

COLONIALISM, EXPLOITATION, REPARATIONS??

Coordinator: Ajit Kumar

From about the middle of the 15th century through the middle of the 20th century, many European and other powers colonized large parts of Asia, the Middle East, Africa and the Americas. Their aim was to establish trade routes to facilitate commerce; in some cases trade led to warfare, conquest and the rule of the colonizer nation. Many countries from Western Europe and Japan were involved in this exercise. Some nations expanded over land; nations such as the United States and Russia are examples.

In this Study Group we will focus on and discuss the colonial history of two nations during this period—Japan and Great Britain: how the colonizer started the process; how conquest was achieved; how the exploitation began and continued for 300+ years. Finally, we will discuss the case for reparations. Should it be undertaken? Has there been reparation thus far?

Ajit Kumar Intellectually challenged with a wide range of disinterests but constantly seeking affirmation, he is almost capable of fulfilling a coordinator's role. A faux Trumpista, inherently lazy, a reliable procrastinator but seeking nirvana from a loyal study group. Unable to articulate clearly or concisely, has overcome a stammer handicap after a 75-year effort by listening to Obama praise the opening lines of the U.S. constitution: "We the people". He co-coordinated two Study Groups but cannot remember their names.

Type of Study Group: Presentation followed by discussion

Readings and other Materials/Online Services:

Most of the reading material, no more than 40 pages a week, will be excerpts from the books listed below. In addition, materials from periodicals will be provided by the coordinator by email other electronic media. Before class begins, participants may be asked to get *Anarchy* by William Dalrymple. There is no need to buy the other books.

Inglorious Empire: what the British did to India by Shashi Tharoor;
Reading Colonial Japan: Text, Context, and Critique by Michele Mason and Helen Lee;

[*The Anarchy: The East India Company, Corporate Violence, and the Pillage of an Empire* by William Dalrymple].

******* SYLLABUS - A WORK IN PROGRESS *******

WEEK 1

TOPIC: Scope of Study Group

Definitions: colonialism, exploitation, reparations; overview of European colonial history from about 1450 to 1800; overview of colonialism by countries' expanding borders.

READING:

Selections of relevant pages, articles.

QUESTIONS:

Would you consider the U.S. or Russia a colonial power? In your opinion are there any countries today that are colonial? Any that are colonized?

WEEK 2

TOPIC: Conception of the Japanese Empire

The Edo period, Shogunates; lead-up to the Meiji period; the role of Admiral Perry; the Meiji period, evolution to modernism

READING:

Selections from the texts on Japan and other relevant materials.

QUESTIONS:

Were there differences in the Japanese empire compared to the European empires? What were the differences?

WEEK 3

TOPIC: The Japanese Empire, expansion & its timeline

The seeds of Empire; history & timeline of Japanese colonial expansion; Taiwan, Korea, Micronesia

READING:

Selections from the texts on Japan and other relevant materials.

QUESTIONS:

Which countries of Asia escaped Japanese colonialism? Why?

WEEK 4

TOPIC: The Japanese Empire; impact abroad and at home
Impact on colonized nation; benefits for Japan.

WEEK 5

TOPIC: The Japanese Empire, its end and aftereffects
World war II ends Japan's colonialism; effect of Japanese colonial rule today on the colonized nations.

WEEK 6: The need for British commerce

WEEK 7: The formation of the East India Company

WEEK 8: The rise of the East India Company

WEEK 9: Impact on local trade and commerce

WEEK 10: Impact on Britain

WEEK 11: From trader to ruler

WEEK 12: Reparations

LP² STUDY GROUP PROPOSAL FOR SPRING 2023