



Would Europe have become wealthy without colonies? A retrospective analysis of the impact of the supply of goods from colonial countries on the economic strength of the EU

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Abstract. The relevance of this topic is growing due to the desire of European states to clarify their place in the formation and development of the global economy. The purpose of this study was to theoretically analyse the impact of raw materials and goods from the colonies on the development of the economic sector in European countries. This study analysed a range of scientific sources and materials, and the following scientific methods were used: structural-functional and dialectical methods, synthesis, logical, and comparative analysis, and generalisation. The findings of this study proved that without colonial possessions, Europe would not have been such an influential continent as it is in the modern world. The study showed how the European Union has done a tremendous job and gained the status of a fairly developed and rich association. It was shown that for a long time Europe exploited dependent territories, which made it the most influential union. These territories include countries in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and South America. The study proved that the colonies had a special impact on the socio-economic development of not only European countries, but also other countries of the world. The colonial policy pursued by Europe influenced the development of the world economy. The study of the history of European development is ongoing, and therefore this study is of great practical importance for determining how the European economy was formed and developed

Keywords: colonial expansion; Great Geographical Discoveries; European integration; colonialism; world economy

INTRODUCTION

In the period from the 16th to the 20th century, European states provided themselves with markets, sources of raw materials, food, and cheap labour through colonial possessions. The existence of colonies made it possible to plunder and politically rule foreign territories outside of the economy. During this period, the economic dependence of colonial countries on developed countries grew rapidly. A. Weber (2019) devoted considerable attention to this study and concluded that it was the reason for the formation of global economic ties and the creation of colossal colonial empires. According to the

author's conclusions, a colony is a dependent territory ruled by another state (metropolis) that does not have political and economic independence.

Europe literally ruled the world. According to Scottish scientists J. Comaroff & J. Comaroff (2021), this happened after the Great Geographical Discoveries. Later, Europeans took over the world and began to divide it among themselves. Advanced European countries divided South and Southeast Africa, Oceania, and the Caribbean into colonies. Great Britain had the most colonies. France was considered the second colonial empire. Although Portugal

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and Spain were the founders of colonialism, they lost their possessions and became minor colonial empires. Germany was the last to start colonial wars, but it quickly turned into a large colonial empire. M. Oliynyk (2019) describes the European Union as a special entity that has no equal throughout history. Most of the founding countries of the Union, namely Spain, Portugal, Great Britain, France, and Germany, were the most influential powerful world metropolises that waged constant colonial wars in various parts of the world. The colonial system was finally formed by the end of the 19th century when most of the world was divided. The colonial policy of the European powers had both negative and positive consequences. Europeans actively invested heavily in the development of the conquered territories. F. Ansprenger (2018) proved that the formation of the Third World in the 20th century marked the beginning of the establishment of new types of relations between European states and former colonial possessions. The authority of developing countries that have undergone a transformation process in the social and economic spheres has grown on the global stage. Despite the elimination of the colonial policy, the exploitation of these lands by the metropolises remained.

European countries did not want to lose sources of raw materials, labour, and markets, and tried to turn the colonies into an integrated part of the capitalist economy. As noted by A. Birhane (2020), the former colonial countries were underdeveloped, with some countries retaining pre-capitalist relations and a low level of productive forces. After the elimination of the colonial policy, these countries began to develop their economies, fully industrialise, and solve the problem of employment, etc. E. Hugh (2018) proves that this issue is quite relevant, and therefore research on this topic continues. Scholars are trying to recreate the history of the European Union (EU) as one of the most influential and developed associations in the world. Thus, according to the above, the purpose of this study was to analyse the political activities of leading European countries and their cooperation with the EU.

▮ MATERIALS AND METHODS ▮

Since this subjectualisation. As for the dialectical method, it is responsible for the logical structure of the study, as it proceeds from the general to the concrete. The paper begins with a discussion of the theoretical foundations of the study, including the terms “colonisation” and “colonial policy”, and concludes with a direct examination of the consequences of such policies for Europe, the colonial powers and the world as a whole.

The method of logical analysis plays a significant role in this study. Thanks to this method, the

general question was divided into separate components, namely the concept of colonisation, the heyday of colonisation, how the countries of Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Latin America were conquered by the leading European powers, and what principles of colonial policy existed, as well as the impact of such policy on the development of colonies and European states. Equally important is the method of synthesis, which was used to establish the connection between the elements of the overall study. As for the method of comparative analysis, it was used to compare the results of colonial policy in the UK, Germany, France, and Portugal, and to identify the similarities and differences in the principles of policy implementation in the colonies. Based on this, the role of the colonies in the socio-economic development of Europe was determined.

As for the theoretical framework of this study, it is subordinate to the method of scientific literature analysis. A special role in the study is played by P.M. Leonenko & P.I. Yukhymenko (2004), I. Viter (2019), and M. Oliynyk (2019). The important role of these studies lies in a detailed investigation of the preconditions of the Great Geographical Discoveries, their significance for the historical development of humankind, as well as a detailed analysis of the impact of the Great Geographical Discoveries on the economic development of European countries in the 15th and first half of the 17th centuries. The implications for European civilisation and for the civilisations of the “open lands” are explored. The following studies are no less important: V. Dolid (2009), M. Farrell (2010), S. Tolstov (2017), E. Hugh (2018), N. Papaniko (2019), and A. Birhane (2020). They provide information about the first attempts of Europeans to conquer the colonies. N. Nunn (2020) examines the current economic performance of the European Union from a historical perspective. K. Larres (1996), D. Russell (2001), F. Ansprenger (2018), and A. Hrubinko & N. Buhlai (2020) examine the legacies of the decolonised world and explore the new relations between European countries and former colonies. Through the literature analysis, the author identified and investigated the relevant set of scientific sources and materials, which helped to analyse the current views of scholars, both Ukrainian and those from other countries, on this issue and to formulate the author's own position.

▮ RESULTS ▮

The economic strength of the European Union is the joint economic activity of its member states. Therefore, the relevance of this issue lies in the desire of each member state to define its role in the development of the economic sector of the European Union. For a more detailed analysis, it is necessary to consider the role of colonies in the development of the

socio-economic sphere in some European countries separately. At the same time, there is a problem of investigating the impact of the Great Geographical Discoveries on the economic development of European civilisation, as it is currently understudied. The most influential European powers that had power over many colonies were Spain, Germany, France, Great Britain, and Portugal. They divided the countries of the Pacific, Caribbean, and Africa. The great geographical discoveries and the events that followed played a vital role in the development of the Western European economy. The possibility of enriching individuals and the state on a large scale has emerged. English researchers compare this policy to globalisation (Nunn, 2020).

One of the consequences of the Great Discoveries was the emergence of colonial empires. The first colonial empires were Spain and Portugal, followed by France, the Netherlands, England, and Germany. This brought large profits to the metropolitan countries, which played a major role in the development of their economies. Back in ancient times, before the Great Discoveries, the term “colony” meant the seizure of someone else’s territory. The colonies were a source of labour and raw materials for the metropolises. Later, the term acquired a different meaning. The colonial system began to take shape. The conquered territories factually lost their political and economic independence, and the metropolises introduced capitalist relations. At the stage of initial capital accumulation and manufacturing production, the colonial policy of European states was limited to the plundering of local valuables. Various goods, animal and vegetable raw materials, and cheap labour were exported to Europe. After the Industrial Revolution, the role of the colonies changed somewhat. Colonial powers were transformed into a market for industrial raw materials for more developed countries. This contributed to the economic and social development of the dependent territories (Larres, 1996). The early 20th century saw the end of the formation of industrial society in the developed world and the creation of colossal colonial empires, which were formed by transforming the lands of North Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Latin America into semi-colonies and colonies. Colonisation cannot be defined as a positive or negative phenomenon. It is positioned as a violent invasion of foreign territories and exploitation of the indigenous population and natural resources, and on the other hand, as an impetus for development. However, it is important to highlight the historical assessment of such a policy, which, although exploitative, was carried out in progressive directions. The political, economic, spiritual, and cultural spheres of both colonies and metropolises were affected accordingly (Weber, 2019).

English scholars emphasise that the colonies served as a source of exploitation of a massive number of natural resources. With the beginning of the industrial era, the UK became the country with the largest number of colonies. The establishment of colonies outside England was of great social importance. Virginia was an English colony for a long time. Exotic fruits, sugar, citrus fruits, tobacco, etc. were exported from its territories. The UK, having a geographically favourable location, actively conducted legal trade with the colonies of Spain and Portugal, developed smuggling as a trade, and also stimulated the spread of piracy and corsair. Britain, being a metropolis, exported some goods to its territory. During this period, London became the centre of business activity. Notably, the UK entered modern history as a country with a relatively mild transformation of the colonial system. Former colonial states became allies and formed the international organisation Commonwealth of Nations (Dolid, 2009). The presence of colonies turned the Netherlands into a more economically developed country in Europe. The state was quite small, but at that time it already had a well-developed industry and a large merchant fleet. Amsterdam and Antwerp became centres of international trade and had close ties with the colonies and other European countries (Oliynyk, 2019).

Notably, each country’s colonial policy was different. This confirms the existence of selective colonisation method in the Portuguese system. The essence of this method was to create military factors on the coasts, from which goods, raw materials, etc. were supplied to European countries. The Spanish model was characterised by a feudal type of economy. The indigenous population served as a source of labour for gold and silver mines and sugar cane plantations. This led to demographic problems due to the mass extinction of people. Piracy was an important source of revenue for the state budget. English and French pirates often plundered Spanish ships carrying gold and silver from America (Yevstratyev, 2020).

Immediately after the Great Discoveries and the emergence of colonies, Europeans began to grow new crops such as corn, tomato, beans, and tropical fruits, sugar, and chocolate. With the advent of the potato, the population of Europe virtually forgot about hunger. Child mortality has decreased. The sale of sugar produced in the colonies of South America contributed to the development of the food industry (Papanko, 2019). Until the early 1880s, Europe owned only the coast of the African continent. Later, due to the special economic, military, and social evolution of Europe, the process of colonisation of African countries began to accelerate. Only Liberia and Ethiopia were still free from European rule. There were many reasons for the intensification of

the conquest process. First of all, they were related to Europe's internal problems. Indigenous people were actively exported from Africa to developed countries, where they were used as labour. They worked on coffee, sugar, and cotton plantations. Slaves became the most lucrative commodity, and countries such as the United Kingdom, Portugal, and Holland became the main slave trading powers (Tolstov, 2017).

One of the main reasons for invading African lands is research. In the 19th century, European explorers made expeditions to Africa. The continent is rich in various minerals that are in short supply in Europe, including diamonds, gold, oil, coal, and non-ferrous metals. Initially, the main purpose of these visits was to find the legendary city of Timbuktu and to chart the course of the Niger River. Later, freight forwarders began to describe details of markets, resources, and goods for wealthy Europeans who financed the journeys. The western regions of Africa are known as the "graves of the white man". This was due to dangerous diseases such as malaria and fever. Europeans wanted to find a cure for diseases. This was another reason for the permanent presence of Europeans in African lands. In 1817, two French scientists, Pierre-Joseph Pelletier, and Joseph Bienheim Caventou, extracted quinine from the bark of the South American quinine tree, which became a solution to malaria. This discovery allowed Europeans to survive the dangerous consequences of diseases on the continent. The advent of vaccination and disease prevention has reduced infant mortality. Today, the African Union, which includes all 55 countries of the African continent, is the main strategic partner of the European Union (Farrell, 2010).

In their studies, John and Jean Comaroff investigated the principle of the development of countries after the collapse of the great colonial empires. They concluded that the modern development of states is factually determined by the strategy used by metropolises in their time. In countries where the geographical and climatic conditions were very favourable, Europeans founded settlements and created political institutions, such as in New Zealand and Australia. In places where conditions were not favourable, there was a high mortality rate, and Europeans tried not to settle. Such areas served exclusively as sources of natural resources. Political institutions were not created here, but a predominantly repressive system of governance functioned, and the economy was focused on the export of natural resources (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2021). Europeans were forcibly imposing capitalist relations. This led to the transformation or destruction of pre-capitalist society, traditional institutions that had been built in colonial countries for a long time. British researcher James Allison argued that colonialism

disrupted the natural development of society. The colonisers' activities caused the depletion of land and a decrease in yields. Tens of thousands of residents died of hunger and epidemics. Together with colonialism, Europeans brought the ideas of democracy, multiparty system, pluralism, and the principle of separation of powers into three branches of government. Most educated people formed special study circles for political figures, where they trained local intellectuals according to European standards. The colonisers did historically progressive things and involved peoples in the development of capitalist civilisation, although this was done by brutal methods (Ellison, 2000).

Over time, favourable conditions were created for the development of a market economy and the emergence of new classes of society. To accelerate the development of a market economy, companies such as the East India Company were created. Its purpose was to operate on the principles of capitalism. Such organisations created the necessary infrastructure: post, telegraph, railways, banks, and built port cities. The gradual destruction of traditional structures caused discontent among the masses, which led to the emergence of anti-colonial movements. Intellectuals and representatives of other upper classes contributed to the transformation of such movements into national liberation movements. Later, this caused the collapse of the colonial system of imperialism (Russell, 2001). In general, the economic policies of the states towards the colonies were similar. European countries transferred all feudal possessions to their dependent territories. Widespread was the plantation economy, which employed slaves – indigenous people who lived in the colonial country but were transported to the metropolis for hard labour. Such farms were similar to capitalist farms that work for the market. However, crude forms of coercion and dependence were used here (Hrubinko & Buhlai, 2020).

Professor M. Mastrantonio (2022) conducted a study and identified other prerequisites for the overthrow of the colonial system. They can be divided into two groups: internal and external. Internal preconditions include the ability of the people to fight for national liberation. Italian colonialism was destroyed directly by Allied military action during World War II. Most of the British and French colonies were liberated mainly peacefully, through compromises with the local elite, which was facilitated by the national liberation movement. The Portuguese colonies were liberated during a long guerrilla struggle, sometimes supported by the armed forces. External factors include the emergence of two blocs that wanted to increase their influence at the expense of the Asian and African continents. The emergence of this rivalry limited the possibilities of using force to

control the colonies. The second external prerequisite is the emergence of new sources of productive forces development, which reduced the importance of colonies in the reproductive processes in developed countries.

Thus, liberation from colonial expansion formally took place after the Second World War. Although the colonial system had negative consequences, it is defined as a progressive phenomenon in human history, as it gave the opportunity for independent choice, national self-determination, and discourse on new achievements of civilisation. The colonisation of new territories accelerated the emergence of capitalist production in Western Europe and contributed to the emergence of significant monetary accumulations. This policy helped to combine the economic potential of European countries with the economic potential of most countries in the world. English researchers have concluded that without such a colonial policy, Europe would not be in the economic situation it is today.

DISCUSSION

Since the Age of Discovery, the global economy has been shaped mainly by expansion. Europeans appropriated new territories rich in resources that were scarce in Europe and turned them into colonies. The colonial policy of European states cannot be assessed unequivocally. I. Viter (2019) shares this opinion. On the one hand, colonial expansion was accompanied by considerable losses of the indigenous population, violence, and the destruction of centuries-old traditions and the system of state administration. Europeans got the territories and peoples they wanted, and then imposed on the locals the system of governance that was acceptable to them and ensured only the rights of the colonisers, the exploitation of natural resources and people. The colonisers established borders and demarcation lines without considering ethnic and geographical features. The international community condemned this policy.

In his studies, M. Oliynyk highlighted the essence and methods of colonial policy. Colonialism is a policy of turning conquered or peacefully acquired territories and dependent territories into markets and sources of raw materials for leading European countries. It is important that the presence of colonies gave the country the status of a "great power". However, the rule of metropolises could be established not only by force, but also by signing a treaty. The colonial state could retain its institutions and local authorities could retain their powers, but only in the implementation of domestic policy. There were three methods of managing colonies. The first method was direct rule, i.e., a metropolitan colony. The second is a protectorate. Local rulers retained the ability to govern their territories. And the third

method was the dominion, which were self-governing colonies with a predominantly white population (Oliynyk, 2019). Globally, colonial policy played a vital role, as it helped to establish unity among the countries of the world based on the primacy of European civilisation. The American researcher D. Russell (2001) proves that this dominance continues to this day. Colonial policies changed the course of history in many countries and regions. The sacramental conditions of life, which had been formed over a long time, were transformed or destroyed.

European expansion has contributed to the development of national markets, the global economy, and the establishment of economic relations between all countries of the planet. P.M. Leonenko & P.I. Yukhymenko (2004) described that the idea of separateness of peoples was formed with a special speed. However, there was still some mutual dependence between them and the farms. Such dependence was established through the subjugation of some peoples by others and the growth of systems of oppression and exploitation, rather than through cooperation. The process of forming the world market was inseparable from the process of forming colonies. This is proved by D.M. Rutecki (2022) in his studies. The establishment of ties between the states took place at the expense of plundering and conquest of colonies, national oppression of the indigenous population, inequality, and violence, enslavement, lack of rights, confrontation, and domination of civilised European nations over undeveloped nations.

At the stage of industrial development of the leading European and American countries, the countries of Asia, the African continent, and Latin America occupied various positions. These territories were turned into sources of raw materials and resources for metropolises. It was in the interests of the Europeans to consolidate their power, to establish non-economic forms of exploitation in the colonies and to maintain political fragmentation in these territories. Ethiopian scholar A. Birhane (2020) believes that the interests of the European colonisers were aimed at trying to slow down the social and economic development of the controlled territories. Admittedly, this left a negative mark on the history of these countries, which is still felt today. These problems are global in nature, and therefore it is necessary to involve the entire international community to solve them.

However, K. Larres (1996) argues that the intervention of European intellectuals in the countries of the African continent, the Asian region, and South America has also had a positive impact. The involvement of these countries and peoples in the world market led to the emergence and development of commodity and money relations and the emergence

of social communities that are typical for Europe. Advanced machinery and production technology began to appear in the above-mentioned regions. Telegraphs, telephones, cinemas, and railways were being built. Social relations typical of Europe developed differently in colonial and dependent territories. This happened only in those industries where it was necessary. The existence of large colonial empires meant that the economic situation of European countries developed in very favourable circumstances, having sources of raw materials and labour and places to sell goods.

The rapid rise in industrial production led to the expansion of domestic markets and contributed to the active development of foreign trade. European producers needed to expand in the domestic market, and therefore there was a need to find new markets. This led to a fierce struggle between European countries for control over new sources of sales. The active spread of European colonial expansion in the countries of the African and Asian regions and South America led to the aggravation of previously unprecedented social contradictions and frequent popular uprisings. The British scholar J. Ellison (2000) conducted a study and called these events harbingers of future national liberation wars of the indigenous population of the colonies for the establishment of independence in their territories. With the arrival of Europeans, political concepts and doctrines began to penetrate the colonial states. These are the concepts of a nation's right to self-determination, social justice, and human and civil rights. With the emergence of such concepts, the development of national liberation movements began.

M. Farrell (2010) addressed the idea of the "white man's burden", which was widespread at the time. It was particularly popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and holds that European colonial empires are responsible for spreading civilisation to other peoples. This concept was only a cover for the violent use of human and natural resources in foreign territories. The proponents of this idea explained that it would involve the spread of an exclusively European-style education and healthcare system, the construction of roads, railways, and communications. Railway construction was particularly active in Africa and India. Europeans saw that the inhabitants of the colonies wanted to become like them. This misconception arose from the popularity of European culture. S. Tolstov (2017) proves that not all countries that had colonies were skilful in managing the resources and goods they received. For instance, Spain exported massive quantities of gold and other precious metals from South America. Instead of turning what they received into capital and developing their domestic infrastructure, the Spaniards squandered it.

Thus, it is difficult to describe colonisation as a negative or positive phenomenon. For the metropolises, the consequences of colonisation were as follows: a decrease in their own production capacity, as there were markets and sources of resources in the colonies; investment of capital in the colonial state; due to excessive concern for the development of colonies, European states lagged behind in competition with other countries of the world. For the colonial powers, the consequences were as follows: the destruction of the nationality; deformation of the traditional economic system; exploitation of natural resources; emergence of their own industry and intelligentsia; reduction of the population; and the emergence of a basis for future development. For highly developed countries at the time, colonies served as a source of finance, labour, raw materials, and markets.

CONCLUSIONS

The consequences of the Great Geographical Discoveries changed the way humankind viewed the world and ushered in a new stage in history. Colonialism is a policy, mainly of European countries, of turning conquered or peacefully acquired territories and dependent countries into markets and uncontrolled exploitation of these lands and peoples. The first countries to become colonial empires were Spain and Portugal, followed by France, the Netherlands, England, and Germany. Colonies were formed by conquering territories in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Having received wealth from all over the world, European civilisation has risen to an unprecedented level of development, leading the global civilisation process. Europe became the centre around which the global economic system was formed. Colonialism affected all spheres of European life - economic, social, cultural, and political. The impact of colonial policy on economic development was to actively disrupt feudalism and form a capitalist economy. With the advent of the colonies, European society began to grow new crops (corn, tomato, beans, potatoes), and tropical fruits, sugar, and chocolate were also introduced. The population of Europe has virtually forgotten about the famine. Sales of exported food industry development products. Active research in colonial possessions on the African continent contributed to the emergence of vaccination and disease prevention. Cities such as London, Antwerp, and Amsterdam have become centres of business activity and international trade.

The consequences of colonial expansion are ambiguous. While the consequences for European civilisation were mostly positive, they were negative for the peoples of Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Latin America. European material and spiritual culture were complemented by the achievements of the conquered territories, which contributed to the

rise of Europe. In a general sense, colonisation contributed to the establishment of unity among the countries of the world based on the dominance of European civilisation. Most researchers believe that without this colonial policy, Europe would not be in the economic situation it is today.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors of this study declare no conflict of interest.

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Чи стала б Європа заможною без колоній? Ретроспективний аналіз впливу постачання товарів з колоніальних країн на економічну міць ЄС

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Анотація. Актуальність даної теми зростає, що пов'язано з прагненням європейських держав уточнити своє місце в формуванні та розвитку світової економіки. Основна мета даного дослідження полягала в теоретичному аналізі впливу постачання сировини та товару з колоній на розвиток економічного сектору в європейських країнах. Під час написання роботи було проаналізовано ряд наукових джерел та матеріалів, використано такі наукові методи: структурно-функціональний й діалектичний методи, метод синтезу, логічного та порівняльного аналізу та метод узагальнення. Основним результатом дослідження є доведення, що без колоніальних володінь Європа не була б таким впливовим континентом, яким вона є в сучасному світі. Показано, як Європейський Союз провів колосальну роботу та отримав статус доволі розвинутого та багатого об'єднання. Показано, що протягом тривалого періоду Європа експлуатувала залежні території, завдяки чому стала найвпливовішим союзом. Такими територіями є країни Африки, Азії, Океанії та Південної Америки. В ході дослідницької роботи було доведено, що колонії мали особливий вплив на соціально-економічний розвиток не лише європейських країн, а й інших держав світу. Колоніальна політика, яку проводила Європа вплинула на розвиток світової економіки. Дослідження історії розвитку Європи триває, тому дана робота має важливе практичне значення для визначення, як формувалась та розвивалась європейська економіка

Ключові слова: колоніальна експансія; Великі географічні відкриття; європейська інтеграція; колоніалізм; світова економіка