussed – came to be seen as far more important than the erstwhile colonial trade.... The economic effect in the United States from the granting of independence to the Philippines was unnoticeable, partly due to the Bell Trade Act, which allowed American monopoly in the economy of the Philippines. The departure of India and Pakistan made small economic difference in the United Kingdom. Dutch economists calculated that the economic effect from the loss of the great Dutch empire in Indonesia was compensated for by a couple of years or so of domestic post-war economic growth. The end of the colonial era is celebrated in the history books as a triumph of national aspiration in the former colonies and of benign good sense on the part of the colonial powers. Lurking beneath, as so often happens, was a strong current of economic interest – or in this case, disinterest."

In general, the release of the colonized caused little economic loss to the colonizers. Part of the reason for this was that major costs were eliminated while major benefits were obtained by alternate means. Decolonization allowed the colonizer to disclaim responsibility for the colonized. The colonizer no longer had the burden of obligation, financial or otherwise, to their colony. However, the colonizer continued to be able to obtain cheap goods and labor as well as economic benefits (see Suez Canal Crisis) from the former colonies. Financial, political and military pressure could still be used to achieve goals desired by the colonizer. Thus decolonization allowed the goals of colonization to be largely achieved, but without its burdens.

Effects on the former colonies

Post-colonial organizations

Due to a common history and culture, former colonial powers created institutions which more loosely associated their former colonies. Membership is voluntary, and in some cases can be revoked if a member state loses some objective criteria (usually a requirement for democratic governance). The organizations serve cultural, economic, and political purposes between the associated countries, although no such organization has become politically prominent as an entity in its own right.



Four international organizations whose membership largely follows the pattern of previous colonial empires.

Former Colonial Power	Organization	Founded
<i>United Kingdom</i>	<u>Commonwealth of Nations</u>	1931
<i>France</i>	<u>French Union</u>	1946
	<u>French Community</u>	1958
	<u>La Francophonie</u>	1970
<i>Spain & Portugal</i>	<u>Latin Union</u>	1954
	<u>Organization of Ibero-American States</u>	1991
<i>Portugal</i>	<u>Community of Portuguese Language Countries</u>	1996
<i>Russia</i>	<u>Commonwealth of Independent States</u>	1991
<i>United States</i>	<u>Commonwealths</u>	1934
	<u>Freely Associated States</u>	1982
<i>Netherlands</i>	<u>De Nederlandse Unie</u>	1949
	<u>De Nederlandse Taalunie</u>	1980

Assassinated anti-colonialist leaders

A non-exhaustive list of assassinated leaders would include:

- Tiradentes was a leading member of the Brazilian seditious movement known as the Inconfidência Mineira against the Portuguese Empire. He fought for an independent Brazilian republic.
- Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi nonviolent leader of the Indian independence movement was assassinated in 1948 by Nathuram Godse.
- Ruben Um Nyobé leader of the Union of the Peoples of Cameroon (UPC), killed by the French SDECE on September 13, 1958. No clear cause has ever been ascertained for the mysterious crash. Assassination has been alleged.
- Barthélemy Boganda leader of a nationalist Central African Republic movement, who died in a plane-crash on March 29, 1959, eight days before the last elections of the colonial era.
- Félix-Roland Moumié successor to Ruben Um Nyobe at the head of the Cameroon's People Union assassinated in Geneva in 1960 by the SDECE (French secret services)^[40]
- Patrice Lumumba the first Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo was assassinated on January 17, 1961.
- Burundi nationalist Louis Rwagasore was assassinated on October 13, 1961, while Pierre Ngendandumwe Burundi's first Hutu prime minister, was also murdered on January 15, 1965.
- Sylvanus Olympio the first president of Togo, was assassinated on January 13, 1963.
- Mehdi Ben Barka, the leader of the Moroccan National Union of Popular Forces (UNPF) and of the Tricontinental Conference, which was supposed to prepare in 1966 in Havana its first meeting gathering national liberation movements from all continents – related to the Non-Aligned Movement but the Tricontinental Conference gathered liberation movements while the Non-Aligned were for the most part states – was 'disappeared' in Paris in 1965, allegedly by Moroccan agents and French police officers.
- Nigerian leader Ahmadu Bello was assassinated in January 1966 during a coup which toppled Nigeria's post-independence government.
- Eduardo Mondlane, the leader of FRELIMO and the father of Mozambican independence, was assassinated in 1969. Both the Portuguese intelligence or the Portuguese secret police PIDE/DGS and elements of FRELIMO, have been accused of killing Mondlane.
- Mohamed Bassiri Sahrawi leader of the Movement for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Wadi el Dhahab was "disappeared" in El Aaiún in 1970, allegedly by the Spanish Legion
- Amílcar Cabral was killed on January 20, 1973 by PAIGC rival Inocêncio Kani, with the help of Portuguese agents operating within the PAIGC.



Gandhi in 1947, with Lord Louis Mountbatten, Britain's last Viceroy of India, and his wife Edwina Mountbatten.

Timeline of independence

This list includes formerly non-self-governing territories, such as colonies, protectorates, condominia, and leased territories. Changes in status of autonomy leading up to and after independence are not listed, and some dates of independence may be disputed. For details, see each national history

18th century to World War I

Year	Colonizer	Event
1776	<u>Great Britain</u>	Thirteen colonies of <u>British America</u> declare their independence a year into a general insurrection. Recognized by Great Britain in 1783 at the <u>Treaty of Paris</u> .
1804	France	After initially revolting only to restore French control, <u>Saint-Domingue</u> declares its independence as <u>Haiti</u> . Recognized by France in 1825 in exchange for £150 million indemnity financed through French banks.
1810	Spain	<u>West Florida</u> declares independence, but is almost immediately annexed by the United States as part of <u>Orleans Territory</u> under its claims from the <u>Louisiana Purchase</u> . Annexation recognized by Spain in 1819.
1811	Spain	<u>Paraguay</u> achieves independence. Recognized by Spain in 1880.
		<u>Venezuela</u> declares its independence. During its revolution, first yields, then joins <u>Gran Colombia</u> , before seceding to achieve independence in 1830.
		<u>Cartagena</u> declares its independence. <u>Cundinamarca</u> and the United Provinces of New Granada followed suit in 1813. Briefly retaken by Spain, saved by <u>Simon Bolivar</u> and united as <u>Colombia</u> in 1821. <u>Panama</u> seceded 1903.
1815	Spain	The Federal League declares its independence of the restored Spanish crown, after having successfully revolted against <u>Napoleonic Spain</u> in 1811. Attacked by <u>Portugal</u> , some provinces united with the future Argentina; others, after a protracted struggle, successfully formed <u>Uruguay</u> in 1828. Recognized by Spain in 1870.
1816	Spain	The United Provinces of South America formally declare their independence of the restored Spanish crown, after having successfully revolted against <u>Napoleonic Spain</u> in its name in 1810. Became Argentina in 1826. Recognized by Spain in 1859. ^{41]}
1818	Spain	<u>Chile</u> declares its independence of the restored crown, after having unsuccessfully revolted against <u>Napoleonic Spain</u> in its name in 1810. Recognized by the Spanish in 1844.
1819	Spain	The Adams-Onís Treaty cedes Florida (also called East Florida) to the United States in exchange for US cession of its claims to Texas under the Louisiana Purchase and in exchange for settling \$5 million of its residents' claims against Spain.
1821	Spain	Following a failed liberal insurrection in <u>New Spain</u> , the colony declares its independence as the <u>Mexican Empire</u> after a liberal mutiny succeeds in Spain. Recognized by Spain in 1836. <u>Texas</u> independent in 1836, annexed to the United States in 1845. <u>Upper California</u> and <u>New Mexico</u> lost to the United States in 1848.
		<u>Chiapas</u> and then all of <u>Guatemala</u> declares its independence as part of the Mexican Empire. Independent from Mexico in 1823 as the <u>Federal Republic of Central America</u> . Divided into <u>Nicaragua</u> , <u>Honduras</u> , <u>Costa Rica</u> , and <u>Guatemala</u> in 1838; remnant renamed <u>El Salvador</u> in 1841.
		<u>Santo Domingo</u> declares independence as <u>Spanish Haiti</u> , requests union with <u>Gran Colombia</u> , and is swiftly annexed by <u>Haiti</u> . It will achieve independence in 1844 only to restore Spanish rule in 1861.
		A Chilean expeditionary force declares the independence of <u>Peru</u> . <u>Bolivia</u> formed from <u>Upper Peru</u> in 1825. Recognized by Spain in 1879.
	<u>Ottoman Empire</u>	<u>Greece</u> revolts. Recognized by the <u>Porte</u> in 1832 in the <u>Treaty of Constantinople</u>
1822	Spain	<u>Quito</u> declares independence as a part of <u>Gran Colombia</u> . Independent from Colombia as <u>Ecuador</u> in 1830. Recognized by Spain in 1840.
	Portugal	<u>Brazil</u> , long the seat of the <u>Portuguese</u> royal government, declares independence under a rogue prince after the king returns to Lisbon. Recognized by Portugal in 1825.
1847	United States	<u>Liberia</u> declares its independence as an organized nation.
1852	<u>Ottoman Empire</u>	<u>Montenegro</u> declares its independence. Recognized in 1878 at the <u>Congress of Berlin</u> . Voluntarily united with <u>Serbia</u> as <u>Yugoslavia</u> in 1918.
1864	<u>Great Britain</u>	The United States of the Ionian Islands a majority Greek protectorate, peaceably united with modern <u>Greece</u> by the <u>Treaty of London</u> .
1865	Spain	<u>Santo Domingo</u> regains independence as the <u>Dominican Republic</u> after four years as a restored

		colony.
1867	<u>Great Britain</u>	Britain grants internal autonomy to Canada, while keeping control of foreign policy. This is popularly considered Canada's independence day; Britain retained legal powers over Canada until 1931, and a role in Canada constitutional law until 1982.
1868	Spain	<u>Cuba</u> briefly declares itself independent before being reconquered.
1869	<u>Ottoman Empire</u>	<u>Serbia</u> declares its full independence from the Ottoman Empire. Recognized in 1878 at the Congress of Berlin. Renamed <u>Yugoslavia</u> in 1929.
1877	<u>Ottoman Empire</u>	The United Principalities of <u>Romania</u> declare their independence. Recognized in 1878 at the Congress of Berlin.
1898	Spain	The United States (barred from annexing <u>Cuba</u> itself by the Teller Amendment) forces Spain to abjure its own claims to the island in the <u>Treaty of Paris</u> ending the <u>Spanish–American War</u> . Various other Spanish colonies are purchased for \$20 million, including the Philippines, which are granted independence in 1934.
1902	United States	Cuba granted independence. <u>Guantanamo Bay</u> is leased in perpetuity as a <u>US Naval base</u> .
1908	<u>Ottoman Empire</u>	<u>Bulgaria</u> , largely autonomous since the Congress of Berlin, declares itself fully independent of the <u>Ottoman Empire</u> .
1912	<u>Ottoman Empire</u>	<u>Albania</u> declares independence. Recognized in the 1913 <u>Treaty of London</u> .

Interwar period

Year	Colonizer	Event
1916	<u>Russian Empire</u>	The independence of <u>Russian Poland</u> as a new kingdom is proclaimed by occupying <u>German</u> and <u>Austro-Hungarian</u> forces. Recognized by <u>Soviet Russia</u> in the 1918 Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Absorbed Polish regions from <u>Germany</u> , <u>Austria</u> , and <u>Hungary</u> following <u>World War I</u> and from <u>Soviet Russia</u> and <u>Soviet Ukraine</u> after the <u>Polish-Soviet War</u> .
1917	<u>Russian Empire</u>	<u>Finland</u> declares its independence. Recognized in the 1918 Treaty of Brest-Litovsk although <u>Karelia</u> remained disputed. <u>Crimean People's Republic</u> declares independence but <u>Crimean Tatar</u> forces hold out less than a month against the <u>Bolsheviks</u> . <u>Volga Tatars</u> declare independence of the <u>Idel-Ural State</u> , other ethnic groups including <u>Volga Germans</u> join them. <u>Kazakhs</u> declare independence of the <u>Alash Autonomy</u> .
1918	<u>Russian Empire</u>	<u>Azerbaijan Democratic Republic</u> , <u>Republic of Georgia</u> and <u>Republic of Armenia</u> declare independence on May 26–28. Occupied by the <u>Soviet Russia</u> in 1920–1921. <u>Estonia</u> , <u>Latvia</u> and <u>Lithuania</u> also declare independence. Occupied by the <u>Soviet Union</u> from 1940 to 1991.
	<u>Austria-Hungary</u>	<u>Bohemia</u> , <u>Moravia</u> , and sections of <u>Silesia</u> , <u>Galicia</u> , and <u>Hungary</u> declare their independence as <u>Czechoslovakia</u> . Recognized in the Treaty of Trianon in 1920. <u>Slovakia</u> independent from 1939 to 1945. <u>Carpathian Ruthenia</u> independent in 1939, eventually annexed to <u>Ukraine</u> . Secession of <u>Slovakia</u> in 1993.
		<u>Croatia-Slavonia</u> and <u>Dalmatia</u> declare their independence as the <u>State of Slovenes, Croats and Serbs</u> and swiftly unites with <u>Serbia</u> as the <u>Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes</u> which later became <u>Yugoslavia</u> .
1919	<u>United Kingdom</u>	End of the protectorate over <u>Afghanistan</u> , when the <u>United Kingdom</u> accepts the presence of a <u>Soviet</u> ambassador in <u>Kabul</u> .
1921	<u>China</u>	<u>Communist Mongolian revolutionaries</u> , with the help of the <u>Red Army</u> , expel the <u>Chinese</u> government presence from <u>Outer Mongolia</u> , and <u>Mongolia</u> passes into the heavy influence of the <u>Soviet Union</u> . <u>Mongolia</u> was recognized by the <u>United Nations</u> in 1961.
1922	<u>United Kingdom</u>	In <u>Ireland</u> , following insurgency by the <u>Irish Republican Army</u> , most of <u>Ireland</u> separates from the <u>United Kingdom</u> as the <u>Irish Free State</u> , remaining as a dominion. <u>Northern Ireland</u> , the north-east area of the island, remains within the <u>United Kingdom</u> .
		<u>Egypt</u> is unilaterally granted independence by the <u>United Kingdom</u> . However, four matters (imperial communications, defence, the protection of foreign interests and minorities, as well as <u>Sudan</u>) remain "absolutely reserved to the discretion" of the <u>British</u> government, which greatly restricts the full exercise of <u>Egyptian</u> sovereignty.
1923	<u>United Kingdom</u>	End of the <i>de facto</i> protectorate over <u>Nepal</u> which was never truly colonized.
1930	<u>United Kingdom</u>	The <u>United Kingdom</u> returns the leased port territory at <u>Weihaiwei</u> to <u>China</u> , the first episode of decolonisation in East Asia.
1931	<u>United Kingdom</u>	The Statute of <u>Westminster</u> grants virtually full independence to <u>Canada</u> , the <u>Irish Free State</u> , and the <u>Union of South Africa</u> when it declares the <u>British parliament</u> incapable of passing law over these former colonies without their own consent. Doesn't take effect over <u>New Zealand</u> , <u>Newfoundland</u> , and the <u>Commonwealth of Australia</u> , until independently ratified by these dominions.
1932	<u>United Kingdom</u>	Ends <u>League of Nations Mandate</u> over <u>Iraq</u> . The <u>United Kingdom</u> continues to station troops in the country and influence the <u>Iraqi</u> government until 1958.
1934	<u>United States</u>	Establishes the <u>Philippine Islands</u> into a <u>Commonwealth</u> under the provisions of the <u>Philippine Independence Act</u> . Abrogates <u>Platt Amendment</u> which gave it direct authority to intervene in <u>Cuba</u> .
1941	<u>France</u>	<u>Lebanon</u> declares independence, effectively ending the <u>French mandate</u> (previously together with <u>Syria</u>) – it is recognized in 1943.
1941	<u>Italy</u>	<u>Ethiopia</u> , <u>Eritrea</u> and <u>Tigray Province</u> (appended to it), and <u>Italian Somaliland</u> are taken by the <u>Allies</u> after an uneasy occupation of <u>Ethiopia</u> since 1935–36, and no longer joined as one colonial federal state; the <u>Ogaden</u> desert (disputed by <u>Somalia</u>) remains under <u>British</u> military control until 1948.
1942	<u>United Kingdom</u>	<u>Australia</u> ratifies the Statute of <u>Westminster</u> .
1944	<u>Denmark</u>	Following a plebiscite, <u>Iceland</u> formally becomes an independent republic on June 17, 1944.

1945	Japan	After surrender of Japan, Korea is occupied by the <u>Soviet Union</u> and the United States.
		After surrender of Japan, <u>Mengjiang</u> and <u>Manchukuo</u> are returned to China. <u>Taiwan</u> is put under the post-war occupation of China in accordance with the arrangement in <u>General Order No. 1</u> , but China has never officially gained sovereignty of Taiwan.
	France	Vietnam declares independence, but France does not recognize it until 1954.
	Netherlands	Indonesia declares independence, which the Netherlands does not recognize until December 1949.

Cold War

Year	Colonizer	Event
1946	United States	The <u>treaty of Manila</u> is signed, effectively ending over 380 years of foreign domination in the Philippines. <u>United States military bases</u> continued to be stationed in the islands.
	United Kingdom	The former emirate of <u>Transjordan</u> (present-day Jordan) becomes an independent <u>Hashemite kingdom</u> when the United Kingdom relinquishes <u>UN trusteeship</u> .
	France	The former Mandate of <u>Syria</u> becomes an independent Republic.
1947	United Kingdom	New Zealand ratifies the Statute of <u>Westminster</u> .
	United Kingdom	The British government leaves <u>British India</u> , which is partitioned into the secular state of <u>Republic of India</u> and the Muslim state of <u>Pakistan</u> (the eastern half of which will later become independent as <u>Bangladesh</u>).
1948	United Kingdom	In the Far East, <u>Burma</u> and <u>Ceylon</u> (Sri Lanka) become independent. In the Middle East, the state of <u>Israel</u> is formed less than a year after the British government withdraws from the <u>Palestine Mandate</u> ; the remainder of Palestine becomes de facto part of the Arab states of <u>Egypt</u> (<u>Gaza strip</u>) and <u>Transjordan</u> (<u>West Bank</u>).
	United States	<u>Republic of Korea</u> is established in the southern part of the Korean peninsula.
	<u>Soviet Union</u>	<u>Democratic People's Republic of Korea</u> is established in the northern part of the peninsula.
1949	United Kingdom	The <u>Dominion of Newfoundland</u> joins Canada. End of the <i>de facto</i> protectorate over <u>Bhutan</u> .
	France	<u>Laos</u> becomes independent.
	Netherlands	The Netherlands recognises the sovereignty of <u>Indonesia</u> following an armed and diplomatic struggle since 1945.
1951	Italy, United Kingdom	The Mandate of <u>Eritrea</u> is given by the British to Ethiopia.
	Italy, France, United Kingdom	<u>Libya</u> becomes an independent kingdom.
1952	United States	According to the United States, <u>Puerto Rico</u> becomes a self-governing <u>Commonwealth</u> associated to the U.S. through the creation of the 1952 Constitution for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, which stands as a bilateral pact between two nations. This issue has been under review by the United Nations Special Committee, who continue to urge the United States to expedite self-determination processes for the island.
1953	France	France recognizes <u>Cambodia's</u> independence.
1954	France	Vietnam's independence recognized, though the nation is partitioned. The <u>Puducherry</u> enclave is incorporated into India. Beginning of the <u>Algerian War of Independence</u>
	United Kingdom	The United Kingdom withdraws from the last part of Egypt it controls: the <u>Suez Canal</u> zone.
1955	United States	The <u>Bell Trade Act</u> is repealed, providing a more independent market for the Philippines. The <u>Laurel–Langley Agreement</u> is signed to take its place.
1956	United Kingdom	Anglo-Egyptian <u>Sudan</u> becomes independent.
	France	<u>Tunisia</u> and the sherifian kingdom of <u>Morocco</u> in the Maghreb achieve independence.
	Spain	Spain-controlled areas in <u>Morocco</u> become independent.
1957	United Kingdom	<u>Ghana</u> becomes independent, initiating the decolonisation of <u>sub-Saharan Africa</u>
		The <u>Federation of Malay</u> became independent! ^[42]
1958	France	<u>Guinea</u> on the coast of West Africa is granted independence.
	United	Signing of the <u>Alaska Statehood Act</u> by <u>Dwight D. Eisenhower</u> , granting <u>Alaska</u> the possibility

	States	of the equal rights of statehood
	United Kingdom	UN trustee, the United Kingdom, withdraws from Iraq, which becomes an independent Hashemite Kingdom (like Jordan, but soon to become a republic through the first of several coups d'état).
1959	United States	Hawaii becomes the fiftieth state in the United States.
1960	United Kingdom	Nigeria, British Somaliland (present-day northwestern Somalia), and most of Cyprus become independent, though the UK retains sovereign control over Akrotiri and Dhekelia. As the State of Somaliland, the former British Somaliland protectorate merges as scheduled five days later with the newly independent Trust Territory of Somaliland (the former Italian Somaliland) to form the Somali Republic (Somalia).
	France	Benin (then Dahomey), Upper Volta (present-day Burkina Faso), Cameroon, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Ivory Coast, Gabon, the Mali Federation (split the same year into present-day Mali and Senegal), Mauritania, Niger, Togo and the Central African Republic (the Oubangui Chari) and Madagascar all become independent.
	Belgium	The Belgian Congo (also known as Congo-Kinshasa, later renamed Zaire and presently the Democratic Republic of the Congo), becomes independent.
1961	United Kingdom	Tanganyika (formerly a German colony under UK trusteeship, merged to form Tanzania in 1964 with the island of Zanzibar, formerly a proper British colony wrested from the Omani sultanate); Sierra Leone, Kuwait and British Cameroon become independent. South Africa declares itself a republic.
	Portugal	The former coastal enclave colonies of Goa, Daman and Diu are taken over by India.
1962	United Kingdom	Uganda in Africa, and Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago in the Caribbean, achieve independence.
	France	End of Algerian War, Algeria becomes independent.
	Belgium	Rwanda and Burundi (then Urundi) attain independence through the ending of the Belgian trusteeship.
	New Zealand	The South Sea UN trusteeship over the Polynesian kingdom of Western Samoa (formerly German Samoa and nowadays called just Samoa) is relinquished.
1963	United Kingdom	Kenya becomes independent.
		Singapore, Sarawak and Sabah (North Borneo) formed Malaysia with the independent Federation of Malaya ^[43] Singapore became independent of Malaysia two years later ^[44]
	Netherlands	Netherlands New Guinea occupied by Indonesia.
1964	United Kingdom	Northern Rhodesia declares independence as Zambia and Malawi, formerly Nyasaland does the same. The Mediterranean island of Malta becomes independent.
1965		Southern Rhodesia (the present Zimbabwe) declares independence as Rhodesia, but is not recognized. Gambia is recognized as independent. The British protectorate over the Maldives archipelago in the Indian Ocean is ended.
1966		In the Caribbean, Barbados and Guyana; and in Africa, Botswana (then Bechuanaland) and Lesotho become independent.
1967		On the Arabian peninsula, Aden colony becomes independent as South Yemen, to be united with formerly Ottoman North Yemen in 1990–1991.
1968	Portugal	Mauritius and Swaziland achieve independence.
		After nine years of organized guerrilla resistance, most of Guinea-Bissau comes under native control.
		Equatorial Guinea (then Rio Muni) achieves independence.
	Australia	Relinquishes UN trusteeship (nominally shared by the United Kingdom and New Zealand) of Nauru in the South Sea.
1971	United Kingdom	Fiji and Tonga are given independence
		Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and seven Trucial States (the same year, six federated together as United Arab Emirates and the seventh, Ras al-Kaimah, joined soon after) become independent Arab monarchies in the Persian Gulf as the British protectorates are lifted.

	Pakistan	Bangladesh achieves independence from Pakistan with the military help of India.
1973	United Kingdom	The <u>Bahamas</u> are granted independence.
	Portugal	Guerrillas unilaterally declare independence in the Southeastern regions of <u>Guinea-Bissau</u>
1974	United Kingdom	<u>Grenada</u> in the <u>Caribbean</u> becomes independent.
	Portugal	<u>Guinea-Bissau</u> on the coast of West-Africa is recognized as independent by Portugal.
	United States	The <u>Laurel–Langley Agreement</u> is repealed by <u>Ferdinand Marcos</u>
1975	France	The <u>Comoros</u> archipelago in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Africa is granted independence.
	Portugal	Angola, Mozambique and the island groups of Cape Verde and São Tomé and Príncipe, all four in Africa, achieve independence. <u>East Timor</u> declares independence, but is subsequently occupied and annexed by Indonesia nine days later
	Netherlands	<u>Suriname</u> (then Dutch Guiana) achieves independence.
	Australia	Released from trusteeship, <u>Papua New Guinea</u> gains independence.
1976	United Kingdom	<u>Seychelles</u> archipelago in the Indian Ocean off the African coast becomes independent (one year after granting of self-rule).
	Spain	The Spanish colonial rule de facto terminated over the <u>Western Sahara</u> (then Rio de Oro), when the territory was passed on to and partitioned between <u>Mauritania</u> and <u>Morocco</u> (which annexes the entire territory in 1979), rendering the declared independence of the <u>Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic</u> ineffective to the present day
1977	France	<u>French Somaliland</u> also known as the 'French Territory of the Afars and the Issa' (after its dominant ethnic groups), the present <u>Djibouti</u> , gains independence.
1978	United Kingdom	<u>Dominica</u> in the Caribbean and the <u>Solomon Islands</u> , as well as <u>Tuvalu</u> (then the Ellice Islands), all in the South Sea, become independent.
1979	United States	Returns the <u>Panama Canal Zone</u> (held under a regime <i>sui generis</i> since 1903) to the republic of Panama.
		The <u>Gilbert Islands</u> (present-day <u>Kiribati</u>) in the South Sea as well as <u>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines</u> and <u>Saint Lucia</u> in the Caribbean become independent.
1980		<u>Zimbabwe</u> (then [Southern] Rhodesia), already independent <i>de facto</i> , becomes formally independent. The joint Anglo-French colony of the <u>New Hebrides</u> becomes the independent island republic of <u>Vanuatu</u> .
1981	United Kingdom	<u>Belize</u> (then British Honduras) and <u>Antigua & Barbuda</u> become independent.
1982		Canada gains full independence from the British parliament with the <u>Canada Act</u>
1983		<u>Saint Kitts and Nevis</u> (an associated state since 1963) becomes independent.
1984		<u>Brunei</u> sultanate on Borneo achieves independence.
1986		Australia and New Zealand become fully independent with the <u>Australia Act 1986</u> and The <u>New Zealand Constitution Act 1986</u>
1990	South Africa	<u>Namibia</u> becomes independent from South Africa.
	United States	The <u>UN Security Council</u> gives final approval to end the <u>U.S. Trust Territory of the Pacific</u> (dissolved already in 1986), finalizing the independence of the <u>Marshall Islands</u> and the <u>Federated States of Micronesia</u> having been a colonial possession of the empire of Japan before UN trusteeship.
1991	<u>Soviet Union</u>	<u>Estonia</u> , <u>Latvia</u> , <u>Lithuania</u> , <u>Ukraine</u> , <u>Belarus</u> , <u>Moldova</u> , <u>Armenia</u> , <u>Georgia</u> , <u>Azerbaijan</u> , <u>Kazakhstan</u> , <u>Uzbekistan</u> , <u>Tajikistan</u> , <u>Kyrgyzstan</u> , <u>Russia</u> and <u>Turkmenistan</u> become independent from the Soviet Union.

Post–Cold War era

Year	Colonizer	Event
1993	<u>Ethiopia</u>	<u>Eritrea</u> , a former <u>Italian</u> colony declares independence and is subsequently recognized.
1994	United States	Palau (after a transitional period as a Republic since 1981, and before part of the U.S. Trust territory of the Pacific) becomes independent from its former trustee, having been a mandate of the Japanese Empire before UN trusteeship.
1997	United Kingdom	The <u>British overseas territory</u> of <u>Hong Kong</u> is given to <u>People's Republic of China</u>
1999	Portugal	Macau is given to People's Republic of China It is the last in a series of coastal enclaves that militarily stronger powers had obtained through treaties from the Ming and Qing Empire which ruled China. Macau, like Hong Kong, is not organized into the existing provincial structure applied to other provinces of the People's Republic of China, but is guaranteed an autonomous system of government within the People's Republic of China as a "Special Administrative Region" or S.A.R.
2002	Indonesia	<u>East Timor</u> formally achieves independence after a transitional UN administration, three years after Indonesia ended its quarter-century occupation of the former Portuguese colony
2006	Serbia and Montenegro	<u>Montenegro</u>
2011	<u>Sudan</u>	<u>South Sudan</u> formally achieves independence.

See also

- Current United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories
- Neocolonialism
- Imperialism
- Partition (politics)
- Separatism
- Secession
- Organisation internationale de la Francophonie
- Indigenous decolonization

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