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Introduction

Chapter 3 : Colonialism and Racism

Exercice : Comprehension Question

A. Chapter 3 : Colonialism and Racism

The colonial encirclement of the world is an integral component of European history from the Early Modern Period to the phase of decolonisation. Individual national and expansion histories referred to each other in varying degrees at different times but often also reinforced each other. Transfer processes within Europe and in the colonies show that not only genuine colonial powers such as Spain and England, but also "latecomers" such as Germany participated in the historical process of colonial expansion with which Europe decisively shaped world history. In turn, this process also clearly shaped Europe itself. (retrieved from Wikipedia)
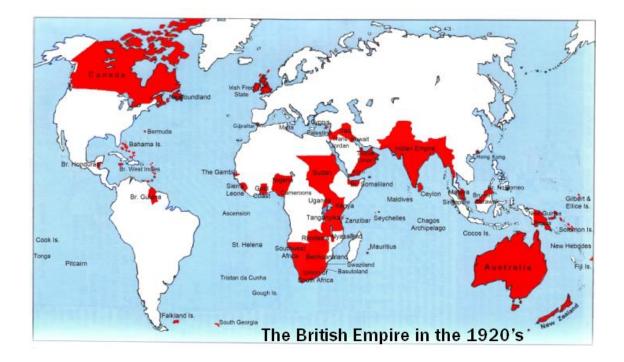
1. 1- Colonialism

Colonialism is the policy of a foreign polity seeking to extend or retain its authority over other people or territories, generally with the aim of opening trade opportunities. The colonizing country seeks to benefit from the colonized country or land mass. In the process, colonizers imposed their religion, economics, and medicinal practices on the natives. Some argue this was a positive move toward modernization, while other scholars refute this theory as being biased and Eurocentric, noting that modernization is a concept introduced by Europeans. Colonialism is largely regarded as a relationship of domination of an indigenous majority by a minority of foreign invaders where the latter rule in pursuit of its interests(Adopted from "An Introduction to Inter-cultural Studies")

2.   2- Case study: The British Empire

The British Empire comprised the dominions, colonies, protectorates, mandates and other territories ruled or administered by the United Kingdom and its predecessor states. It originated with the overseas possessions and trading posts established by England between the late 16th and early 18th centuries. At its height, it was the largest empire in history and, for over a century, was the foremost global power.[1] By 1913, the British Empire held sway over 412 million people, 23% of the world population at the time,[2] and by 1920, it covered 35,500,000 km2 (13,700,000 sq mi),[3] 24% of the Earth's total land area.[4] As a result, its political, legal, linguistic and cultural legacy is widespread. At the peak of its power, the phrase "the empire on which the sun never sets" was often used to describe the British Empire, because its expanse around the globe meant that the sun was always shining on at least one of its territories(Adopted from "An Introduction to Inter-cultural Studies")

The British Empire in the 1920's

3. 3- The Post-colonial World

Postcolonialism, the historical period or state of affairs representing the aftermath of Western colonialism; the term can also be used to describe the concurrent project to reclaim and rethink the history and agency of people subordinated under various forms of imperialism. Postcolonialism signals a possible future of overcoming colonialism, yet new forms of domination or subordination can come in the wake of such changes, including new forms of global empire. Postcolonialism should not be confused with the claim that the world we live in now is actually devoid of colonialism.(Adopted from "An Introduction to Inter-cultural Studies")

B. Exercice : Comprehension Question

What impact did the British empire on the post-colonial world?

Solution des exercices

Students should discuss three main issues : the emergence of post-colonial literature, the idea of resistance in literature and the increasing animosity towards minority groups living in the U.K.