



# WHAT IF FRENCH TOOK OVER INDIA INSTEAD OF BRITAIN

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**Abstract-** This study has been conducted to analyse the factors that would have varied if there was a variation in the colonisers of India, i.e., French instead of Britishers. The condition of various other colonies of the two nations has been and their imperial policies across them has been studied to reach the conclusion.

## INTRODUCTION

The mid 1700s was the time of ultimate tussle that was to decide the future of not only India but also the European nations. India was being ruled by various powers including both native forces and also external powers, this led to power struggle mainly between the European forces. With the incoming of French and British forces into India, the struggle became limited to majorly the two.

The tussle between the two forces, i.e., the British and French was not something limited to India only, but its main roots lay scattered around. The tussle in India began when the two stood on different fronts outside India, for example, the Austrian war of succession, the seven years war.

## CARNATIC WARS

At the beginning of the Austrian war of succession back in Europe, many countries of Europe got involved in the same with France and Britain against each other. The French governor appealed the Madras governor to not bring the tussle to India but the British governor of Madras sieged the French ship. As a result, the French governor Dupleix called on French governor of Mauritius La –Bourdonnais for help. This led to the start of FIRST CARNATIC WAR. The French governor of Mauritius reached and sieged Madras. Later on, he was corrupted by the madras governor for one lakh pagodas and also on promise of £40000 to the French company. This invited a recall for La Bourdonnais from France along with a jail term of 3 years. The first Carnatic war ended with the end of Austrian succession war with THE TREATY OF AIX LA CHAPPELE. Madras was restored to British and Louisburg to France.

The SECOND CARNATIC WAR was a result of interference into the political struggle within India. With the death of Asaf Jah, began the succession war in Hyderabad. The two proclaimants of the post being Muzaffar Jung and Nasir Jung. It was coincided by the succession war in Carnatic between Chanda Sahib and Muhammad Ali. Both French and British again took opposite sides with British support to Muhammad Ali and Nasir Jung and French supporting Chanda Sahib and Muzaffar Jung. Together with Chanda Sahib and Muzaffar Jung, Dupleix captured Madras, but with the suggestion of Robert Clive, British attacked and captured Arcot. The British had a very little number of soldiers compared to that of the opponent, but they were able to stay for almost two months, within this time help arrived and hence British were able to get back madras. This was followed by two other wars at Ami and Kaveripak which were also won by Clive. Dupleix was called back to France seeing the larger amount of financial losses that had occurred and a new governor Charles Robert Godeheu was sent. Godeheu signs TREATY OF PONDICHERRY in 1775. This

treaty ended what Dupleix had thought of. This treaty asked both the forces not to interfere in the politics of the native states, return old territorial possessions and not build new forts.

at the end of the second Carnatic war, Carnatic was under Muhammad Ali whereas Hyderabad was under the influence of Bussy, a French official appointed by Dupleix, but the nawab being Salabat Jung, the third son of Asaf Jah.

The THIRD CARNATIC WAR was a result of seven year war in Europe between Austria and Prussia. The hostilities in India began from Bengal when British captured Chandranagore. In response to this, the new French governor Count De Lally, captures fort St. David and also tries to bag Madras but was not able to. As a response sir Eyre Coote, a military commander, was sent to madras. This led to the BATTLE OF WANDIWASH. Eyre Coote eventually took over Pondicherry, Karaikal and Ginjee. It was in 1763 that the seven year war ended with the TREATY OF PARIS. This treaty impacted not only Europe but also India. Its impact in India was seen as an end of the French expansion in India. This treaty returned French territories to them but also restricted them from building forts in India. Also, this treaty asked French not to maintain troops in India. They could retain the Northern Circars. Also later in 1770, the French east India company was dissolved.

Hence, the Carnatic wars were the last nail in the coffin of French east India company’s expansion in India. It was these wars that laid the path for India’s future developments and difficulties.

But what if the result of the Carnatic wars varied to favour the French instead of the British? What would have been the difficulties that India was to face? Would the struggle to freedom still have been the same even in case of French? Would India still have freed in the same conditions? Before we go ahead to answer these questions lets first compare the conditions of France and Britain back in Europe.

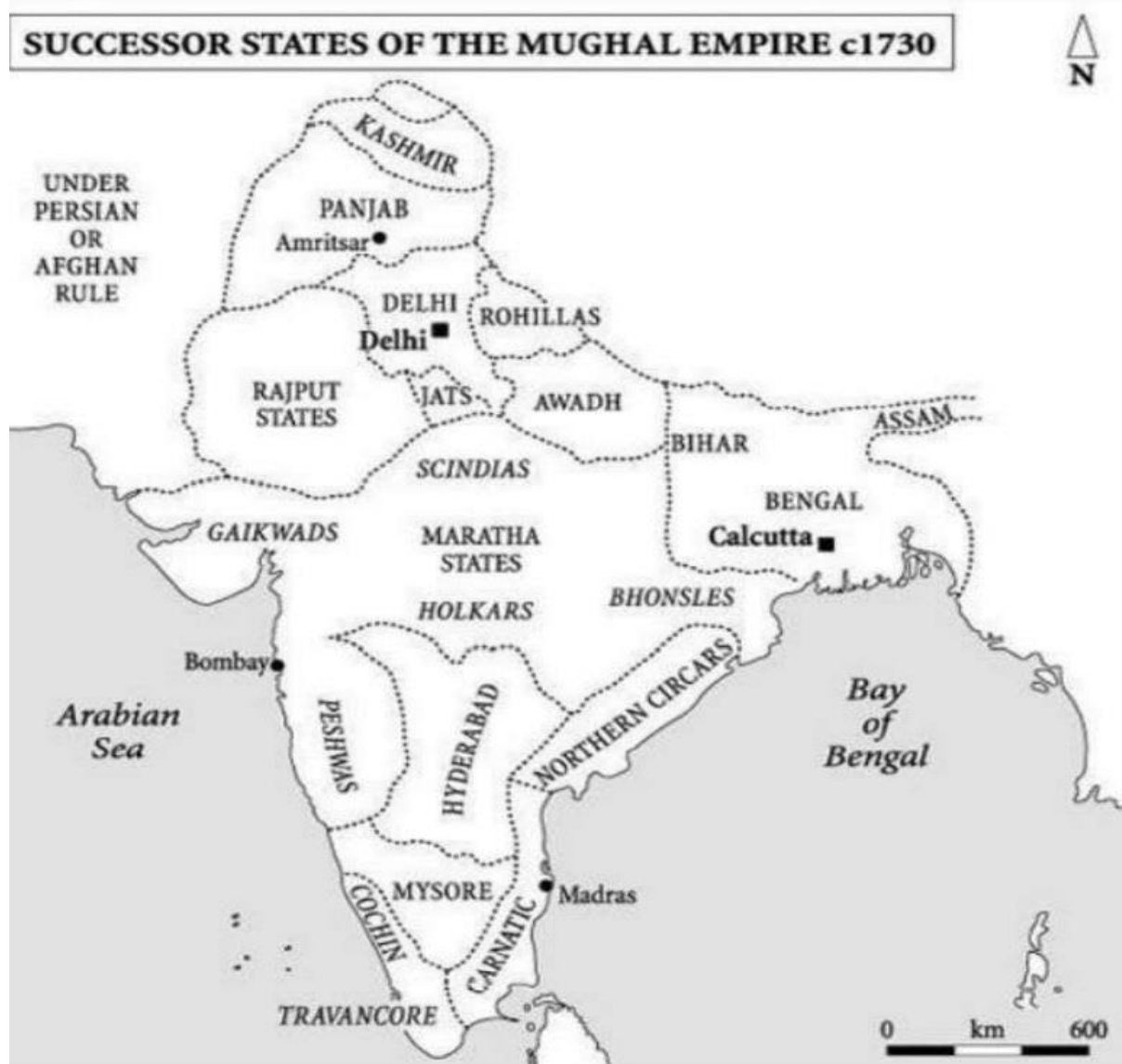


Figure-India during the 18<sup>th</sup> century

## COMPARISON BETWEEN FRENCH AND BRITISH SITUATION IN EUROPE

### FRENCH CONDITION AT HOME

The French condition at home had a tincture by all the factors including the polity, economy, society, philosophy etc.. The medieval and pre modern era in France saw a great flip in the situation which to shaping of the new face of France or the modern French state. The impact of the factors and incidents at home didn't only affect the interior of the country but also the external relations as the well impacted the French position and stand in the world politics and share in the world economy. It also impacted the European countries and the polity as well as philosophy of the nations.

### POLITY

The French state was under the control of an absolute monarchy until the French revolution of late 1780s and early 1790s. the state saw a change in monarchy from the Valois dynasty to Bourbon dynasty in the 1580s. this was referred to as the ANCIEN REGIME i.e. the old rule or the old kingdom or the old regime. The dynasties tried creating a centralised kingdom but the control they exercised didn't lead to a perfect scenario. The efforts and presence of an absolute monarchy at the centre was not able to bring about uniformity in the system, hence, the administration was full of irregularities with prerogatives overlapping each other. In an effort to cure the same and bring about uniformity in the system and further establish centralisation, personal patronage system was replaced with the institutional system which further led to disunity. The noble control over the regional scenario was greatly compromised with the appointment of the institutions and devolution of powers, it also undermined the regional control of the nobles. For example, the royal court saw more dependence on the noblesse de robe as judges and royal counsellors. This was one of the reason of frustration in the masses which saw an outburst in the form what is popularly known as the French revolution. The French revolution which was an outcome of the amalgamation of the situation of societal, economic, political and philosophical factors was able to impact all the sectors of the State. But it was not far that monarchy again rose to the situation and took control. It was napoleon Bonaparte who took control of the State in the late 1790s. His reign saw an influence of the French revolutionary principles of liberty, equality and fraternity.

### DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

During the early and mid medieval era, France was one of the most powerful nations in Europe with maximum wealth and high place in the world order. The country saw an intense increase in the population and also acquisition of new territories which increased the pressure on the resources of the country. During this time major European powers were trying to extend their control both within and outside Europe, i.e., they were trying to gain colonies and also expand their borders by acquiring nearby areas. Also the political outlook of whole Europe was monarchical in nature. This led to frequent conflicts between nations. The whole time period was dominated by wars. France was the centre of all the aggressiveness that built. Major wars were fought of which France was a part either directly or indirectly. During Louis XIV, the monarch with one of the longest rule in history, was a part of some of the major wars included Franco-Dutch war, nine year war, war of Spanish succession and also the war of devolution. The intense of focus on French rivalry could be understood by the event when even the protestants and the Catholics joined hands against it. It was then that the diplomacy of French came to the front. The French general decided to let the merchant navy also play a role in taking over the navy of the opponents. In all, French State played a central role in the polity and face of Europe and also the world. For quite a phase, France dominated the scene and was a major power to deal with.

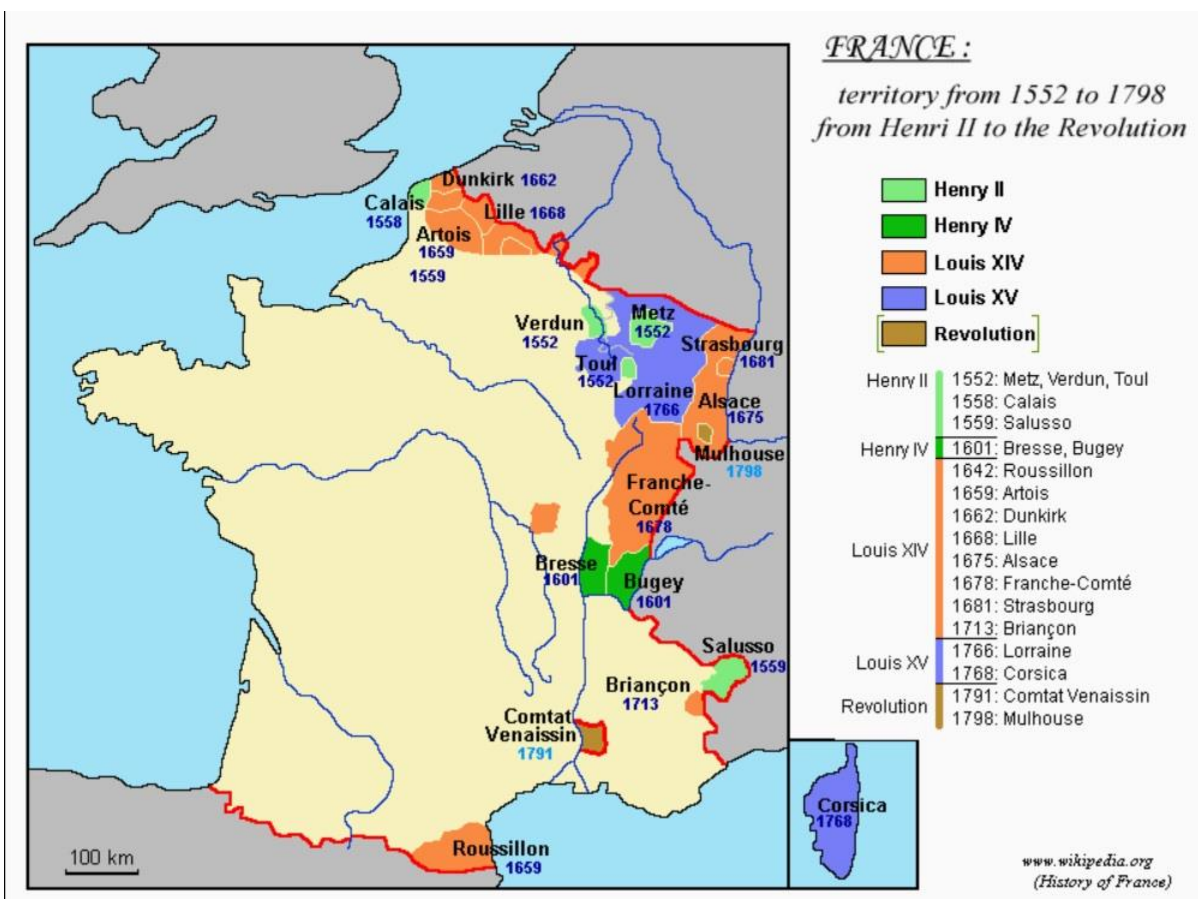


Figure- French expansion and occupation of nearby territories

## SOCIETY AND DEMOGRAPHY

Right from the beginning, the society of France was divided into three estates, clergy, nobles and commoners respectively. The first two estates constituted only about 2 percent of the population while the remainder was constituted by the commoners. The clergy constituted the priestly class. They were responsible for running the catholic church and also some parts of the country. Not only did this estate not pay taxes but it also collected taxes from the third estate of the society, i.e., commoners. This tax was known as the tithe. The next estate which was second in order was the nobility. A person belonging to this estate would either belong to the royal family or be a knight, duke or viscount. This section however didn't comprise of the king himself. This estate too collected taxes from the lowest estate of commoners, this tax was known as the taille. The third and the lowest estate called the commoners or the bourgeoisie comprised of the remaining people. A major part of this estate constituted of the agricultural class, as agriculture was the foremost occupation of the people. However, it also comprised of the working class. This was the class which dominated the society and formed the tax paying class. They used to pay taxes to both the clergy and the nobility. This class suffered the most. It was this class of commoners which paid all the taxes and had the least number of rights and privileges in the society. It was the most suppressed one. But this class never revolted until the French revolution of 1789. They had accepted the situation as it was. This was due to the presentation of theories by the two estates in such a way that made them accept it. The king portrayed himself as a deputy of god himself whereas it was fixed into the minds of commoners that they had committed certain crimes in their past lives that they are born into this class and supposed to pay all the taxes. It was until the 1750s that the commoners started questioning the situation. It was an impact of the new political theories evolving and the concepts of liberty, equality and fraternity rising. Also the flour war which took place due to the high inflationary conditions led to the eruption of the accumulated frustration among the third estate.

The division in the society was not just on the basis of class and occupation but also on linguistic basis. The people of northern France spoke of collection of various dialects called the **oil** languages whereas the written and administrative language was latin. The southern part of the country spoke mostly the Occitan languages

with other languages also being spoken. These included the Breton, Catalan, Dutch etc.. It was only in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the country became linguistically unified and French became the official language.

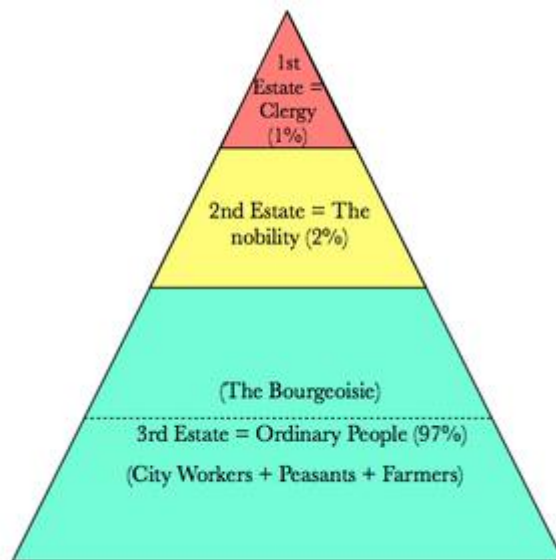


Figure-The three estates of French society

The society of medieval France was a rural one, but it also had cities like Paris which were one of the most populated ones of the time in whole of Europe. Women's condition was nothing better. They lacked all kinds of rights and privileges until the 20<sup>th</sup> century when they led a movement for the same.

## ECONOMY

Initially the economic condition of France State was prosperous but due to vast number of wars being fought both at home and outside led to the economic drain of the nation. Also, the pandemics that took place not only deprived country of its workforce but also ruined State's economy to a major level. Not just these but the lavish lifestyle that was being followed by the monarchy also impacted the state finances. During the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and early 18<sup>th</sup> century, the situation became such that the state expenditure outnumbered the tax collected by almost seven percent per annum leading to debt situation for the country. The situation further got intensified with poor agriculture produce for the years leading to galloping inflation. The monarchy tried bringing inflation under control by changing the currency from livre to assignats. But this step didn't provide a relief in the situation. Trying to fight the situation, new finance minister Robert Jacques Turgot was appointed. He advised to remove government interference from the market and hence the grain police was waived off from its duties. But due to low agriculture produce and in hope of better rates people started hoarding grains further leading to flour war and riots in 1775. With the failure of the step of deregulation of the market, Turgot now recommended imposing a new tax on the nobility and clergy which angered the two classes leading to dismissal of Turgot from the post. Further the situation got critical as all the burden of the tax fell on the bourgeoisie class which was already the most oppressed leading to building resentment in the class. It was not just the internal factors that affected the French economy, but the wars being waged outside required finances whose burden was again on the shoulders of the common people. French help to America in their independence war further strengthened Anglo-French rivalry whose consequences it faced in the seven year war and also lose of colonies. Also the French colonies were administered by government officials due to which it couldn't achieve its maximum capability and hence earn good profits.

## PHILOSOPHY

The France of medieval era and the early modern times saw a dominance of the church which did not allow rationalism into the society. Anyone who spoke against the church was either imprisoned for life or executed. The church was the source of all the education in the society but it never taught rationalism, it just taught subjects and topics which wouldn't let people to question its authority and also make people accept the State, i.e., it provided certification to the theory of divine origin of the monarchy which in turn provided the church with everything it needed, i.e., a mutual exchange and satisfaction of demands among the two.

But little did anyone know that France would evolve as the centre of the rise of principles and philosophies which would not just shape the future of France but also help bring about a revolution in the whole world and also form the plinth of the democratic structure. Many great philosophers were born and made in the soil of France including the father of modern philosophy Rene Descartes, Charles Montesquieu, Voltaire, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Auguste Comte etc.. France became the birthland of the concepts of equality, justice, liberty, fraternity among others. Also the theories like the social contract theories saw their origin from the minds of the French people. The French revolutionaries and people were highly impacted by the theories of economists like Adam Smith, Karl Marx, John Stuart Mill etc..

### BRITISH CONDITION AT HOME

The Great Britain as we see now was not the same right from the start of the modern era. It was in slow and steady steps that it started taking the shape it currently has. Its start from a disintegrated island and not so very big financial or military power to being able to colonise at least some part of almost every continent of the world is a notable journey where it develops its powers by enhancing its trade relations, political relations etc.. All this was due to its political situation, geographical extent and presence along with its naval power.

### POLITY

Britain's political outlook saw a shift from absolute monarchy to a constitutional monarchy through the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The beginning of modern era in Britain is generally considered with the coming of the Tudors to the power in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It was during the Tudors that the English renaissance happened. The English renaissance was widely influenced by the Italian renaissance but also varied in context. The Tudors saw a rise after the war of the roses and tried to run its authority on the basis of theory of divine rights of the king. Even within the Tudor dynasty the monarchs varied highly in their beliefs, especially the religious ones, which changed the face of the nation in the coming years. The Tudors were followed by the Stuarts during which had to face the civil wars during the 17<sup>th</sup> century followed by the English interregnum when the military and the parliament took control of England and Wales for almost three decades until the glorious revolution of 1688 which placed the monarch back on the throne but constitutionally limited, i.e., with almost no powers. This step stabilised the nation politically for time continued which gave it a major advantage on the world sphere and helped establishing its authority. After the glorious revolution England was being administered in the name of the monarch but on the decisions being taken by the parliament which was partially elected and elected nominated. Soon in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, 1706 to be precise, the treaty of union or the act of union got ratified by the Scotland as well as the England parliaments which led to the formation of the Great Britain, i.e., Great Britain=Scotland + England + Wales.

### RELIGION

The whole of Europe in the early modern days was having a tug of war between the Catholics and protestants. England too was stretched between the two religions and even faced consequences. The Tudor dynasty was a catholic follower. With the coming of Mary Tudor to the power in the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century came the phase of extremeness in the religion. Mary was an ardent follower of the catholic religion and even got executed many protestants. The era of Mary led to so intense bloodshed which can be totally understood by her being called as the bloody Mary. Her death in 1588 called for celebrations all around the nation. Elizabeth became the new monarch and was a follower of the protestant sect. But she was a religiously tolerant monarch and supported both the protestants and the catholic sect. She even built an Engligan church where both the sects were being followed. She herself headed this church which reduced the authority of the pope.

## GEOGRAPHY

Figure-Britain in the 18<sup>th</sup> century

The islands of Britain have a strategic location which provided it with the pro of safety and command over seas and oceans. Britain is located on an isolated island which saved it from all types of border disputes as well as incursions from enemies. In the initial stages when there existed differences between Scotland and England, safety issues existed to an extent but with the diplomacy played by Elizabeth I when she nominated the prince of Scotland as the new monarch of England, the relation between the two became better to a great extent. The final nail in the coffin between the relations of the two and the safety of the nation came with the ratification of the treaty of the unions. Its open position where it was bound by North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean gave it easy access for maritime expeditions. All this together made up the situation in favour of the nation for future.

## ECONOMY

The mid eighteenth century saw the beginning of the industrial revolution which breathed its first from England. With the coming of the industrial revolution into England the society got divided vertically on the basis of class to an extent that the wealth got restricted into a few hands and the majority of the nation struggled even for bread. The condition of this majority working class was so deteriorated that even after working their nails off they couldn't still manage two meals a day. The wage for this unskilled labour was too menial, people were ready to work even for few cents but still couldn't find jobs. With the industrial revolution on the front, the country developed its information sector, transport sector along with communication. All this boosted new innovations like the steam engine. The production shot off and very soon England became the workshop of the world.

It gained colonies on both the eastern side like Indian subcontinent as well as the western side like the Americas. The international trade with its colonies and other nations was too prosperous and eventually built the nation. Unlike other nations who tried using military for gaining colonies, Britain used trade and diplomacy for the same. Also unlike others it kept aside the political and territorial motives and focused on the economic aspects and turned to be the forerunner. Britain strategically located the wants and supplies of various areas and used them for its profit. Eventually when it got a strong hold of the situation in various areas, it started using them to supply raw material and use them as market for its processed goods. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century when the Americas gained independence, England focused more on the Australia, India and Africa which came to be known as the beginning of the second British empire. However still continued with the Americas. Britain's international diplomacy like passing of the navigation act and restricting colonies trade through British ships only and further granting monopoly of produces to the trading company over the British market further brought prosperity into the nation.

## THE CONCLUSION

On comparing the situation of France and Britain, we find large variations in almost the sectors. On one end, we find Britain to be economically prosperous and leading the world towards industrial revolution and setting the path of development for other nations even whereas on the other end, we see France which was eventually sinking in debt and inflation brimming. Britain was able to very well use the colonies for its economic prosperity by giving the companies a free hand in the trade and also granting monopoly, but French government tried to place regulations and restrictions on the trade with the colonies due to which eventually it suffered defeats and losses.

Along with the existing differences, there lie certain similarities also between the two. The similarities could be noticed in the struggles for polity. People of both the nations were fighting against their respective monarchs, but eventually one decided on democracy and democratic principles whereas the other settled with constitutional monarchy. The similarity also stands in the presence of parliament as the decision-making body in both the nations. Both the nations also saw religious wars between the protestants and the catholic. The lower class formed a majority section of the society and this section was the most suppressed and oppressed one which could barely arrange the bare necessities of life.

After noticing the variations and similarities among the two nations it can be concluded that Britain was in far better condition than France at that time.

## LIST OF FRENCH COLONIES

French colonies were the second largest behind only Spanish colonies during the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> century, however, this domination was later taken over by the Britishers. The list of the colonies of French goes on as-

- In North America, it had certain areas of all the three major countries, i.e., USA, Canada and Mexico.
- The Caribbean islands including Haiti, Dominican Republic, St. Kitties and Nevis, Antigua and Barbuda, Trinidad and Tobago, Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent and Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Turks and Caicos, Montserrat and many others.
- In Latin America, its colonies extended in Chile, Suriname, Argentina, Guyana, Falkland Islands, French Guiana.
- In Africa, parts of Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Ivory Coast, Benin, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Togo, Nigeria, Somalia, Djibouti, Gambia, Chad, Congo, Central African Republic, Gabon, Cameroon and Sao Tome and Principe were colonised by the French for some time.
- In the Indian ocean, we see French occupation in Seychelles, Reunion Islands, Madagascar, Mauritius, Chagos Archipelago.
- In Asia, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Taiwan, China, Palestine, India, Sri Lanka, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen.
- Australia



- Various Oceania nations like Papua New Guinea, New Caledonia, French Polynesia etc..

The French colonialism took place in two waves, the first wave started in the 16<sup>th</sup> century in the Americas, India and Caribbean and came to an end in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century when most of its territories were either lost or sold. The second wave started around the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and was on its heights between the world wars. It happened in the northern and western African continent along with the Indochina. The first French colonial empire was lost due to the series of conflicts between Britain and France. These involved the Austrian war of succession, seven years' war, Napoleonic wars and Indian and French wars.

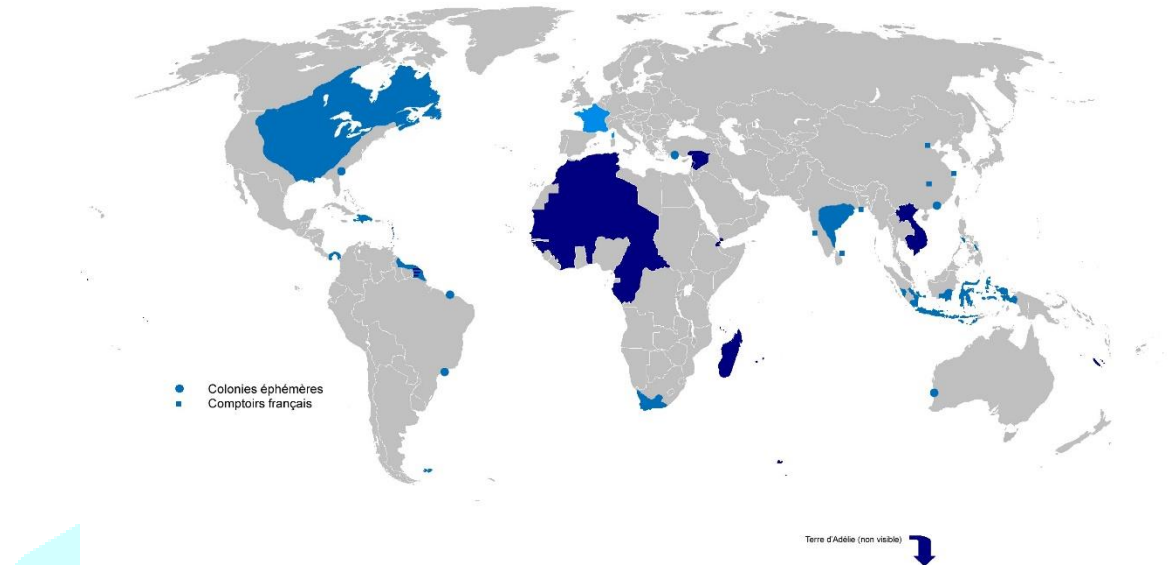


Figure- major French colonies

### LIST OF THE BRITISH COLONIES

British empire was the biggest of the world at a time and covered almost quarter of the land. The saying that sun never sets on the British empire very well brings out the extent of the stretch of the empire. Today most of the colonies of Britain are a part of the commonwealth league. The list goes on as-

- In North America-13 coastal colonies, Belize.
- In Africa-Botswana, Egypt, Ghana, Jamaica, Lesotho, Libya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somali, south Yemen, Sudan, Gambia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.
- In Asia-Bahrain, Brunei, Cyprus, India, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Syria, Kuwait, Malaysia, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, UAE.
- In Caribbean- Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Fiji, Bahamas, Trinidad and Tobago.
- In Oceania region- few nations like Hawaii.
- British overseas Indian territory, Mauritius, Maldives, Seychelles.

Certain nations till date exist as dominions of Britain. These include,

- Canada
- Australia
- Ireland
- South Africa
- New Zealand
- Dominion of Newfoundland

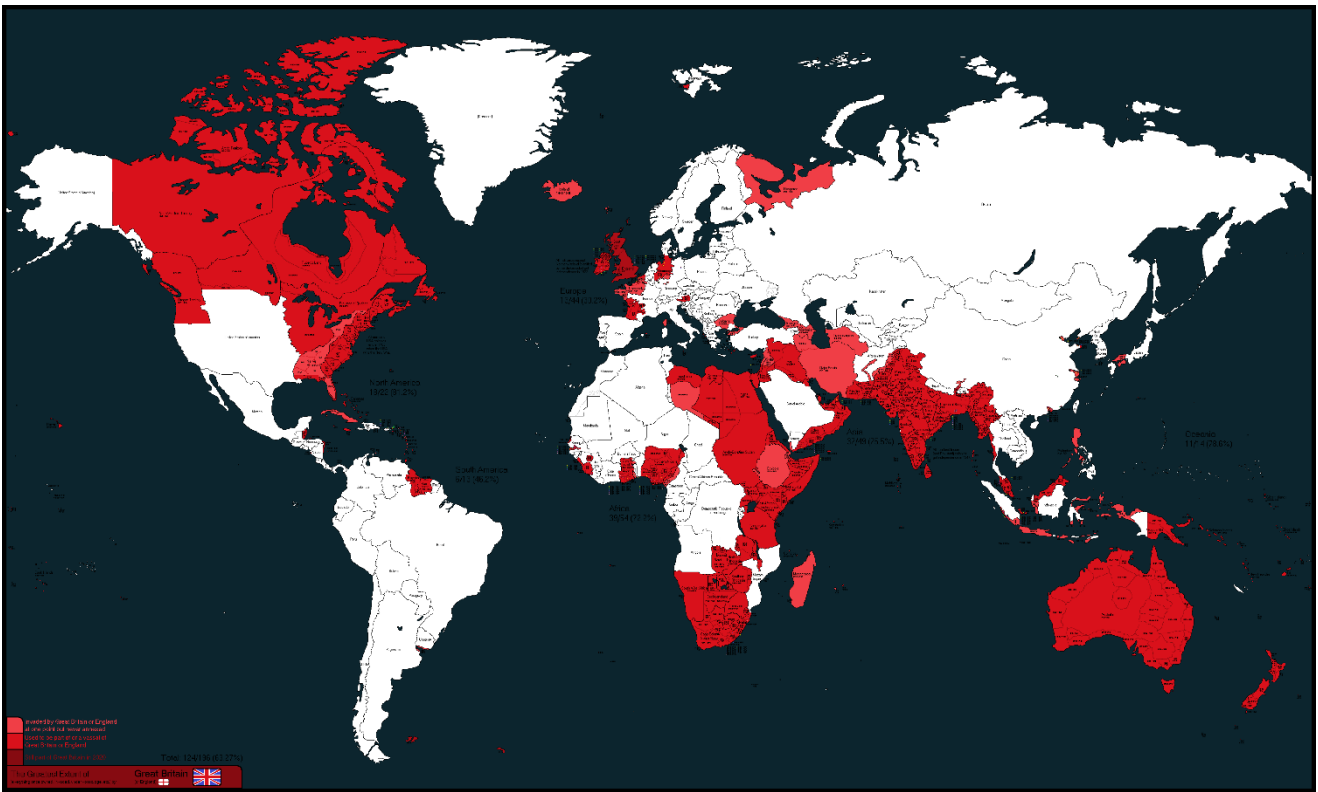


Figure- major British colonies

### WHAT IF FRENCH WOULD HAVE WON THE CARNATIC WARS

If French would have emerged as the winners of the Carnatic wars, the face of current India would have varied quite a lot with certain influences at the global level too. To understand this, we can have a comparative analysis of the imperial policies of the two nations and try to evaluate the differences and equate them into the conditions of India at that time and evaluate the consequences that would have followed. Lets have a look at various perspectives:

#### GLOBAL LEVEL

- If Britain would have lost the Carnatic wars and the seven years war, the global face would have been a complete different one. If French would have won than the wars against Britain than eventually France would have taken over almost the same amount of land as Britain did, i.e., it would have been the largest conqueror of the world. In reality, where France controlled nations like Algeria and Tunisia which were not in very good condition as they were either under the influence of slave trade or had just finished of with the slave trade; the situation would have been different as France would be having colonies which were well off in trade, most importantly India, which was considered as a golden bird due to its large proportion in world trade.
- France would have never needed to surrender territories like Quebec and Louisiana.
- France would have had good finances and the French revolution would have not occurred at the time as it did. Hence, the coming of Napoleon into power would be a rare possibility. If Napoleon would have not come into power, the political structure of Europe wouldn't have seen the amount of unifications that did happen. For example, rhine confederacy wouldn't have taken place due to which Germany wouldn't have come into existence ever, and there would have been a state of Prussia but no political unification. Neither would have Italy been in the current shape. Napoleon was one of the primary reasons which brought to front the political limitations that Spain and Portugal were going through at the time, which further led to withdrawal of them from Latin America, though absence of napoleon wouldn't have led to complete dismissal of the event of withdrawal but it would have taken place later sometime.
- Suez Canal which was built by French initially but controlled by Britain due to its occupation of Egypt would have been under French control as Aden was a part of India and India would have been a jewel in French crown. Along with Suez Canal, France would have established a stronger control over the Indian ocean.

- As Britain would have lost its most precious colony, India, it would have tried to compensate it with either intensified extraction from Americas and West Indies or would have started looking for some other territories to occupy. In its search for other territories, it would have possibly landed in China and South East Asia.
- As France wouldn't have lacked any resources, it would have slowly become the most powerful in Europe with a strong navy and may had even challenged Britain in Australia and even had a larger portion of Africa then it primarily had.
- Absence of Britain in India would have saved everyone from the opium wars and changed the face of China.

## DIFFERENCES IN FRANCE

- France which was continuously involved in wars of expansion, would now have India as a financier, this would have helped continue the journey of expansions and annexations.
- India, which was a jewel in the crown of Britain, would have been the brightest star in French constellation. With India in its control, France would have never faced a financial crunch. The financial crunch at that time was one of the most forefront reasons for the French revolution to have taken place. Hence, French revolution wouldn't have been a reality, and so did the ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity.
- With no lack of resources and finances, eventually France would have evolved as the most powerful European nation. The navy of France would have been no less than the Britain royal navy. Hence, it would have been able to become the queen of the oceans.
- France would have not faced the French revolution but with time the monarchy may had faced opposition and chances would stand that France, just like Britain, would have become a constitutional monarchy instead of a democracy.
- Even though Britain would still be the first nation to industrialise, French industrialisation wouldn't have stayed limited to certain cities. France too would have experienced industrial revolution in full force at almost the same time as Britain did.

## EFFECTS ON INDIA

### 1. POLITICAL

- If France would have taken over India, there would have been wars of annexation as did happen even with Britishers. Hence, the political condition of Indian princes wouldn't have varied much. Politically similar to Britishers, French would have taken over whole of India eventually.
- Unlike British who slowly and carefully transferred power to Indians, and also at that time Indians had experience of system, French wouldn't have introduced Indians to the administration and law-making procedure, hence on gaining independence, India would be in a situation where there were great of chances of a power tussle or maybe even political vacuum. The constitution making and administering nation would have been a tough nut to crack. Also, there would have been chances of political instability. Military coup would have also been a possibility.
- Mostly nations that have attained independence from France have eventually come under dictatorship, monarchy or military rule. Similar would have been the case with India. India wouldn't have had a democracy and the fundamental concepts of our constitution now which include equality, liberty, fraternity, sovereignty etc. would have come into reality but that would have required a new struggle by the masses.
- France usually gave its colonies' people the option to choose between French citizenship or their native countries' citizenship but the French citizenship was given as privilege and not as a matter of right. Similarly, many Indians would have been given the French citizenship.
- The official language of India would have been French along with Hindi.
- In various countries, it has been found that France interfered with the political outlook of the nation even after independence. This can be seen in Gabon.

## 2. ECONOMIC

- France too would have exploited wealth from India just as Britishers did. But seeing the track record of France in other colonies, it can be derived that if people would have paid taxes on regular basis, there were chances that French would have provided a better education system and proper health facilities.
- When the French colonies were gaining independence, France tried to sign cooperation agreements with the colony to keep the relations intact. Under these agreements, France would provide aid to the independence gaining nation in return of the rights over natural resources, allow France to maintain troops on their land and further they were asked to keep their currency linked to FRANC. This currency was known as the CFA FRANC. Although it was the personal choice of the nation whether to sign the agreement or not but if the nation decided not to get involved or pull out of it at a later stage, it would have to face a consequence. Something on similar lines can be seen in Guinea, when it tried pulling out of the agreement, France conducted a secret campaign where it flooded the market with fake currencies and collapsed the economy of Guinea. The economy of Guinea is till date struggling stabilising its economy. Similarly, India would have also been offered the agreement. If India would have signed the agreement, the rupee would have been linked to the Franc and also the natural resources of India would have been utilised by France, hence, the economic prosperity of India wouldn't have paced.
- Countries using CFA FRANC have limited or no monetary sovereignty as Franc is linked to Euro. Any appreciation in euro would make export from the in CFA less competitive. Example- when euro appreciated, Senegal's rice became expensive in its own country and slowly got wiped out by imports from Thailand. This not only nullified the export growth but also affected the sale at home leading to reduced finances. On similar lines, an appreciation in euro would have affected Indian rupee and Indian growth.
- Seeing all the points up above, it seems like France even after giving independence doesn't seem to want to end things up. Hence, it uses neo-colonialism where it just extracts and care the least about development.
- It has generally been noticed that the nations which were ex-French colonies, except for few African nations, have performed well in terms of GDP when compared to the ex-British colonies.

Ex-British colonies and their current GDP		Ex-French colonies and their current GDP	
Myanmar	1250 USD	Morocco	3500 USD
Pakistan	1700 USD	Algeria	3650 USD
Bangladesh	2200 USD	Tunisia	3550 USD
Sri Lanka	3700 USD	Laos	2650 USD
Egypt	3900 USD	Vietnam	3750 USD

Table- comparison of GDP of various ex colonies

## 3. SOCIETY, RELIGION AND ARCHITECTURE

- The Britishers called it as a white man's burden to civilise the uncivilised. On the other hand, Jules Ferry, a former French prime minister, said that the higher race has a right over the lower races, they have duty to civilise the inferior races. Also, the civilisatrice or the civilising mission of French was not so varied with the thoughts of the Britishers. Hence, racism would still have existed under French as it did under the British and almost on the same levels.
- Both the nations did try converting locals into Christianity but at varied intensities. French were a little more inclined towards conversions than British were. British allowed evangelicals only after the charter act of 1813 but French had focused on conversions right from the very beginning. French used the assimilation policy where they tried making French out of the natives, whereas British had no such intention to make Britishers out of the locals.
- Both the nations did use urban planning and colonial education to prevent cultural mixing.

- In name of education, France simply exported the systems and methods that were in vogue in France and didn't focus on furthering the ambitions of the locals, Tunisia being an exception. On the other hand, Britishers had a debate to decide which education to be favoured, the orientalist vs the anglicist debate, but the final motive of education for Britain was also not much varied, they too wanted to build a class of clerks that would not raise voices but just work for them.
- The land tenure system of France and various land revenue systems along with the fixed crop demands like indigo by Britain in India, equally destroyed the traditional agriculture and land of the colonies. Both the nations dismantled tribal land ownership to individual land ownership which was again a corrupt process under both the colonisers. Both the nations, as a consequence, faced tribal and civilian revolts at high rates.
- The Indian renaissance was largely impacted by the ideals of French revolution, and with France having India, French revolution wouldn't have been a reality. But this doesn't mean that Indian renaissance wouldn't have occurred, Indian renaissance would still have taken place but the timing would have been a little delayed. Chances stand that maybe even it would have been India from where the concepts of fraternity, equality, liberty etc. would have originated and spread around.
- Slavery was abolished by Britishers much before than French. Also, under French in Pondicherry, the working condition of labour was very unpleasant. The working hours were set to eleven hours for six days and six hours for the seventh day of the week with very low wages. These working hours and wages were reformed only after 1935. Whereas under British, the labour reforms came much earlier than it did under French.
- Both the nations did commit war crimes in their colonies but Britain never went to the extent of conducting nuclear tests in its colonies, but France conducted several nuclear tests in its colonies whose aftereffects still persists.
- There are less chances that there would have been a Hindu-Muslim divide under French, as they were not expected to play the divide and rule game. This would have saved the nation from the bloodiest event in Indian history, the partition. In absence of the event of partition, today there would have existed a unified India including modern day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, i.e., the Indian subcontinent.
- Also, impact could have been seen in the architectural outlook. Under the Britishers, different places developed different architectural patterns. Although, development at certain places could have been kind of same as both had the same motives, i.e., keep cultural separation, development according to need including rail, road, telegraph etc... The differences would have been in the building styles.

### CONCLUSION

French occupation of India wouldn't have changed the face of India to a great extent at that time. India would still have faced the hardships it faced but the course it followed to independence and what it evolved as after independence would have been different. Under French, it would have fought a bloody war to gain independence instead of the long struggle it had against the British. The after independence look of the nation is not easy and certain to be framed. The future could have gone downhill or be a glorious one.

### REFERENCES

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