Bakalářská práce

Great Britain and Its World Dominance Story: A Reassessment

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Poděkování

Děkuji doktorce Janktové za odborné vedení práce, věcné připomínky, dobré rady a vstřícnost při konzultacích a vypracovávání bakalářské práce.

Abstrakt

Bakalářská práce se zabývá historií Velké Británie v reakci na tvrzení britského historika Stuarta Laycocka, že Velká Británie a její státní útvary v historii napadly 90 % existujících zemí. V teoretické části bakalářské práce je definována metodologie pro určení, které vojenské operace lze klasifikovat jako invazy země, a které nikoliv, a také které útvary lze považovat za suverénní státy. V praktické části jsou zpracovány dané země a odůvodnění, zda je lze řadit mezi napadené cí nikoliv.

Abstract

The bachelor's thesis deals with the history of the United Kingdom in response to Stuart Laycock's claim that the United Kingdom, or its parts, have in history invaded 90 % of existing countries. The theoretical part of the thesis defines the methodology for determining which military operations can be classified as invasions and which cannot, and what territorial entities can be regarded as sovereign nations. The practical part describes the situation in individual countries and the reasons for their classification as invaded, or uninvaded.

Klíčová slova

Britské Impérium, Spojené Království, invaze, země, suverénní stát

Key words

British Empire, United Kingdom, invasion, country, sovereign nation

Contents

1. Introduction

Throughout history, there were dozens of great empires. The Roman Empire, which dominated the European continent for several centuries, or the Mongol Empire which swallowed nearly the whole of Eurasia at their greatest extent. However, no empire was as large as the British Empire at their greatest extent.

Every empire starts somewhere, and the British Empire began on an island off the coast of Europe. On and off, the inhabitants of the British Isles, the English, Scots, Welsh and Irish fought over the control of the British Isles. Despite all the obstacles in history, the British Isles united at last and thus a new era of Great Britain began. However, even when united, the British Isles are "only" 315 159 km^2 large. On the other hand, the British Empire at its peak covered an incredible 35 500 000 km^2.

The intriguing question is, how did the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland managed to go from ruling an archipelago off the coast of continental Europe to ruling over an empire, "on which the sun never sets".[1] The empire expanded gradually, through war and subsequent conquest and subjugation of smaller, underdeveloped countries.

The largest empire the world has ever seen is only a small part of the story. The British set foot and fought in various countries that were never even part of the empire. Clashing of swords and later the sounds of machineguns go hand in hand with the history of the world, which the United Kingdom has been a major player in.

My bachelor's thesis is going to examine how many of today's countries have been invaded by the British in response to a book by Stuart Laycock published in 2012 called *All the Countries We've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To*, where Laycock comes to an interesting conclusion. He claims that 90% of existing countries were at one point in history invaded by the British army. Laycock's book is the main inspiration for my thesis set to reassess the claims he made in the book with clearer criteria on what counts as an invasion of a country and what does not.

Stuart Laycock is British, and he does not shy away from admitting that there is a little bias towards his home country. There are numerous misinterpretations concerning British history, and for British people it may be desirable to make things clear, especially in situations, where in British eyes, they are unfairly pictured as villains. There are many ways in which country can be invaded. For example, the liberation of a country can be seen as an invasion, or not, depending on the context and who is asking.

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[1] Macartney, George. *1773.* cit in **Kenny, Kevin. 2006.** *Ireland and the British Empire. p. 72, fn.22.*

In his short introduction, Laycock admits the complexities of the world and that one may not share his ideas of invasion. Laycock's book is basically a list of countries, and his reasoning why he thinks, "we", the British, have invaded said country.

It is of no surprise that Laycock uses the "we" pronoun to describe the action of the British, when he uses more personal view of events, and expects the book to be sold mainly in the United Kingdom.

Also, Laycock admits that his country of origin throughout history was not always on the "right side". Non-justified aggression, their treatment of colonies, interference in internal affairs of countries are some examples of controversial decisions. The British controlled the largest mass of land known to man, and it is of no surprise that some see the United Kingdom as a great oppressor throughout history. However, history is not black and white, and I think Laycock correctly points out that there are good and bad sides to the history of his nation, as there are to any nation.

But the author counts nearly all events in which the British army set foot on foreign soil or in foreign waters as an invasion. If at one point or another the British army was present, Laycock counts it as an invasion. In his book, when during World War I British troops passed through Moldova to get to the front and help Russians, Laycock counts such instance as an invasion of Moldova.

Did British troops set a foot on Moldovan soil? Yes. Did they invade Moldova? With the rules Laycock set, yes. However, I think such types of "presence" should not be classified as invasions.

Nonetheless, I think Laycock deserves praise for covering all of the countries and their relationship with the United Kingdom, usually pointing out lesser-known events in the United Kingdom's history.

There is no doubt that Britons were one of the first and greatest explorers and conquerors when new worlds were being discovered. But just how many of today's countries did they really invade? If I define and set a concrete methodology on how to determine whether a country was invaded, to be more objective, what number I will reach? Will it be close to 90% of countries as Stuart Laycock says, or will I get more underwhelming numbers?

The goal of this bachelor's thesis is to assess how many countries did the British invade throughout history, in response to Laycock's claim, using the definitions of terms in dictionaries, and internationally recognized criteria to determine what classifies as a country, and trying to stay as objective as possible when it comes to complex cases.

2. Classification, terminology, and methodology

2.1. Sovereign nation

Before I begin to list countries and their stories involving the United Kingdom, I need a clear list of countries. How many countries are there? That question is not an easy one to answer, as different people from different parts of the world have different answers. The geopolitics of the world is a complicated matter, even in today's world. One can have their own language, government, borders and still not be classified as a country as some countries have different criteria for recognizing a sovereign state.

The geopolitics of the world is handled in such a way, that unless a large majority of already established countries see the entity as a nation, the self-proclaimed nation has little to no world-stage presence. Any group of people can unite within a country, form their own form of government, and declare itself an independent nation. However, unless the world accepts them as a country, they have nearly no presence on the world stage. One of the international organizations which can act as a useful identifier as to what classifies a country is the United Nations.

The United Nations (UN) is a successor to the League of Nations formed after the World War II. The main objective of the UN is to form friendly relations between countries, in hopes of preventing more destructive wars in the future.

According to international law, sovereign states must have a permanent population, one government, and the capacity to enter relations with other states.[2] Members of an international organization which wants to keep good relations between countries is a good indicator as to which countries are sovereign and can keep relations with other states, and which are not. Using members of the UN, I have an objective, clear list of sovereign countries that I can use in my thesis. And the list provided by the UN lists 193 countries.[3] Excluding the United Kingdom itself, I will be examining 192 countries.

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[2] **Shaw, Malcolm Nathan (2003).** *International law. Cambridge University Press. p. 178.*

[3] Member States. *United Nations.* [online]. Dostupné z: https://www.un.org/en/about-us/member-states
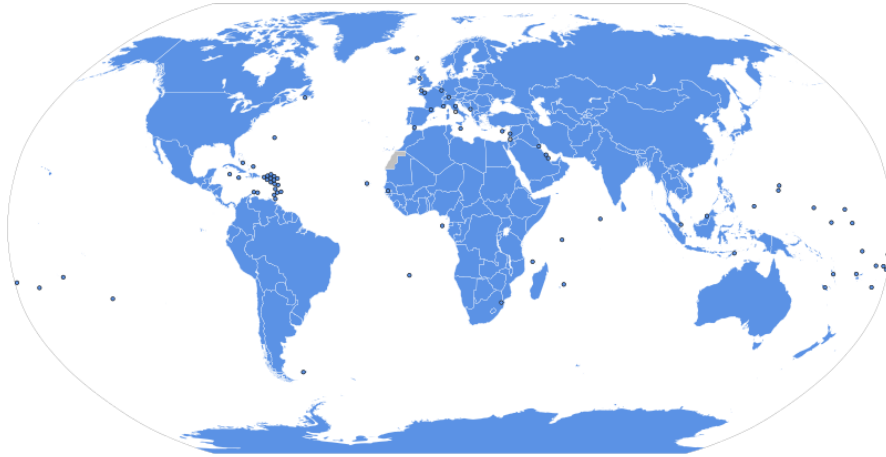
Picture 1 – UN member states[4]

The number of countries is the first difference between this thesis and Laycock's book. Stuart Laycock includes countries that the government of the United Kingdom recognizes as independent states. The United Kingdom adds two more countries to his list. Vatican City[5] and Kosovo.[6]

However, even with a defined number of countries, the complications do not end, because throughout history, countries changed, expanded, shrunk, united, dissolved and these situations need to be addressed as well.

If, for example, in history, the United Kingdom had invaded the Russian Empire, which countries in the current world would the United Kingdom have invaded? Would it be all the countries which were once part of the Russian Empire? What about Poland, where only part was subsumed into the Russian Empire? There is no clear rule for these ambiguous situations, which makes things much harder. Here, the viewpoints can vary significantly, and thus some concrete rule is needed.

Successor states seems to be the best option to resolve these issues. In my opinion, using the example from before, I do think that the United Kingdom would have invaded only what is today the Russian Federation, since it was the biggest entity within the Russian Empire with must power and authority. Once the Russian Empire dissolved, the Russian Federation has been widely acknowledged as the successor state to the Russian Empire. As opposed to Ukraine, for example.

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[4] **Lateiner. 2008.** Soubor:United Nations Members. *Wikipedia.* [Online] https://cs.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soubor:United_Nations_Members.svg.

[5] UK in the Holy See. *Internet Archive.* [Online] https://web.archive.org/web/20121020015109/http:/ukinholysee.fco.gov.uk/en/working-with-holy-see/relations2/.

[6] UK to recognise independent Kosovo - PM. *Internet Archive.* [Online] https://web.archive.org/web/20080510070233/http://www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page14594.asp.

Unfortunately, the cases of successor states are very complex. Serbia is generally accepted as the successor to the former state of Yugoslavia. Israel does not claim the succession to the Mandate of Pakistan, and India is seen as the sole successor to the British Raj. For Soviet Union, Russia claims to be the sole successor to the Soviet Union, and the Baltic States do not claim to be successors to the Soviet Union.[7] However, a situation may occur where one country claims to be the sole successor to a previous state, and other claims to be a sole successor as well. Or once country can claim there are two successor states. In such complex cases, I will have to form of my opinion on the matter.

The point of departure I will be using are the generally acknowledged successor state by other states. It may not be the most objective method, but the complexities of dissolutions of states are too complex. Most agree that Russia is a successor to the Soviet Union and the Russian Empire, Serbia is a successor to Yugoslavia, and Israel is a successor to the Mandate of Palestine. Here is the list of the most complex states that dissolved, and what state will be considered a successor state in the research:

- The Russian Empire and the Soviet Union -> the Russian Federation[8]

- Yugoslavia -> Serbia[9]

- The Ottoman Empire -> Turkey[10]

- The Austro-Hungarian Empire -> Austria and Hungary[11]

- Denmark-Norway -> Denmark and Norway[12]

- Czechoslovakia -> the Czech Republic and Slovakia[13]

- Mandatory Palestine -> Israel[14]

If I were to examine the territories of countries the United Kingdom invaded, I would count the Crimean Wars as an invasion of Ukraine. However, I am focusing on states existing at the

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[7] **Shaw, M.** 2008. *INTERNATIONAL LAW*. 6th ed. [ebook] Cambridge: Camabridge University Press, p.960

[8] Union of Soviet Socialist Republics* - Countries - Office of the Historian. *Office of the Historian* [online]. Dostupné z: https://history.state.gov/countries/soviet-union

[9] Serbia - Countries - Office of the Historian. *Office of the Historian* [online]. Dostupné z: https://history.state.gov/countries/serbia

[10] **Patrick Dumberry. 2012.** Is turkey the 'continuing' state of the ottoman empire under international law. *Research Gate.* [Online] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259424685_Is_turkey_the_%27continuing%27_state_of_the_ottoman_empire_under_international_law

[11] **Mutschlechner, Martin. 2014.** The Dual Monarchy: two states in a single empire. *Habsburger.* [Online] https://ww1.habsburger.net/en/chapters/dual-monarchy-two-states-single-empire

[12] The Faroe Islands in the Norwegian/Danish Monarchy. *FaroeIslands.* [Online] https://www.faroeislands.fo/the-big-picture/history/the-faroe-islands-in-the-norwegian-danish-monarchy/

[13] **United Nations.** Czechoslovakia and Successor States: Czech Republic and Slovakia. *United Nations.* [Online] [cit. 6. Jule 2022.] https://www.un.org/en/about-us/member-states/czechoslovakia.

[14] **Ginat, Avital.** British Mandate for Palestine. *International Encyclopedia of the First World War.* [Online] https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/british_mandate_for_palestine

historical moment, and the country that the British invaded during the Crimean War was the Russian Empire, so Ukraine, even when the invasion happened in the territory of today's Ukraine, will be counted as uninvaded case. The same criteria will apply to invasions of colonies, such as French West Africa for example. A theoretical invasion along the coast of today's Senegal in the colonial era, when Senegal was part of the French Colonial Empire will count as an invasion of France.

The inverse case, in which theoretically the British invaded the Austro-Hungarian Empire along the coast of today's Croatia, would count as an invasion of both Austria and Hungary, even when the British were not close to today's Austria nor Hungary.

The criteria would apply even if the nation disappeared from the world map for several years. If an invasion of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had taken place, the country of today's Poland would also be recognized as an invaded country, even when the Polish nation disappeared from the geopolitical map for a while. Also, the successor to the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth is generally seen as Poland and Lithuania.

Exceptions such as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Austro-Hungarian Empire, where there would be more successor states will occasionally appear. However, I believe this is the best way to characterize and simplify which of today's countries the United Kingdom has invaded when dealing with the vast and complex history of the world.

A situation in which the United Kingdom enters the country as a part of an international organization such as the UN or NATO, or even just with one ally conducting aggressive military operations will be counted as a British invasion in relation to the occupying state.

2.2. Unions and Incorporations

I need to address the opposite situation, where the United Kingdom would have invaded the Kingdom of Leon, but not the Kingdom of Aragon. Several years later, the kingdoms united creating Spain. In this case, did the British invade Spain? In such cases where two countries unite to create a more powerful country, I would not say they invaded the unified country. Unification creates an entire new nation. However, if all the united countries within the united nation were invaded by the British, the unified country will count as an invaded country.

To avoid speculations, I also need to distinguish what is a union and what is an incorporation. Cambridge Dictionary uses these definitions for union:[15]

> *"The act or the state of being joined together"*

and for incorporation:[16]

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[15] UNION | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary. *Cambridge Dictionary | English Dictionary, Translations & Thesaurus* [Online] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/union

"The act or including something as part of something larger"

The definitions provided allude to a difference between the two. Union, being something joining together to create something new. And an incorporation as something where one entity is taken in to create something bigger. Such differentiation is crucial.

If I use an example, a union would be the previously mentioned case of the Kingdom of Aragon and Kingdom of Castille. An incorporation would be Nazi Germany annexing Austria without resistance. There can be different types of incorporations, but the point is that the country incorporated is not in any form of equal union and is not creating a new nation. If a third party would have invaded Nazi Germany, even if an invasion had taken place in the Austrian part, it would not have been an invasion of Austria, but Germany, because there was no independent state of Austria. The army would have invaded the *sovereign nation* of Nazi Germany on Austrian soil. And since I am examining the *countries* with set borders that were invaded, and not territory, such distinction is very important.

There could also be a mix of several changes. Germany is an interesting example, having been a unified empire, dissolved, and unified republic in the span of a century. In this case, the split into East and West Germany caused post-war Germany to have two successor states. And if two successor states decide to reunify, the succession continues uninterrupted. This example is to illustrate that in some cases, the answer to whether a country has been invaded is a difficult one, even with the rules set.

One last point I need to address is the fact the United Kingdom itself is a union of nations. If at the time when England and Scotland were separate, and one of them had invaded a country and the other had not, can we say the United Kingdom invaded the country? In my opinion, yes, it does count. This is a case in which a country within a part of a today's country invades another nation. Since the United Kingdom's history is a history of all the countries within the kingdom, I would classify such instances as invasions.

2.3. Civil Wars

Another complex situation comes when the British would join a civil war on either side of the conflict. Should all involvements in civil wars be counted? Once more, the criteria here will be a bit subjective. Because on the one hand, if one side requests the British military support, it could be counted as allied help. But on the other, it may be viewed as invasion of another country.

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[16] INCORPORATION | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary. *Cambridge Dictionary | English Dictionary, Translations & Thesaurus* [Online] https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/incorporation

In international law there is the principle of non-intervention. That means non-interventions in internal affairs of a state, or restriction of involvement from other states in cases of internal affairs. However, there are still many disputed areas.[17]

These are the criteria I think would be the most objective. Usually, in civil wars, there are two sides. The rebelling side, and the side that is in charge. If the British join the rebelling side, it will be counted as an invasion of the country. If the British join the side to defeat the rebellion, such instance will be counted as an allied help.

2.4. Invasion

Another issue that needs to be properly defined is what constitutes an invasion. Is a simple march through a country an invasion of the country? Such questions and more need to have a clear answer to obtain the best result possible in this research. The Cambridge Dictionary defines an armed invasion as following:[18]

"An occasion when an army or country uses force to enter and take control of another country"

Using this definition, I can rule out the instance where an army marches through a land to get to a different place.

There is also another definition of invasion, in this case it concerns international law and is stated by the UN. It defines invasion as follows:[19]

"The blockade of the ports or coasts of a State by the armed forces of another State" and *"an attack by the armed forces of a State on the land, sea or air forces, or marine and air fleets of another State"*

So, any form of an attack, be it air force, naval invasion or a land invasion classifies as an invasion. Even blockades.

2.5. Liberation

As mentioned previously, allied help will not count as an invasion. British troops are sent to a foreign country and fight enemies. However, looking back at the definition of invasion, such an instance does not count. The army is not using force to enter the country but are invited to it. Neither the army coming to help is going to take over some land and occupy, rather help against aggressors, and leave as soon as domestic administration is established.

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[17] **Dubay, Carolyn A. 2014.** A Refresher on the Principle of Non-Intervention. *International Judical Monitor.* [Online]
http://www.judicialmonitor.org/archive_spring2014/generalprinciples.html

[18] INVASION | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary. *Cambridge Dictionary | English Dictionary, Translations & Thesaurus* [Online]
https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/invasion

[19] Definition of Aggression, General Assembly 3314 (XXIX). *Audiovisual Library of Internation Law.* [Online]
https://legal.un.org/avl/ha/da/da.html

If the invading country wants to gain land, money or an influence over the region, it classifies as an invasion. Allied help will not such as the help in Ukraine, providing military equipment, will not count as an invasion.

When it comes to the word liberation, many may associate the term with June 6th, 1944, the D-Day as it is now remembered. This opens a question whether or not the allied forces invaded France, Belgium, Austria and other countries on their way to Berlin. The Cambridge Dictionary defines liberation as following:[20]

"An occasion when something or someone is released or made free"

In the case of D-Day, I would say that the British did not invade France, rather the German Reich. The German Reich were occupying the territories of France, and the British invaded German Reich occupied France to fight the Germans, not the French. Identifying who the enemy nation is will be integral in deciding whether the British come as conquerors, or liberators.

2.6. Occupation

As alluded to in the previous case, when a sovereign nation invades an occupied territory, the nation does not invade the occupied nation but the occupier's nation.

In the case of the United Kingdom, the more important question is whether to classify the states occupied during the era of British Empire as an invasion. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, an armed occupation is:[21]

"A situation in which an army or group of people moves into and takes control of a place."

Additionally, according to the Article 42 of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL), occupation is:[22]

"Territory is considered occupied when it is actually placed under the authority of the hostile army. The occupation applies only to the territory where such authority is established, and in a position to assert itself."

Occupation of another nation, or a part of an established nation is a clear example of an invasion. An army is sent to another country to gain something, be it a control over territory, or some other kind of influence.

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[20] LIBERATION | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary. *Cambridge Dictionary | English Dictionary, Translations & Thesaurus* [online]. https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/liberation

[21] OCCUPATION | meaning in the Cambridge English Dictionary. *Cambridge Dictionary | English Dictionary, Translations & Thesaurus* https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/occupation

[22] ICRC. Convention (II) with respect to the Laws and Customs of War on Land and its annex: regulations concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land. The Hague, 29 July 1899. *Internationl Committee of the Red Cross.* [Online] https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/ART/150-110048?OpenDocument.

However, there are instances in history when the British were part of a joint occupation of a sovereign nation with another country. If the United Kingdom with another country occupies a territory of another country, such instance will also be counted as an act of invasion.

I will also not count instances where the British would build a military base in another country if the opposing country does not conduct military response to such an event.

2.7. British Empire and Territorial control

This section addresses the issue of British colonial possessions around the world. If we take the British Raj, by the above rules, only India would be classified as an invaded country, because it is widely acknowledged as the sole successor to the British Raj and Pakistan would be excluded from the counting. In the case of British colonial possessions, if the colony separated into several countries following the British leave, all the countries will be counted as invaded countries. One good indicator of such instances is if a country has an Independence Day from the British rule.

However, Pakistan that emerged from the British Raj was not the Pakistan that we know today. It included the country of Bangladesh as its eastern province, which complicates things further. Was the country of Bangladesh occupied by the British?

First, the issue of Pakistan needs to be resolved. Pakistan seceded directly from the British Raj and Pakistan has an Independence Day from the United Kingdom, which makes it an invaded country. And although the nation lost a large portion of territory, the successor to the Federation of Pakistan (1947-1956) is the present Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

In the cases of the British Empire, I will only count countries that emerged from the British Empire directly. The Bangladeshi freed themselves from the country of Pakistan, not the British Raj.

In terms of land, it is undisputable that the British controlled the territory of Bangladesh, as well as those of India and Pakistan. However, in terms of countries, the British controlled India and Pakistan, as Pakistan was the country established after the dissolution of the British Raj. But not Bangladesh.

If the country had seceded from the British Empire directly, the country will be counted as an invaded country. However, if a country is seceding from a country that seceded from the British Empire, creating a new nation, such a country will not be counted.

2.7.1. Mandates, Trust Territories and Condominiums

Mandates are territories where an international organization assigns territories to be governed by a third nation. The intentions of a mandating a territory is to entrust the development and well-being of another nation with a nation which could undertake such a

responsibility.[23] Trust territories are successors to mandates. Differences here are that mandates are associated with the League of Nations, whereas Trust Territories are associated with the United Nations.

The condominium is an instance, where two more or states exercise sovereignty with respect to a territory and its inhabitants.[24]

In both cases, a nation has control over a territory like in the case of colonies, but in this case the control is recognized, or arranged, by international organizations. The countries mandated were not militarily invaded, but are still under control of another nation, even if the mandated nation is not content with the situation. In the cases of a mandate, I have decided to include such nation into the invaded category. Even if the nation was not militarily invaded, it was in a sense, invaded by a foreign nation, with a blessing from international organizations, allowing a foreign nation to have control over another.

2.7.2.   Protectorates and protected states

In international law, there is a key difference between protectorates, and protected states in terms of sovereignty. Protected states entering an agreement with another nation are seen as sovereign nations, while protectorates do not have a status of separate statehood. As such, I will count invasion of a protectorate as an invasion of the country which oversees protectorates, whereas invasion of a protected state will be count as an invasion of the protected state.[25]

2.8. Amphibious warfare

British naval superiority throughout history is widely accepted information. Invasion is often seen as actions on land, with men entering a country to fight. However, there can also be naval invasion. As with criteria I set previously, I will not count passing through territorial waters of another country to sail elsewhere, but I will do so in an instance where British fleet fought in the waters of another country, blockaded another country's harbour, bombarded the lands of a foreign country and fought enemy ships or in cases where there was the intention to gain something outside peaceful reach.

However, sea borders may present another problem. What are the territorial waters of another country? How far do they reach and where are the borders? UN's international law called Law of the Sea classifies territorial sea extending at most 12 nautical miles from the coast of the coastal state.[26] There are a few exceptions to the rule, and some disputes over

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[23] **Shaw, M.** 2008. *INTERNATIONAL LAW*. 6th ed. [ebook] Cambridge: Camabridge University Press, p.224.

[24] **Shaw, M.** 2008. *INTERNATIONAL LAW*. 6th ed. [ebook] Cambridge: Camabridge University Press, p.226.

[25] **Shaw, M.** 2008. *INTERNATIONAL LAW*. 6th ed. [ebook] Cambridge: Camabridge University Press, p.216.

[26] PART II, TERRITORIAL SEA AND CONTIGUOUS ZONE. *United Nations.* [Online] https://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/part2.htm.

several territories, but I will use the UN's territorial sea classification once again as it is generally accepted.

2.9. Pirates, privateers, and buccaneers

A naval superpower like the British Empire creates many people who are born to sail the world on a boat. However, some of them can easily turn to the life of crime and piracy. The issue here, is that the line between a pirate and a privateer is a bit blurry.

In colonial times, every ship was encouraged to carry firearms aboard, to deter others from attacking. In such times, a letter of marque authorised the owner of a ship to attack another ship. And some can easily take advantage of such letter. If someone has a letter of marque and attacks a ship in the waters of another, does that count as an invasion?

Cases in which British privateers are authorised to attack for example Spanish ships are undisputed acts of aggression against Spain. Sometimes British ships could even be authorized to blockade ports along the Spanish coast.

This is my opinion once more, but I do not think that in cases where for example, a privateer is authorized by the government of United Kingdom to attack a Spanish ship in Spanish waters an invasion of Spain. That means even blockades of Spanish ports. If an attack on a Spanish ship happens in international waters, I will classify such case as an aggression against Spain, not an invasion. To classify an invasion, military of the United Kingdom must be present.

If a privateer is leading a part of United Kingdom's army, then such an occasion will count as an invasion as well.

2.10. Air space

One last important term that needs to be defined is air space. British Royal Air Force is as famous as British Navy, and invasions do not have to be just by land and water, but also by air. The definition of an airspace according to international law is airspace that goes from land of a nation up to the territorial water borders (12 nautical miles of the coast).[27] It does not include outer space.

2.11. Rescue missions

If the British Army enters the territory of another nation solely to rescue British residents out from dangerous situation, does that count as an invasion? Here, I think it all depends on the response of the country into which the British want to go and rescue their people from. If the opposing nation is hostile and military actions are taken, then yes, such an instance

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[27] APAC Electronic Documents. *Uniting Aviation: A United Nations Specialized Agency.* [Online] https://www.icao.int/APAC/Documents/edocs/International%20Airspace%20and%20Civil-Military%20Cooperation.pdf.

counts as invasion since the nation does not want British military in its territory. If the nation does not attack the United Kingdom, and lets them evacuate their citizens, then such an instance does not count as an invasion. In case some rebels tried to stop the evacuation, then it would still not classify as an invasion, since the government of said country still does not mind if British armed forces try to evacuate their citizens.

2.12. Scope of inquiry

The above definitions set basic criteria as to what to classifies an invasion, and what does not. The following list of countries will not occur in alphabetical order as is the case with Laycock. They are rather grouped by various similarities through history, and the nation's connections to the United Kingdom, British Empire, European Continent etc.

In the analytical section, limited historical detail will be given in the cases of countries such as Ireland or France due to their rich and well-researched historical relations, including warfare. However, nations where the situation is not so clear will be explored more thoroughly. After every section, I will list the invaded/not invaded countries in a list and colour a world map with green colour marking the invaded countries, and red colour marking the not invaded countries. At the end, I will obtain a final percentage of countries invaded by the United Kingdom through its history and compare it with Laycock's assessment.

3. British Empire

The British Empire marks the era of human history in which the United Kingdom was one of, if not the most powerful country in the world.

3.1. Early British Empire

In the early days of the British Empire, the United Kingdom mainly focused its attention on to the New World. Here, the two main countries that are connected with the United Kingdom's colonial efforts are Canada and the United States of America. The territories of both have been invaded by the United Kingdom.

Although the United States of America was not called the United States of America at the time, but Thirteen Colonies, the British did invade the territory. And after the Americans defeated the British and declared independence on July 4th, 1776, they formed the United States of America. Another noteworthy case is the War of 1812.

Canada, being one of the colonies of the British Empire also classifies as an invaded country, being a direct successor to the Dominion of Canada under British rule.

3.2. Expansion of the British Empire

After losing the Thirteen Colonies, the United Kingdom began focusing more on other parts of the world then only the Americas. The two biggest bodies of land the British acquired, were Australia and the British Raj.

3.2.1. Indian subcontinent

As mentioned previously, India and Pakistan will be counted as countries that the United Kingdom invaded. Bangladesh will not. However, these are not all the countries that were part of the British Raj.

There is also Myanmar, or Burma as it was called back then. As with India and Pakistan, the country separated directly from the British Empire shortly after India and Pakistan on January 4th, 1948, creating a new country and classifying it as an invaded country.

Also, there is the island and country of Sri Lanka. When the British Empire took over the Indian subcontinent, they also took over the island of Sri Lanka, or Ceylon as it was known then. Sri Lanka gained independence on February 4th, 1948, as Dominion of Ceylon, gaining status as a British Commonwealth nation. And on May 22nd, 1972, Sri Lanka became its own republic, free from British influence and meets the requirements for an invaded country.

Another country that was once a British colony and which won its independence from the United Kingdom, is the small archipelago of islands in the Indian Ocean, Maldives. It gained independence from the United Kingdom on July 26th, 1965. Except for Bangladesh, all of these countries on the Indian subcontinent seceded directly from the British Empire and can be considered as formerly invaded by the British.

3.2.2. Australia, Oceania, Polynesia, and Micronesia
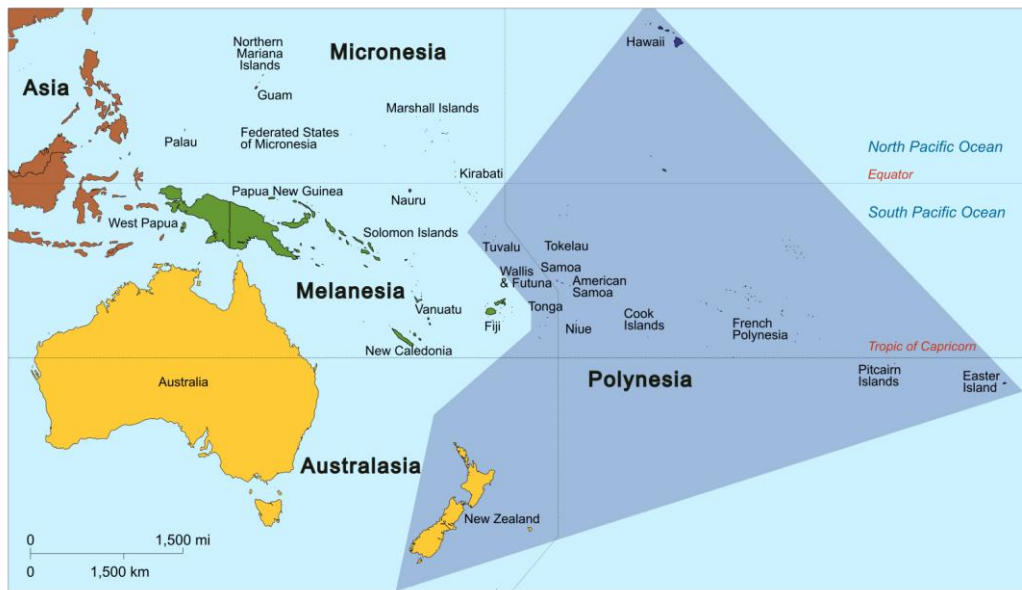
Picture 2 – Map of Australia, Polynesia, and Micronesia[28]

Other large colonies British controlled by the British were Australia and New Zealand, then known as the Dominion of Australia and the Dominion of New Zealand. These Commonwealth nations classify as invaded countries, formed after the British left the lands in control of Australians and New Zealanders. Australia gained independence on January 1st, 1901. In the case of New Zealand, there is not a clear day the nation gained independence, but we can use the date on which New Zealand passed the Statute of Westminster Adoption Act (11th December 1931) and gained formal independence from the United Kingdom.

Located in Oceania is the country of Papua New Guinea. Before it became an external territory of Australia, it was a British colony from 1988-1902. However, Britain controlled only the southern part of today's Papua New Guinea. The northern part was controlled by the German Empire. Additionally, the control of the southern part went to Australia, who then unified it with the German part of New Guinea. Several years after the unification, Papua New Guinea gained independence on July 1st, 1949. In this case, Britain controlled only half of the country and lost their control before the country became unified. The Australians controlled the southern part and unified Papua and New Guinea.

The case of Papua New Guinea is complex because although Australia gained independence in 1901, the British still held some control over Australia. It was not until 1986, that all ties to the British government were severed.[29] I lean towards the case where Papua New Guinea was not invaded by the United Kingdom. It is widely acknowledged that Australia gained

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[28] **Walker, Mary**. Map of Polynesia. In: *World History Encyclopedia* [Online] https://www.worldhistory.org/image/13659/map-of-polynesia/

[29] Australia Act 1986. *Federal Register of Legislation.* [Online] https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2004A03181

independence in 1901, and has been an independent country since. Thus it was Australia that unified Papua New Guinea and from which Papua New Guinea gained its independence.

There are other colonized countries in Polynesia and Micronesia that formed after the British left. All of these nations gained independence from the United Kingdom directly meeting the requirements for an invaded country. These countries are:

- Fiji (Independent as of October 7th, 1987)

- Kiribati (Independent as of July 12th, 1979)

- Solomon Islands (Independent as of July 7th, 1978)

- Tonga (Independent as of June 4th, 1970)

- Tuvalu (Independent as of October 1st, 1978)

Three interesting cases in Polynesia and Micronesia are Nauru, Samoa, and Vanuatu. The five previous countries all celebrate an Independence Day from the United Kingdom. But with these three countries it is slightly more complicated.

In the case of Nauru, it is an island which consisted of 12 tribes before the arrival of the German Empire. After their arrival, the island was unified under one jurisdiction called Germany's Marshall Islands Protectorate. The British held onto the island when it was given to them by the League of Nations after World War I. In 1923 the British agreed to a joint mandate of the territory with New Zealand and Australia. And in 1968, Nauru gained independence from not only United Kingdom, but New Zealand and Australia as well.[30] Although the situation is complicated, because of being a mandate, Nauru will be considered an invaded nation.

Vanuatu is a case of a joint control with the French. In other words, Vanuatu is a Condominium. Here, the French and the British clashed over an influence on Vanuatu's populace. Another complex case, but I am counting Condominiums as invaded countries, and as such I am leaning towards such conclusion.

Samoa saw military action from the British army in the Second Samoan Civil war in 1899, when it was not evident which Great Power controlled the Samoan Islands. At that time, Samoa was an independent country, with king Susuga Malietoa Tanumafili I as the head of state.[31] The intentions of Germany, USA and the United Kingdom were clear. They all wanted to conquer the island and gain control over it, classifying it as an invasion of the Kingdom of Samoa.

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[30] Nauru Colony. *The British Empire* [Online] https://www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/nauru.htm

[31] Susuga Malietoa Tanumafili I, King of Samoa, 1879-1939. *National Library of New Zealand* [online] https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22564577

3.3. Scramble for Africa

Another big expansion of the British Empire took place in 1884, when the representatives of major powers of Europe met in Berlin and divided the African continent among themselves. The United Kingdom being one of these Great Powers was a key player in the division of the continent and returned with several new colonies. As the British Empire declined, most of these colonies seceded directly from the United Kingdom, creating a following list.

- Botswana (Independent as of September 30[th,] 1966)

- Egypt (Independent as of February 28[th,] 1922)

- Eswatini (Independent as of September 6th, 1968)

- Ghana (Independent as of March 6th, 1957)

- Kenya (Independent as of December 12th, 1963)

- Lesotho (Independent as of October 4th, 1966)

- Malawi (Independent as of July 6th, 1964)

- Nigeria (Independent as of October 1st, 1960)

- Sierra Leone (Independent as of April 27th, 1961)

- South Africa (Independent as of December 11th, 1931)

- Uganda (Independent as of October 9th, 1962)

- Zambia (Independent as of October 24th, 1964)

- Zimbabwe (Independence recognized as of April 18th 1980, declared on November 11th 1965)
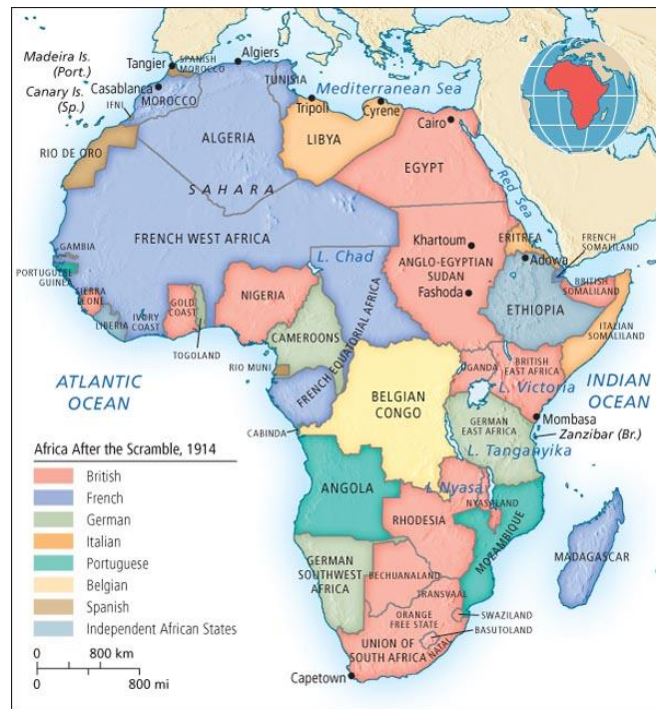
Picture 3 – Divided Africa[32]

Sudan, South Sudan and The Gambia were also part of the British Empire, but their situation is not as clear cut as it was with the above-mentioned countries.

Once again, we have a case where a country split into two long after the British left, creating Sudan and South Sudan. Additionally, even the Sudan Republic from 1985-2011 had its own interesting circumstances of secession.

Sudan seceded not only from the British Empire, but also from the Kingdom of Egypt, which was then under British influence. However, this case is not that of splitting spheres of influence, but rather a case of a condominium.[33]

In that sense, all of Sudan seceded from the United Kingdom and Egypt, gaining independence from United Kingdom and the Kingdom of Egypt on January 1st, 1956.

In the case of South Sudan, it split from Sudan July 15th 2011. The widely acknowledged successor to the state of Sudan (1985-2011) is the Republic of the Sudan. Country of South Sudan did not exist when the United Kingdom controlled the territory. The case is

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32 Explain the "Scramble for Africa" - Chapter 33. In: Blendspace [online] https://www.blendspace.com/lessons/NW4kz2z9U8tIWQ/age-of-imperialism

33 **University of Central Arkansas**. 14. Anglo-Egyptian Sudan (1922-1956). *Political Science.* [Online] https://uca.edu/politicalscience/dadm-project/middle-eastnorth-africapersian-gulf-region/anglo-egyptian-sudan-1922-1956/.

comparable to those of Bangladesh and Pakistan, leaving South Sudan as an uninvaded country, whereas Sudan as invaded.

The Gambia is an obvious case of invasion and secession, but it is also interesting case because of its joining with Senegal, creating the Senegambia Confederation from 1982-1989. Nevertheless, nothing changes the fact that the Gambia before and after the confederation are the same countries, even though the country joined with another for a short period of time.

A complex case is Somalia. The United Kingdom did control an area of Somalia called Somaliland. During the colonial era, Somalia was split between the southern Italian Somalia, and northern British Somalia. After gaining independence, Somalia unified. The Somaliland in the north is a semi-independent nation, but the UN does not recognize it as such.[34] Since the British and Italians left and Somalia unified, the country has not been invaded by the United Kingdom since. In this case, however, I lean towards the verdict of an invaded country.

Two last cases are the small island nations in the Indian Ocean near Madagascar called Seychelles and Mauritius. Both were part of the Mauritius Crown Colony of the British Empire. Seychelles gained independence on June 29th, 1976 and Mauritius in March 12th, 1968. A case of direct secession from the British Empire which meets the criteria for an invaded country.

3.4. Remaining territories of the British Empire

3.4.1. Middle Eastern colonies

The colonies the British acquired in the Middle East mainly stem from the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the first World War. Starting in the north, the countries of Iraq and Jordan were both a British colony. Mandatory Iraq and Emirate of Trans-Jordan respectively. Both mandates directly seceded from the United Kingdom. Jordan in May 25th 1946, and Iraq in July 14th, 1932.

Additionally, a clear invasion of Iraq happened in the year 2003. A coalition between the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Poland captured the capital city Baghdad in less than two months.

Israel saw many battles in the past, mainly because of crusades, when European kingdoms tried to take back the "Holy Land", from Muslims. However, the invasion in those times was an invasion of various Sultanates, none of which can be seen as predecessors to the modern country of Israel. The country of Israel was a British mandate called Mandatory Palestine

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[34] **Bragg, Rebekah.** International Recongnition of Somaliland. *Old Dominion University.* [Online]
https://www.odu.edu/content/dam/odu/offices/mun/2015/specpol-international-recognition-of-somaliland.pdf.

from 1920-1948, gaining independence in May 14th 1948. And even though Israel does not claim to be a successor to the Mandate of Palestine, it seceded directly from the British Empire, creating Israel and I lean towards the case of an invaded country.

The Sheikhdom of Kuwait, the predecessor to the present Kuwait voluntarily joined the British Empire in 1899 due to threats to their independence from the Ottoman Empire and became a British protectorate. Kuwait became independent of British control on June 19th, 1961.

The small countries of Bahrain and Qatar both became British colonial territories and eventually gained their independences in the late summer of 1971. Bahrain on August 15th 1971, and Qatar on September 3rd 1971.

Going further, another country that became independent from the United Kingdom was United Arab Emirates. The British protectorate of trucial States became independent on December 1st 1971, forming the United Arab Emirates.

The last countries in this section will be Yemen and Oman. Yemen is yet another country that was had been divided, but eventually united in 1990. The British controlled South Yemen, but after South Yemen gained independence, it became unified with the uninvaded Yemen Arab Republic in the north, creating a new country. And the United Kingdom did get involved in the North Yemen Civil War (1962-1970), but it was on the side of the government, and as such North Yemen remained uninvaded under the criteria set. It is another debatable case, but I am inclined to classify Yemen as an uninvaded country. I cannot interpret such a case as an incorporation of territory, as this is more a union of two countries, one of which was invaded, and the second one was part of an allied help. The United Kingdom clearly controlled parts of Yemen, and operated on Yemenis soil, but not after Yemen was unified.

In Oman's case, the preceding country of Muscat and Oman was a British colonial territory until July 23rd, 1970. And although Muscat and Oman gained more territory eventually creating Oman, there was no case of unification with another nation, classifying Oman as an invaded country.

3.4.2. Southeast Asia

Malaysia is the second case in which the unified landmasses were all under British control. Territories of Malaya, and Sabah and Serawak respectively. Therefore, it is an easy classification of an invasion.

Singapore was a British colony as well. The small country joined Malaysia for a period of time between 1963 and 1965, but it was expulsed from the country of Malaysia in August 9th, 1965. Nevertheless, Singapore that gained independence is the same country that was later expulsed from Malaysia.

Brunei was part of the British Empire as North Borneo, and was the last country to gain independence from the United Kingdom on January 1st, 1984.

3.4.3. Americas and Europe

The fact the British lost one of the most valued colonies in Thirteen Colonies did not deter the British from colonizing or keeping other parts of the Americas, mainly the Caribbean islands. The listed below islands gained independence from the declining British Empire.

- Antigua and Barbuda (Independent as of November 1st, 1981)

- Bahamas (Independent as of July 10th, 1973)

- Barbados (Independent as of November 30th, 1966)

- Dominica (Independent as of November 3rd, 1978)

- Grenada (Independent as February 7th, 1974)

- Jamaica (Independent as of August 6th, 1962)

- Saint Kitts and Nevis (Independent as of September 17th, 1983)

- Saint Lucia (Independent as of February 22nd, 1979)

- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (Independent as of October 27th, 1979)

- Trinidad and Tobago (Independent as of August 31st, 1962)

In Central America lies the country of Belize, which also was a British protectorate until September 21st, 1981, which also classifies Belize as an invaded country.

The last country in America, in this South America, that was formerly under British control, is Guyana, formerly known as British Guinea. As all the previous countries, Guyana was a British colonial territory which gained independence on May 26th, 1966, classifying it as an invaded country.

The last countries to conclude the section of the British Empire will be those from United Kingdom's own continent, Europe. In the Mediterranean Sea there are two island countries colonized by the British.

- Cyprus (Independence as of August 6th, 1960)

- Malta (Independence as of September 21st, 1964)

One more country that belongs into this category is of Ireland, which was part of the British Crown for a long time. It is neither a colonial territory nor a mandate, but it was a part of the United Kingdom for a large part of the latter's imperial history.

The British invaded Ireland on numerous occasions. One example from history is the invasion by Henry VIII when he decided to bring Ireland under the English Crown in 1536.

3.5. British Empire reassessed
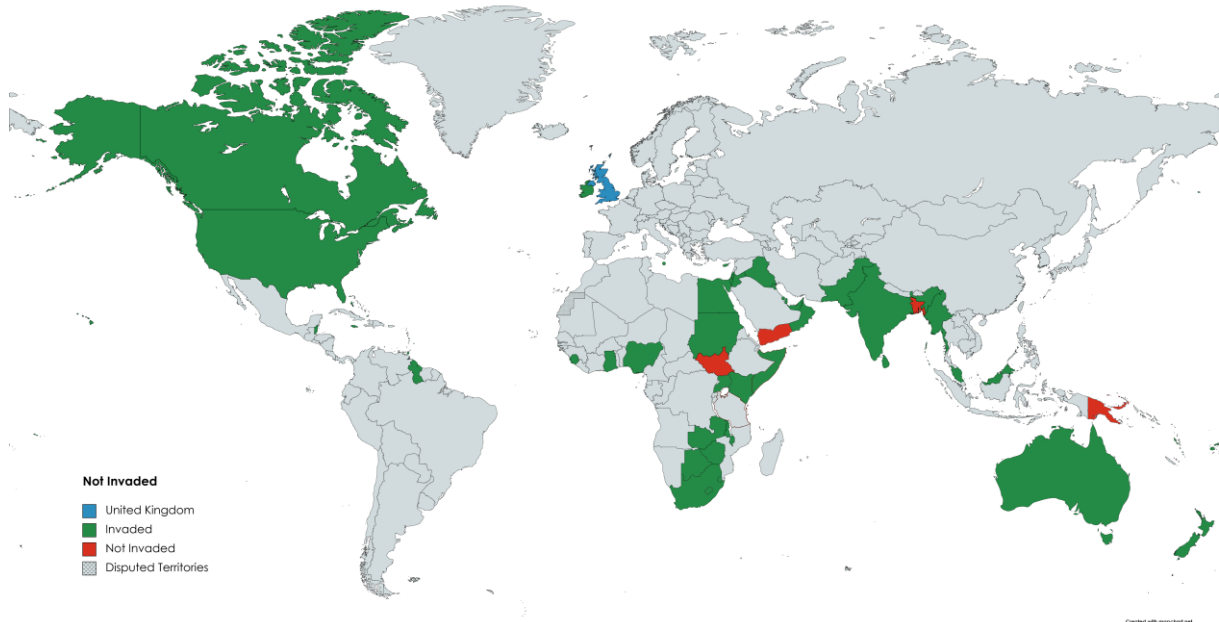
Picture 4 – Countries of the British Empire reassessed[35]

4. European conflicts

Although the United Kingdom is an inevitable part of Europe, the Britons always felt at least partly detached from mainland Europe. Being the first country to ever leave the European Union is a most recent example.

However, not even the distance between from the rest of Europe could keep them out of the inevitable wars that plague the history of the world. The residents of the British Isles leading the Industrial Revolution became formidable fighters, especially on the sea, cementing themselves as one of the Great Powers of Europe, leaving a big mark on their home continent.

4.1. Old rivals

Throughout history, the United Kingdom allied themselves with numerous European countries. However, they also made some enemies. Europe has been in relative peace now, compared to the numerous wars that happened on the continent in the past. Most enemies have turned into allies, or friendly rivals at most.

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[35] World Map. In: *Mapchart* [Online] https://www.mapchart.net/world.html

The European section will start with England's most well-known rival, France. In this case, there were so many invasions that an entire thesis could be just on wars with France, and it would only cover a small portion of history. Since I have already mentioned Henry VIII, I select his invasion of the Kingdom of France in 1544 as an example for France.

Spain became another well-known rival to the United Kingdom as well. And as with France, there are many cases when the United Kingdom invaded Spain. One of the examples is the entire period of the Seven Years War between 1756-1763.

Another colonial rival is the Netherlands. In total there were four Anglo-Dutch Wars, and any of them can be classified as an invasion of the Netherlands. Most of the battles took place on the sea, and some just right of the coast of the Netherlands, or the Dutch republic, as it was known at the time of the Anglo-Dutch Wars.

Germany is yet another country that was invaded by the British. Both World Wars provide more than enough evidence. One instance that could pose problems in classification is the division of Germany into its Western and Eastern parts after World War II and its unification at the end of the Cold War. Nonetheless, Germany still meets the criteria. The German Empire and the German Reich both are widely acknowledged as predecessors to Germany we know today.

The largest rival of the United Kingdom in territorial terms was also invaded. The most notorious clash between the Russian Empire and the United Kingdom was the Crimean War. The regions of the Black Sea were controlled by the Russian Empire, and the United Kingdom used their famous Royal Navy to invade Russian waters.

The last rivals examined will be the Scandinavian countries. It may not be "rivalry" in proper terms, but the inhabitants of the British Isles were one of the first people to encounter Vikings and their pillaging. Starting with Denmark, during Napoleonic Wars, Sir Hyde Parker and Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson were sent to destroy the Danish fleet which could threaten the Royal Navy. They succeeded in the Battle of Copenhagen (1801), classifying it as another case of an invasion.[36]

Since Norway was at this time in a union with Denmark, creating the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway, and since Kingdom of Denmark-Norway has two successor states, Battle of Copenhagen could classify as an invasion of Norway as well. During Napoleonic Wars, the British Navy also fought in the Battle of Silda, near the Norwegian island of Silda.[37]

And lastly, Sweden. Surprisingly, there is nothing that could classify as an invasion of Sweden, or any of its predecessors. The closest the British came to an invasion of Sweden

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[36] Battle of Copenhagen. *Britannica.* [Online] https://www.britannica.com/place/Copenhagen.

[37] About: Battle of Silda. *DBpedia.* [Online] [cit. 4. July 2022.] https://dbpedia.org/page/Battle_of_Silda.

was once again during Napoleonic Wars. After the implementation of the Continental System, which forbid any country to trade with the British, Sweden as part of the sphere of Napoleon's influence had to abide by the rule. However, at the time, Kingdom of Sweden and the United Kingdom had great relations and trade, and as such the treaty was notupheld. Napoleon ordered Sweden to declare war against the United Kingdom, and having no other choice, Sweden did. However, no military clash happened, and Napoleon was eventually deposed.[38]

4.2. Coastal Europe

In their naval dominance, the United Kingdom became engaged on the northern edge of Europe, just below the Artic Circle in the so-called Cod Wars. It was a conflict between the United Kingdom and Iceland in the second half of 20th century. By then, Iceland had been an independent republic for a few years. Iceland began to focus on the seafood industry, and the waters where they fished expanded to an extent noticed by the British. In short, there were Three Cod Wars in total, where the United Kingdom's navy invaded Icelandic waters.

Continuing with Nordic countries, Finland is next. During World War II, the British launched the Operation EF (1941) attacking a merchant vessel in Petsamo. [39] Finland, because of the Winter War against the Soviet Union entered an alliance with Axis powers and as such, the United Kingdom and Finland stood on the opposing sides on the conflict. Now, the area belongs to the Russian Federation, but at the time, it was Finnish territory, classifying it as an invasion of Finland.

Below Finland lie the Baltic countries. The British set foot in the Estonian lands numerous times throughout history, but it was always to fight the Russian Empire. The latest example is when the British helped Estonians by giving them naval and air support when Estonia wanted to achieve independence.[40] However, once independent, the British never fought Estonia and so, Estonia was not invaded.

Latvia has a similar story to that of Estonia. The British moved around the area when Latvia was part of the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union, but not when it was an independent state, classifying it as an uninvaded country.

Lithuania has a similar modern history as Latvia and Estonia. However, Lithuania's earlier history is quite different from its Baltic neighbours. At one-point, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was one of the biggest countries on the European continent. In 1390, King Henry IV, who was the Earl of Derby at the time supported the crusade to Lithuania in the siege of

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[38] Anglo-Swedish war of 1810–1812 - Wikipedia. *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia* [online] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglo-Swedish_war_of_1810–1812.

[39] Operation EF (1941). *DBpedia* [online] https://dbpedia.org/page/Operation_EF_(1941).

[40] Estonian War of Independence - Wikipedia. *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia* [online] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Estonian_War_of_Independence.

Vilnius, the capital of the then Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It was a small and unsuccessful invasion, but an invasion of Lithuania nevertheless.[41]

Lithuania's neighbour Poland was its long-time ally during the days of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It is a nation that has seen many battles, and although the lands of Poland had seen British military action numerous times, it was never against the country of Poland itself. Allied help against Germany in Second World War, fights against Napoleon during Napoleonic Wars all happened in the territory, but never was it an invasion of Poland or its preceding countries.

Belgium, like most young countries, was not invaded by the United Kingdom. The lands of Belgium saw military actions by the British, mainly during World Wars, but none of the aggression was aimed at the country of Belgium.

Next is a country that has the longest standing alliance treaty (Treaty of Windsor, 1386) with the United Kingdom, Portugal. Once again, British presence in Portuguese waters is undisputed. However, once more, it was always to fight other nations. Mostly Span, but during the Napoleonic Wars, also France. The British never tried to invade Portugal itself, nor their colonial possessions.

Monaco, because of its size and age, not only remains uninvaded, but its lands did not British Army in action either. Not even during World War II, when the British only passed by. Even Laycock agrees here.[42]

Italy is yet another example of an invasion from recent history. Although Italy as we know it today unified "only" in 19th century, it didn't escape British invasion. The most obvious example is World War II and the invasion of Sicily.

Slovenia is the first nation of the formerly known Yugoslavia. Since its disintegration, and due to the fact that Yugoslavia's successor is Serbia, the young state of Slovenia was never invaded by the United Kingdom.

In the case of Croatia, the British were once in the area, but never to fight Croatia. During Napoleonic wars they fought the French, and during World War II, they fought Italy.

What might surprise someone is that Bosnia and Herzegovina belong into this category as well. Zooming on the map reveals that Bosnia and Herzegovina owns a tiny bit of land connected to the sea around the town of Neum. And as young as Bosnia and Herzegovina is, it saw British army in action. It was during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913). Another involvement with Bosnia and Herzegovina happened during the Bosnian War (1992-2004), where the United Kingdom took part in the fights against the rebelling Republika Srpska in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since NATO was on the side of the Republic of

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[41] Henry IV. *Britannica.* [Online] https://www.britannica.com/biography/Henry-IV-king-of-England.

[42] **Laycock, S.** *All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 160-161.*

Bosnia and Herzegovina, I will classify such involvement as allied help during the times of a civil war and not a an invasion.[43]

Montenegro is the very last country to split from Serbia when Yugoslavia was falling apart, and since Serbia is the only successor to Yugoslavia, British did not have much time to get militarily involved with Montenegro, and as such Montenegro remains uninvaded.

For a long time, Albania was part of the Ottoman Empire and the modern nation of Albania was not invaded by the British. Once again, during the World Wars, the nation saw the presence of the British army, but the British fought the nations occupying Albania.

Greece is the first case of an invasion where I am using a blockade as an example. The example here is the Don Pacifico affair, where a Portuguese Jew named Don Pacifico was attacked by an anti-sematic mob. Pacifico had been born in Gibraltar, and therefore he claimed to be British. The British government supported his claims and demands for compensation, and the United Kingdom blockaded Piraeus to ensure Pacifico's demands were met.[44]

British military involvement with Turkey goes all the way back to the first crusade and the British knights participating in it. However, I rather use more recent examples. With Turkey being the successor to the Ottoman Empire, the British found themselves on the opposing side in World War I, the situation resulting in several battles against the Ottomans when the United Kingdom invaded their waters.

Bulgaria was on the opposing side in World War I, and the British 26th division invaded Bulgaria. After the war the United Kingdom occupied the territory of Bulgaria.[45] Clear case of an invasion

Romania was on the opposing side in World War II. There was not much British military action on the land during World War II. However, the British Royal Air Force did invade Romanian airspace, and bombed Bucharest.[46]

The territories of today's Ukraine were usually ruled by other powers, be it Lithuania, Poland, Ottomans, or Russians. As such, the British never had a chance to invade this young nation. Although, once again when the territory was a part of another country, British were here.

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[43] **Tirpak, John A. 1997.** Delibrate Force. *Air Force.* [Online] https://www.airforcemag.com/article/1097deliberate/.

[44] **Wright, Owain.** Don Pacifico Incident (1850). *ResearchGate.* [Online] https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324925659_Don_Pacifico_Incident_1850.

[45] **Baker, Chris.** 26th Division. *The Long, Long Trail. Researching soldiers of the British Army in the Great War of 1914-1919.* [Online] https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/order-of-battle-of-divisions/26th-division/.

[46] Bombing of Bucharest in World War II. *Academin Dictionaries and Encyclopedias.* [Online] https://en-academic.com/dic.nsf/enwiki/3500565.

4.3. Landlocked Europe

Surprisingly, there are quite a few landlocked countries on such a small continent as Europe. And although they are free from the threat of the Royal Navy, the Royal Air Force could easily reach them.

Starting with Moldova, where the British only involvement was when military vehicles passed through country on their way to Russia. Not an invasion.

The same are area of Europe also includes Belarus. So far, only Sweden and Monaco were the two cases where I and Laycock both agreed on an uninvaded country.[47] Belarus is the third, where, in our opinion, the British army never set foot in both, as an independent nation, or a part of a bigger country.

North Macedonia is another former Yugoslav nation. And once more, uninvaded. Although, British troops were in North Macedonia during the NATO mission in 2001, to help Macedonia when there was an unrest of Albanian populace. Such case could be a case of invasion, but NATO arrived on the request of North Macedonia.[48]

Even though Serbia had been a British ally during both World Wars, the invasion from the United Kingdom came. It happened in 1999, when a dispute over Kosovo caused NATO to send its forces into the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (then only with Montenegro). The United Kingdom did part of the bombing, and as Serbia is the sole successor of Yugoslavia, it classifies as an invaded country

Austria, because it is a successor to Austria-Hungary due to its involvement in World War I counts as an invaded country. Although it is not as clear cut as it may seem. The British troops pushed into Austro-Hungarian territory in World War I, but not far enough to reach the territory of today's Austria. Nonetheless the British invaded the country of Austria-Hungary, the predecessor of Austria and another country.

Hungary. Not much to be said here that has not been said in the Austria section. Austria-Hungary had two successor states, which qualifies Hungary as an invaded nation as well.

The next two nations are the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Although the British did help Czechs and Slovaks during World War II and pushed just over the border with Germany into today's Czech Republic, the case of liberation does not classify as an invasion.

Switzerland is famous for its neutrality in international matters, and maybe because of that, they have not been invaded by the British. Laycock mentions a group of knights roaming the

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[47] **Laycock, S.** All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 29.

[48] Peace support operations North Macedonia (2001-2003). North Atlantic Treaty Organization. [Online] https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_52121.htm.

lands of what is now Switzerland in the 14th century.[49] However, it was neither the country of Switzerland that was invaded nor its predecessors.

Luxembourg is another case where Laycock and I agree that the country was never invaded by the British. British troops never even passed through the lands of Luxembourg. The small countries of Liechtenstein and Andorra were not invaded either, also in Laycock's view.[50]

The last nation on the European continent that needs addressing is San Marino. Another microstate, but here Laycock states the case of liberation. However, with different criteria, the liberation of San Marino in World War II does not qualify as invasion.[51]

4.4. Europe reassessed
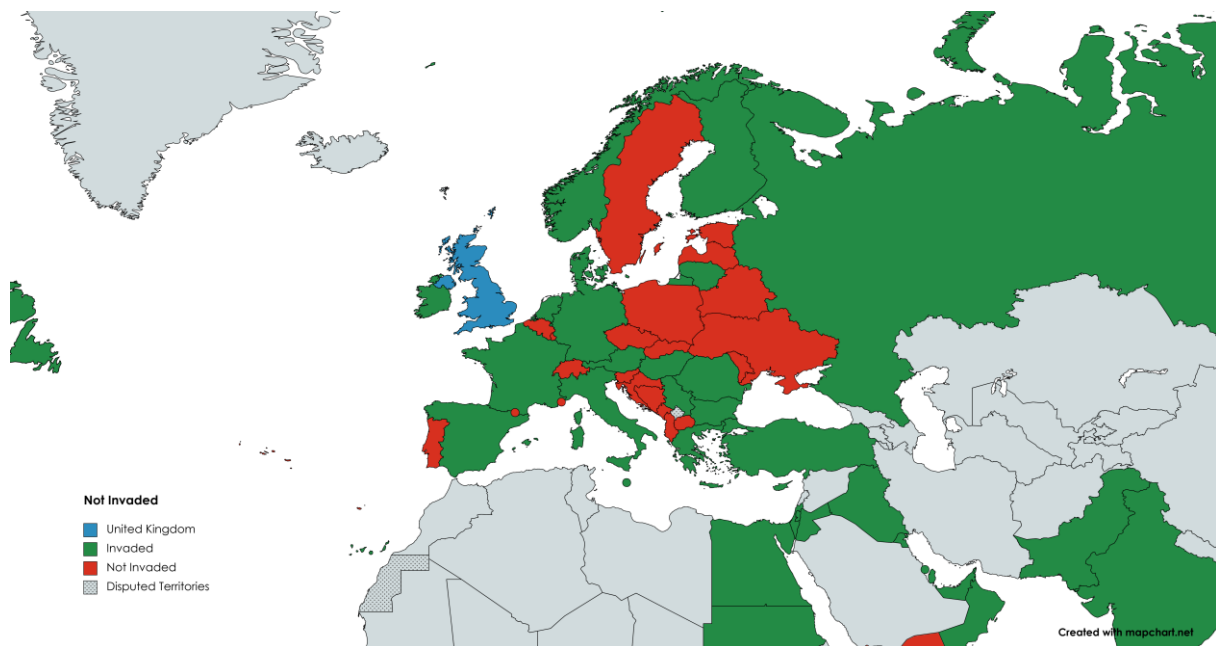
Picture 5 – Countries of Europe reassessed[52]

5. Decay of colonial Africa

It was not just the British Empire that lost its grip on the African dominions. The rest of Africa freed itself from foreign control as well as the British Africa. Slowly, the entire continent became independent of foreign control, paving their own path into the future.

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[49] **Laycock, S.** All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 223-224.

[50] **Laycock, S.** All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 18, 146, 147-148.

[51] San Marino's liberation from fascism. Italy On This Day. [Online] https://www.italyonthisday.com/2018/07/san-marinos-liberation-from-fascism.html.

[52] World Map. In: Mapchart [Online] https://www.mapchart.net/world.html

5.1. French Africa

The biggest colony the French managed to get from the Scramble of Africa was called French West Africa, which covered nearly the whole part of western Africa.

Starting in the northern part of Africa lies the country of Morocco. Morocco was a French colony in the times of colonialism, however, in the 17th century there was the Saadi Sultanate, the predecessor to today's Morocco. In 1661, the Portuguese Empire gave the city to King Charles II when he married Catherine of Braganza. However, the Moroccans wanted the British out, and so an invasion and the Battle of Tangier (1664) began.

Algeria had various levels of autonomy within the Ottoman Empire (the Regency of Algiers), however it was never fully independent of it. And after Ottomans, it was controlled by the French. The British bombarded the lands of Algeria in 1825, but the lands were in possession of the Ottomans. Then during World War II it was controlled by the French and as such, this does not qualify as an invasion. And as an independent nation Algeria gained help against Al-Qaeda in the region from the United Kingdom.

As Algeria, Tunisia was part of the Ottoman Empire, and then a French colony. However, there was the independent Kingdom of Tunis, also known as Beylik of Tunis from 1705 to 1881. The British, however, never invaded Beylik of Tunis.

The Republic of Congo in the North, not to be confused with the Democratic Republic of Congo in the South, was never invaded by the British even according to Laycock.[53] This part of Congo was controlled by France during the colonial years and even during World War II, the British never set foot in the Republic of the Congo's territory.

The Central African Republic is yet another nation that Laycock claims as uninvaded.[54] Because it is too far away, and not close to the coast to be threatened by the British naval force, it avoided being invaded. And during colonial years, the lands belonged mainly to France, with a bit owned by Portuguese.

Gabon is another nation that was part of the French Colonial Empire and never invaded as an independent nation from the French.

Chad is a young landlocked country in the middle of Africa. If a country is landlocked and far from bodies of water, the chance is that it was not invaded by the British. And that is the case here, where as Laycock also agrees.[55]

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[53] **Laycock, S.** All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 58.

[54] **Laycock, S.** All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 49-50.

[55] **Laycock, S.** All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 50-51.

Niger, located in the northern part of Africa, is a case of another French speaking country that is landlocked and was not affected by any British military affair while being a sovereign nation.

The lands of Djibouti saw British armed forces only in World War II times. And as usual, it was not to fight Djibouti but France, who was at one point in World War II forced to fight on the side of Axis powers.[56] Benin was another colony that was part of French West Africa when British troops arrived.

The French invaded the Mossi Kingdoms, which are predecessors to today's Burkina Faso. Another former French colony that was not invaded while independent as Burkina Faso, nor while being part of Mossi Kingdoms.

Ivory Coast belonged to the French, and once more the British did not participate in any military operations in the area, except for an evacuation of British citizens in 2004, during civil war.[57]

Mali. As with most countries that emerged from French West Africa, this country was not invaded by the United Kingdom. Landlocked and far from British lands, even Laycock did not find any case in which the British military would be present in today's Mali.[58]

In Guiana, the British controlled the Îles de Los from 1818 to 1904, but the possession of the island went in exchange to France, after France relinquished fishing rights in Newfoundland. The islands were incorporated into the French West Africa. After France lost the African colonies, the islands became incorporated into the country of Guinea. And such an involvement does not classify an invasion.

Comoros Islands between Mozambique and Madagascar were colonized by the French, during World War II and the British sent their troops to the islands. However, Comoros was part of the French Colonial Empire.

Another French Colony was Senegal. And as is with most colonies, the British military operations were mainly against France when Senegal was part of French West Africa, and as such, Senegal was not invaded.

Mauritania is located very close to the European continent causing the British to get to this part of the world faster than the rest of Africa. However, as yet another part of the French West Africa, there is no preceding nation to that of Mauritania before the French incorporated it into the French Colonial Empire that the British would invade, so it is another case of an uninvaded country.

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[56] **Chen, C. Peter.** Franch Somaliland. *World War II database.* [Online] https://ww2db.com/country/french_somaliland.

[57] **Meldrum, Andrew. 2004.** Foreigners flee Ivory Coast mayhem. *The Guardian.* [Online] https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/nov/11/westafrica.andrewmeldrum.

[58] **Laycock, S.** *All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 154-155.*

The Cape Verde Republic, located in the Atlantic Ocean, was under France's sphere of influence, and apart from explorations of Sir Francis Drake in the early days of the British Empire, British did not make any notable military appearances on the islands

The island of Madagascar is an interesting case. From 1540-1897, the island was united and known as Merina Kingdom, predecessor to today's Madagascar. An interesting case is when the British and the French joined forces in 1845 and invaded, attacking the fort of Tamatave in the eastern part of the island. In 1897-1958 Madagascar adjacent island were part of French Colonial Empire known as Colony of Madagascar and Dependencies.[59]

5.2. German Africa

Germany's colonization began a bit later compared to the rest of European powers. However, they left the Scramble for Africa with a notable acquisition, becoming a colonial power as well.

The territory of Tanzania was first under German control. However, the ownership of the land changed after World War I, and the lands of Tanzania became British possession as a mandated state. And it remained in British hands until Tanzania got independence on December 9th, 1961. That would classify Tanzania as an invaded country. However, at the time of independence the country was called Tanganyika. That alone would not change the verdict, but on April 26th, 1964, the country unified with the country of Zanzibar, creating todays United Republic of Tanzania. A union of two states would disqualify the United Republic of Tanzania as an invaded country, but even Zanzibar was under British control from 1890-1963 as a British colonial territory. Union of two countries where both were invaded by the British classifies the United Republic of Tanzania as an invaded country.

Rwanda is similar to most of the small countries in this thesis. In World War I, when Rwanda was part of the German Empire, the British were close but did not manage to enter the lands of Rwanda. After the war, the territory became a trust territory. Also, British sent their troops to help with the aftermath of the Rwandan Genocide in 1994. However, I do not think such case classifies an invasion.

Burundi is another case where Laycock claims the British did not invade the nation. During World War I, Burundi was part of the German Empire and after Germany lost the war, Burundi became a Belgian trust territory called Territory of Ruanda-Urundi, united with today's Rwanda. The British were in the area around Burundi during World War I, but never in Burundi itself.

Cameroon was a German Colony, but after World War I, Cameroon was split as a mandate territory between the British and French. The French mandate of Cameroon, the larger part

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[59] Merina Kingdom. *Wikipedia.* [Online] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merina_Kingdom.

of Cameroon gained independence first. After the British mandate of Cameroon split from the British Empire, one part was incorporated into the French part of the now independent Cameroon, and the other part was incorporated into Nigeria. It is a complicated case, because with the criteria set, mandates count as a form of an invasion. But I believe incorporation of a part of British Cameroon into the Independent Cameroon and the other into Nigeria does not meet the criteria for an invaded country.

Togo was slightly bigger country when part of Germany. After World War I, the colony was split into the French Togoland and the British Togoland, forming a condominium, which later turned into mandate states. The British Togoland was incorporated into neighbouring Ghana, and the French Togoland became independent, and as such, Togo was not invaded by the British

Namibia was also under German control at first. However, it became part of South Africa in 1915 as a mandate after the defeat of Germany. South Africa held onto the territory long-after it became independent of the United Kingdom. In 1990, South West Africa, as Namibia was known back then, became independent not from the United Kingdom, but from South Africa. Very complex case, in a lot of ways like Bangladesh and South Sudan, and as such, I will not regard Namibia as an invaded country.

5.3. Portuguese Africa

This includes the colonies of British longest ally, Portugal. Although they have been allies for the longest time, and helped each other in times of needs, it need not to necessarily mean that former Portuguese colonies had never been invaded by the United Kingdom.

British navy operated in the area of Mozambique. During World War I, German troops were in the area under the leadership of German commander Lettow-Vorbeck. Since the territory belonged to long-time allies, the United Kingdom sent allied help to Portugal to pursue German commander out of the Portuguese Mozambique.[60]

Angola is another colony that belonged to the United Kingdom's oldest ally, Portugal. After gaining independence, British troops on duty in the UN entered the era to watch ceasefire in the Angolan Civil War. Such a case could be classified as an invasion, but I am more inclined to qualify the UK's actions as allied help on the side of Angolan government. British mercenaries were involved in Angolan Civil War, but I do not consider inclusion of British mercenaries in wars as an invasion of a country. In my opinion, the British did not invade Angola.[61]

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[60] **Duffy, Mechael. 2009.** Who's Who - Paul von Lettow Vorbeck. *firstworldwar.com.* [Online] https://www.firstworldwar.com/bio/lettowvorbeck.htm.

[61] **Garaint, Hughes. 2014.** Soldiers of Misfortune: the Angolan Civil War, The British Mercenary Intervention, and UK Policy towards Southern Africa, 1975–6. *Taylor and Francis Online.* [Online] https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/07075332.2013.836120?scroll=top&needAccess=true

São Tomé and Principe are two islands off the coast of Africa, near Gabon. The islands were under Portuguese rule and as such, have not been hostile with the United Kingdom. Since independence, the United Kingdom has not invaded the islands either.

The British tried to set a colony in Guinea-Bissau, but the few colonists who remained returned back in 1793. During colonial years, Guinea-Bissau was a part of the Portuguese sphere of influence. And apart from these few times when some Britons set a foot on Guinea-Bissau's soil, British military never invaded the nation of Guinea-Bissau.

5.4. Italian Africa

Libya is a problematic nation to categorize based on which colonial empire it belonged to, because the territory of today's Libya was split between France, the United Kingdom, and Italy. However, the widely accepted view is that Libya was part of the Italian colonies in Africa.

As for the British involvement, the British have invaded Libya as recent as 2011 as part of a NATO intervention. United Kingdom used both the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy and launched air strikes and a blockade of the country of Libya under Muammar Qadhafi.[62]

At the time of the Ethiopian Empire, the country of Eritrea was the northern, coastal part of the empire. During and after World War II between 1941-1952, Eritrea was in possession of the British. There was along political debate on what to do with Eritrea, until it was decided that Eritrea would become part of Ethiopia. That did not last, and Eritrea became de facto independent from Ethiopia in after a bloody war in 1991.

Another very complex case and here I am inclining towards an invaded country. It is a similar case to that of the Gambia, where the territory of Eritrea was in British possession, but united with another nation for a short period of time, until gaining independence.

5.5. Spanish Africa

Equatorial Guinea was the only part of the Spanish Empire in Africa, apart from a Western Saharan territory and a small part of Morocco. And after gaining independence, it has not come into contact with the British army either.

5.6. Belgian Africa

Belgium and its role in the colonisation of Africa is an interesting case. At the beginning, the areas were not controlled by Belgium, but it was rather a possession of the Belgian king Leopold II. After 1908, it officially became a Belgian colony. The Democratic Republic of

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[62] Libya: US,UK and France attack Gaddafi forces. *BBC.* [Online] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12796972

Congo was a Belgian colony when British troops were in the area. And even then, the British troops just passed through Congo since Belgium was their ally.[63]

5.7. Independent Africa

Ethiopia is famous for being the only nation with Liberia to resist the colonization of Africa. Despite that, in 1868, the British armed forces entered the Ethiopian Empire, the predecessor to Ethiopia, when Ethiopian Emperor Tewodros imprisoned two British representatives and several missionaries.[64]

As a nation of freed slaves, Liberia did not see much British activity. However, there is the interesting case of the John Seyes incident. Liberian petrol boat took a British vessel called Little Ben. On the other hand, the British seized a vessel called John Seyes, which flew the Liberian flag. The British took the vessel to Sierra Leone for trial. They demanded the release of Little Ben ad argued that Liberia had an illegitimate claim to the John Seyes as only a sovereign nation with its flag can have such a claim, which according to the United Kingdom, Liberia was not.[65]

By the criteria set, this could count as an invasion of Liberian territorial waters. However, I think that this case does not classify as an invasion. It was a very minor skirmish about involving two vessels. One vessel unwelcomingly entering waters of another nation is not an invasion, in my opinion.

[63] Belgian Congo in World War II. *Wikipedia.* [Online] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belgian_Congo_in_World_War_II.

[64] Battle of Magdala. *BritishBattles.com.* [Online] https://www.britishbattles.com/abyssinian-war/battle-of-magdala/.

[65] **Dodoo, Lennart. 2019.** Liberia: July 26 and the Road to National Independence. *FPA.* [Online] https://frontpageafricaonline.com/opinion/commentary/liberia-july-26-and-the-road-to-national-independence/.

5.8. Africa reassessed
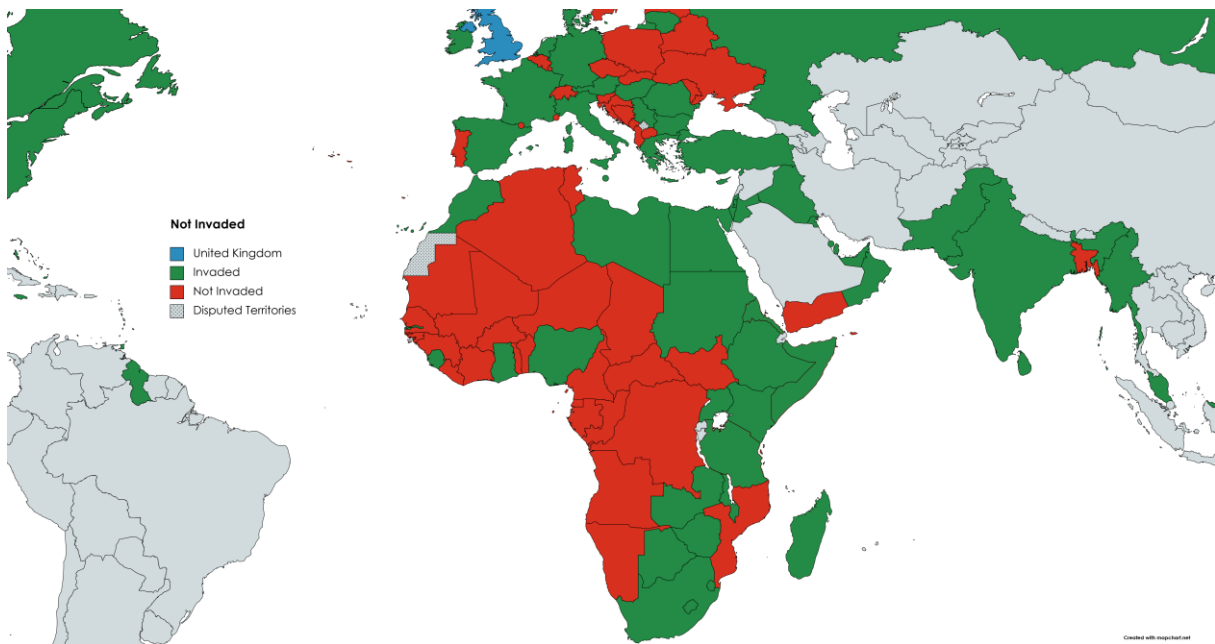
Picture 6 – Countries of Africa reassessed[66]

6. Influence in Asia

British presence in Asia was mainly on the Indian Subcontinent, but that does not mean that Britons did not venture into other parts of Asia. Controlling the entire Indian Subcontinent, the British did not have it far to reach the rest of Asia.

6.1. Eastern Asia

The biggest country in eastern Asia is China. Home to one of the most ancient civilisations in the world, the Chinese have a long well-documented history, which involved the United Kingdom as well. The Opium Wars, when British and Chinese warships clashed in 1840 is just once instance of the United Kingdom invading China.

Another clear case of invasion is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, commonly known as North Korea. When North Korea invaded South Korea, the British troops along with their UN allies pushed North Korea back, and the Korean War ended in a stalemate on the 38th parallel. Since the UN troops went over a little way beyond the 38th, this does classify as an invasion.

Since the allied help in the Korean War does not count as an invasion of South Korea, were there any other wars? Yes, there is an event to examine, namely the Port Hamilton incident (1885), when the British occupied a small island south of the Korean Peninsula in the fear of Russian expansion. At the time, Korea was known as Joseon, which was the predecessor to

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[66] World Map. In: *Mapchart* [Online] https://www.mapchart.net/world.html

both North and South Korea. The dynastic kingdom of Joseon was not content and protested against the British occupation of one of their island. It was a very minor incident, but the British army did occupy a territory of Joseon at the time, and as such, I lean towards the decision to include such action as an act of invasion.[67]

Japan is another easy case of an invasion. Japan was occupied by the allied forces, which United Kingdom was part of. And even before the World Wars the Royal Navy bombarded Kagoshima in 1863.[68]

Ironically, the successors to the biggest and the second biggest empires in the world rarely met each other. Mongolia remains a nation that did not see any military actions by the United Kingdom.

6.2. Central Asia

Most of these countries have been part of the Russian Empire and then Soviet Union. And most are not likely to have been invaded by the United Kingdom.

As for Kazakhstan, British troops operated in the Caspian Sea during World War I, but they were once again attacking the Russian Empire.[69]

Turkmenistan also borders on the Caspian Sea, and similarly, fighting here was done against the Russian Empire.[70]

Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan are all landlocked countries that the United Kingdom never got a chance to invade.

6.3. Western Asia

Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia are all countries that seceded from the Soviet Union, and had been part of the Russian Empire before. During Russian Revolution, the British troops were active here, such as the 27th division southern command, but once more, the British fought the Russian Empire. [71]

Further south Syria saw many wars throughout history. In terms of historical clarity, it is a highly chaotic place. It was part of the Ottoman Empire, and the British fought there during

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[67] **Royle, Stephen A.** Traditional Korean island encounters with the British navy in the 1880s: the Port Hamilton Affair of 1885-1887. *Science Direct.* [Online] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S221268211630004X.

[68] British bombardment of Kagoshima, Japan, August 14-17, 1863, arist's impression, zoomable image. *House Divided: The Civil War Research Engine at Dickinson College.* [Online] https://hd.housedivided.dickinson.edu/node/41413.

[69] **Laycock, S.** *All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 134.*

[70] **Laycock, S.** *All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 235-236.*

[71] **Hovannisian, Richard G.** *The Republic of Armenia, Vol. II: From Versailles to London*

World War I. The ongoing civil war in Syria included a British invasion, since the United Kingdom militarily supported the rebel side in the conflict.

Lebanon is in the opposite situation compared to Syria. The United Kingdom supported the government of Lebanon during the Lebanese Civil War from 1975 to 1990. Apart from allied help, the country of Lebanon or its predecessors did not see any invasions from British military.

The British supported the rebels in the Ottoman Empire in the Arab Revolt in 1916 that wanted to create their own independent state, which would resemble Saudi Arabia. The goal was eventually achieved, and thanks to the British allied help, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was eventually declared. This case isan invasion of Turkey, but not Saudi Arabia.

Persia, or as it is known today, Iran, is another nation whose roots are ingrained in ancient civilisations and mighty kingdoms. Most countries with long history, were invaded by the British. And Iran is no exception because of the Anglo-Persian War (1856-1857).

6.4. Southern Asia

Most of the countries in Southern Asia have been already examined as part of the British Raj. However, there are still a few countries left.

Starting with Afghanistan. And here it is a clear case of an invasion, because of Anglo-Afghan Wars, which there were three in total. The First Anglo-Afghan War from 1839-1842, the Second Anglo-Afghan War from 1878-1880, and the Third Anglo-Afghan War in 1919. There is also the recent war in Afghanistan, in which the United Kingdom took part.

Next is the country of Nepal. The country neighboured on the British Raj and because of border disputes, the Kingdom of Nepal was invaded by the United Kingdom in 1814.

Another country on the Indian subcontinent where the United Kingdom became involved in a border dispute was Bhutan. Bhutan was invaded and lost 20% of its territory at the end of the Duar War as it became known.[72]

6.5. Southeast Asia

During World War II, under the pressure from Japanese, Thailand was on the opposing side of the war. And in December 1941, the British invaded in the Battle for the Ledge.

During Cambodian Civil War, only the United States were involved. And prior to that Cambodia was part of the French Colonial Empire.

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[72] The Duar War 1864-1865. *ONWAR.COM: Armed Coflict Events Data.* [Online] https://www.onwar.com/data/britbhutan1865.html.

Laos, similarly, to Cambodia, was part of French Indo-China during World War II. And similarly, to Cambodia, French Indo-China was invaded and occupied near the end of the war by the Japanese. However, Laos belonged to the French at the time.

The case of Vietnam is similar with one more event to examine. France needed assistance from the British in the War in Vietnam (1945-1946), and the United Kingdom responded. However, Vietnam was still under French rule. Undisputedly, the British Army operated in the territory of today's Vietnam. It even fought the Vietnamese. This is again more complex, but with the criteria set, I am leaning towards the uninvaded conclusion. There can be different views on the incident, and I consider this as an allied help to France against rebels in the territory of today's country of Vietnam.

The Philippines is associated mainly with Spain. Under Spanish rule, the British did occupy what is now known as the Philippines in years 1762-1764. However the present independent Philippines did not see any military hostilities from the United Kingdom.

Indonesia is a very similar case. This time, the region was controlled by the Dutch. Clashes between the British and the Dutch over Indonesia continued until Indonesia's independence. However, ironically enough in the times of the Indonesian National Revolution (1945-1949), the United Kingdom supported the Netherlands who controlled Indonesia against Indonesian revolt. As is the case with Vietnam, I am leaning towards the uninvaded verdict and an ally help to the Netherlands against Indonesian rebels within the Dutch colonial territory.

Timor Leste, a small island nation, stranded among Indonesian islands. In addition, Timor Leste's territory consists of only half an island. Before Timor Leste became an independent nation, it was part of the Portuguese Empire. Even Portugal claimed only half of the island there were still some disputes over it. And the British came as an allied help to Portuguese. As such, I do not count Timor Leste as an invaded country.

6.6. Asia reassessed
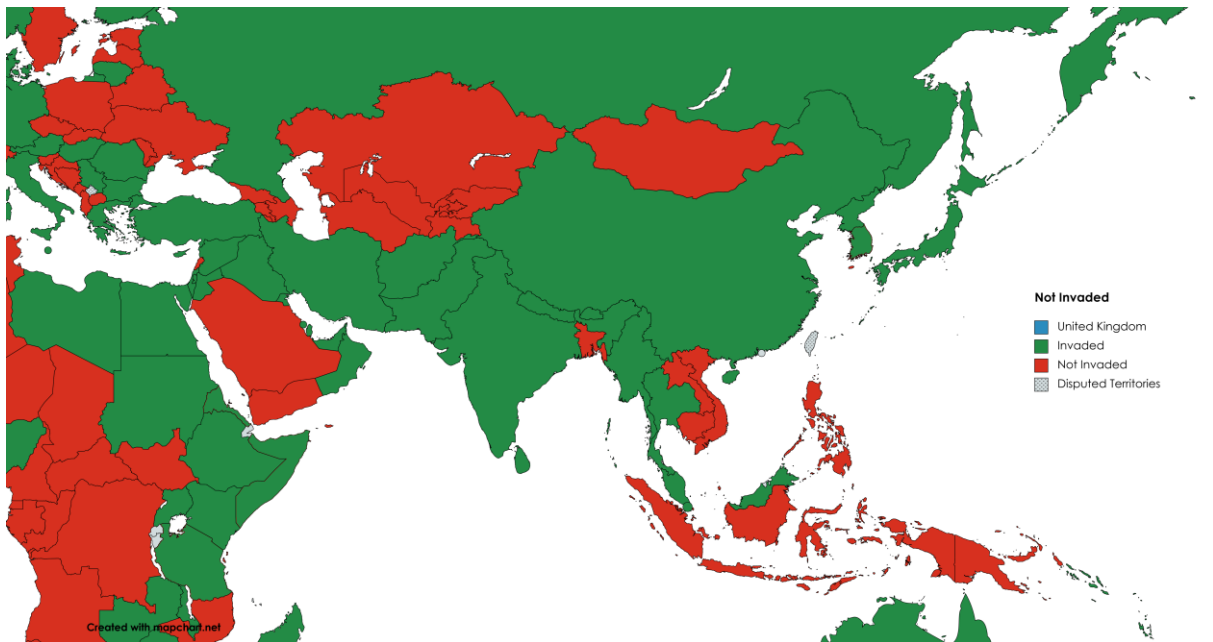
Picture 7 – Countries of Asia reassessed[73]

7. The New World

What remains is the New World. Even when these countries were never directly part of the British Empire, British possessions can cause some military conflicts with other nations. Before moving onto the Americas to finish the list, there are a few more nations in the area of Micronesia.

7.1. Micronesia

The Federated States of Micronesia is an agglomeration of several islands in Micronesia. Before World War I, the territories were in the possession of the German Empire. Later, they became parts of Imperial Japan. During World War II, it was mainly the Americans that were invading the islands then under Japanese control. Although British forces were present as well, they were invading the country of Japan who controlled the islands. After the war, the United States of America gained the islands as a trust territory, and on May 10th, 1979, the Micronesia proclaimed independence. There was no invasion of Micronesia to be counted.

Palau is in a similar situation to the Federated States of Micronesia, firstly Germany, then Japan and finally the USA. Here, Laycock too agrees that there was no British invasion of Palau.[74]

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[73] World Map. In: *Mapchart* [Online] https://www.mapchart.net/world.html.

[74] **Laycock, S.** *All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 180.*

The last examined country in this part of the world is the Marshall Islands. A nearly identical story happened here. Germany, Japan, the USA and eventually independence.

7.2. Central America, the Caribbean and Mexico

Starting with Mexico, it gained independence in 1821, after a lengthy war with Spain. The United Kingdom did get involved in the matters of independent Mexico. In 1861, the French invaded Mexico to transform the Mexican Republic into a state that would be more favourable to the French. The United Kingdom joined France for a period of time but left the war prematurely. Nevertheless, the United Kingdom did invade Mexico, along with France.

7.2.1. Caribbean

Laycock mentions the Bay of Pigs invasion at the beginning of his chapter involving Cuba, but there are no records I could find that would support the claim that the United Kingdom invaded alongside the USA in such time.[75] During the other examples listed, Cuba was part of the Spanish Empire. For a brief time (1898-1902) even part of the USA, but I do not think the British invaded Cuba while it was independent.

Haiti was first in the possession of Spaniards, and from 1625-1804 a French Colony of Saint-Domingue. However, after gaining independence, Britain did invade Haiti in the event known as the action of 3rd February 1812.[76]

Dominican Republic is yet another country that was colonized by European country, and when the British invaded, they once again invaded the country that colonized Dominican Republic, in this case it was Spain and France.[77]

7.2.2. Central America

Guatemala, like most countries on this continent, was part of the Spanish Empire. And once again, the British became involved when the country was part of the Spanish Empire. And after its independence, Guatemala did not witness the British army in action.

El Salvador is the same case as Guatemala. An interesting case is the rescue mission of British nationals when the United Kingdom requested Canadian government to send two armed ships to rescue British citizens. After the rescue, the ships left, and nothing happened.

The Spanish Empire controlled Honduras as well at the time of British military actions in 17th century. Interestingly, there was the nation of Mosquito Coast which has two successor states in Honduras and Nicaragua. However, the British were allies of the Miskito people and did not invade.

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[75] **Laycock, S.** All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 62-63.

[76] Action of 3 February 1712. Wikipedia. [Online] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action_of_3_February_1812.

[77] **Laycock, S.** All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 69-70.

Nicaragua on the other hand, was invaded by the United Kingdom. This was when Nicaragua annexed the territories of the Mosquito Coast. The British occupied the Port of Corinto on April 27th, 1895.

Costa Rica was never invaded by the British. Even when part of the Spanish Empire, the British did not invade Costa Rica's lands.

7.2.3. South America

The last continent I will examine as part of my thesis will be the continent with the most Spanish influence, South America.

Panama gained independence from Colombia in 1903, from Columbia. As the independent state of Panama, it was not invaded by the British.

Colombia is another Spanish colony in the New World that was not invaded by the British. Although, right before Colombia's secession from the Spanish Empire, the British helped in the independence wars. They even created a British Legion in Colombia to help Colombians. Helping rebels in the Spanish Empire falls into the category of invading the Spanish Empire.[78]

The independent Venezuela was blockaded during the Venezuelan Crisis in 1902-1903 and the British even bombarded Puerto Cabello. It is a clear case of an invasion.

Suriname is an odd case of a Dutch colony in South America and the United Kingdom never invaded the independent nation of Suriname.

The Christie Question (1862-1863) was a crisis in Brazil once it became independent of the Portuguese Empire. During the crisis, a group of British sailors was arrested and the British Navy blockaded Rio De Janeiro for six days.

The Uruguayan and British military histories include the Uruguayan Civil War. After gaining independence, the political scene in Uruguay was split between the conservative Blancos and the liberal Colorados. It is another grey area, however, at the time, Manuel Oribe was in charge of the country, and the British supported Fructuoso Rivera, leader of the rebelling Colorados, and as such, this complex case meets the criteria for an invaded country by the United Kingdom.

Argentina's Falklands War another case of an invasion. Argentina occupied Falkland Islands, and then British retaliated back with their own military, attacking he Argentinian occupied Falkland Islands.

Paraguay being a landlocked country far from Europe escaped an invasion from the British. The same is true for Paraguay's neighbour, Bolivia.

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[78] Bolivar and the British Legion - the Papers of Mary English. *Bonhams.* [Online] [cit. 6. July 2022.] https://www.bonhams.com/auctions/17807/lot/32/.

After Chile gained its independence, the British had a military base there, but nothing that would constitute an invasion.[79]

When Peru became an independent state, Peruvian rebels became involved in a minor skirmish with the British Navy in the Battle of Pacocha. However, as mentioned in the Civil War section, battling rebels does not meet the criteria for an invasion.

The very last country inspected will be Ecuador. During the era of the Spanish Empire, British buccaneers and pirates battled Spaniards around Ecuador. When Ecuador began fighting for independence, the British helped in the Battle of Pichincha with its volunteers. However, after independence, the British never attacked Ecuador.

7.3. Map of the entire world reassessed
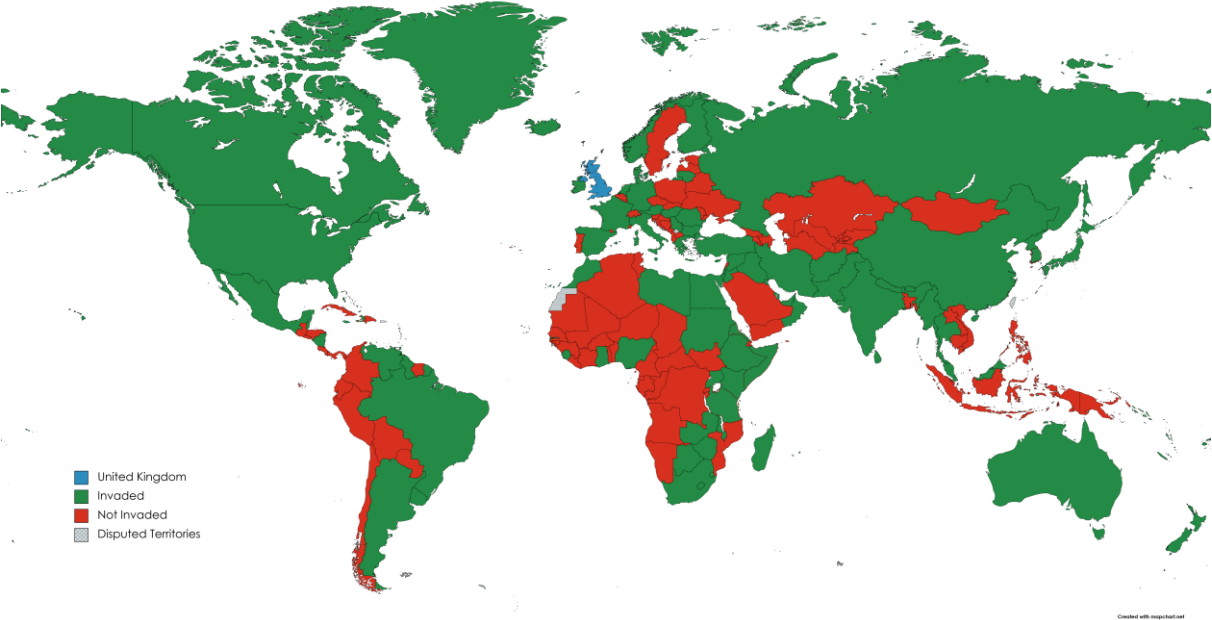
Picture 8 – Map of the world reassessed[80]

[79] **Laycock, S.** All the Countries we've Ever Invaded: And the Few We Never Got Round To, p. 51-52.

[80] World Map. In: Mapchart [Online] https://www.mapchart.net/world.html.

8. Findings

Invaded	102
Uninvaded	90

The United Kingdom has invaded 53.13% of today's countries

The result of my reassessment is quite different from what Laycock claims. The percentage of invaded countries is barely above 50%. Even if my results vastly from Laycock's claims, I personally think that even such number is noteworthy. Invading more than half of today's countries, when a lot of them are new and are at the beginning of writing their histories, is still a great achievement.

We can divide countries by continents and see what percentage of countries was invaded by the United Kingdom in each continent.
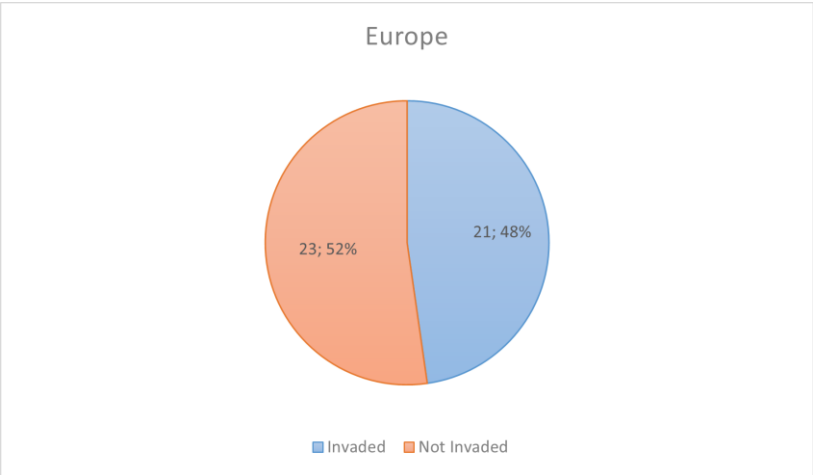
Picture 9 – Graph of invaded countries in Europe
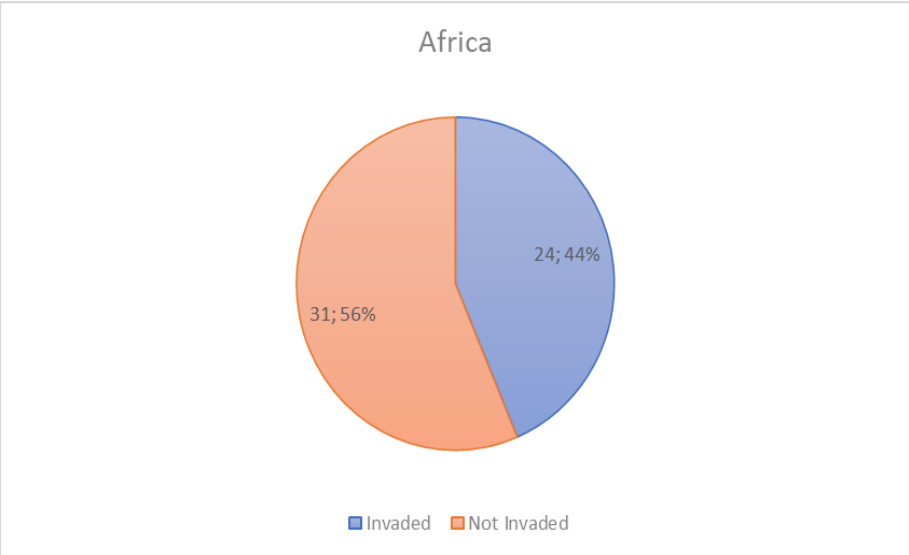
Picture 10 – Graph of invaded countries in Africa
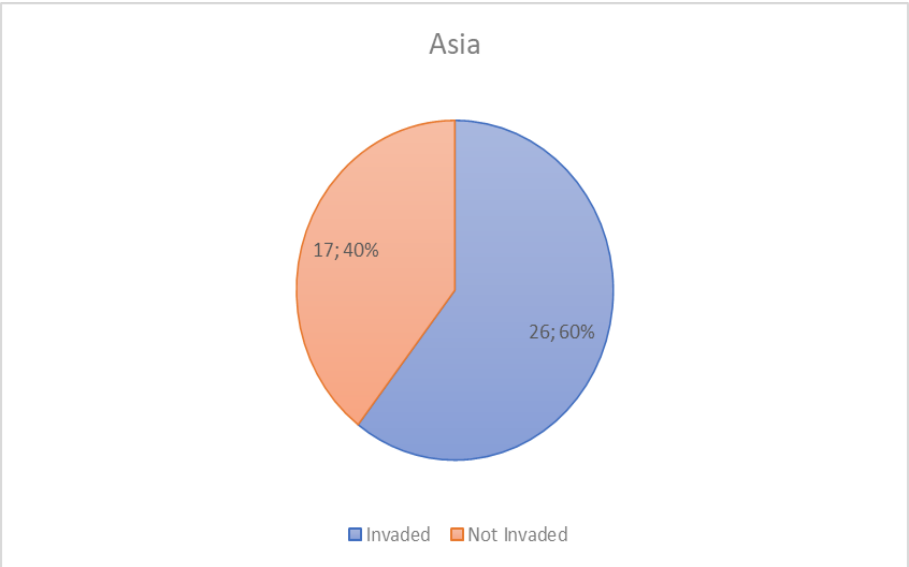
Picture 11 - Graph of invaded countries in Asia

Picture 12 - Graph of invaded countries in North and Central America

Picture 13 – Graph of invaded countries in South America

Picture 14 – Graph of invaded countries in Australia and Oceania

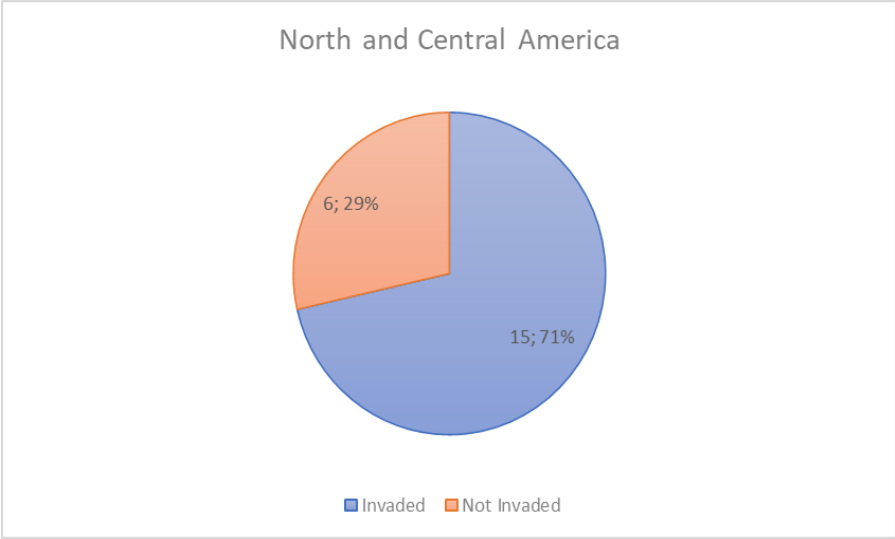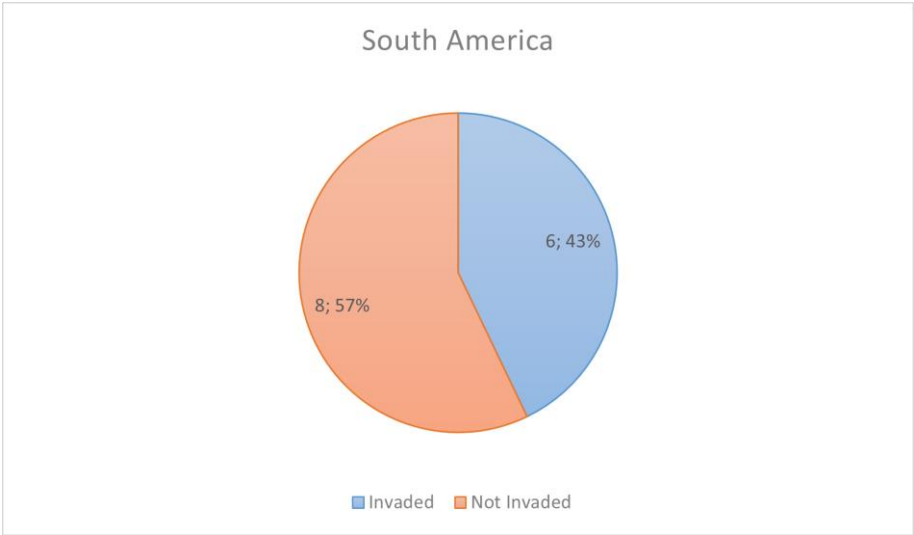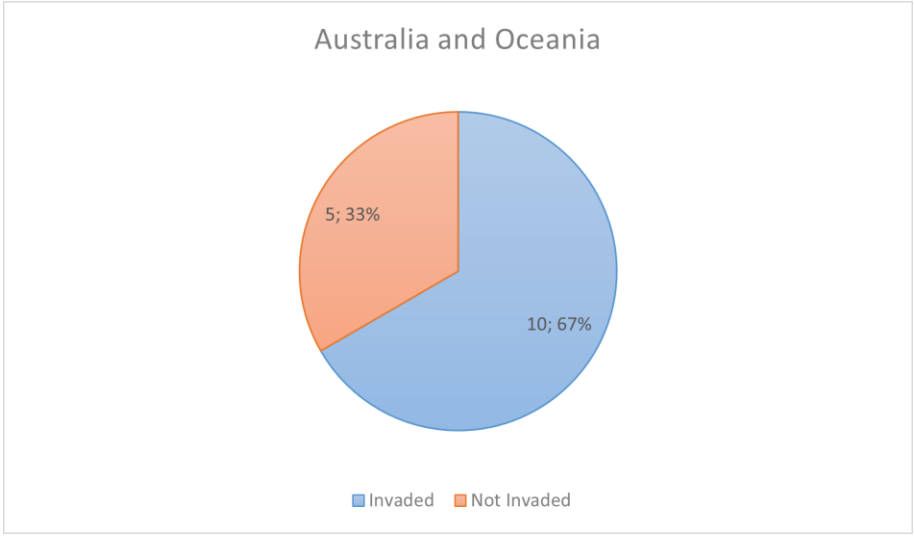As demonstrated, the biggest number of nations invaded by the United Kingdom has the continent of Asia, with 26 invaded countries out of 43. The biggest percentage of countries invaded has the continent of North and Central America along with Australia and Oceania, largely due to British control of various islands during the colonial period.

The British fared the worst in South America and Africa, where the results are very close. Nevertheless, if we take into account that the British fought other colonial empires there and not the young nations of contemporary Africa that are present today, it is not that surprising. I am surprised by South Africa, where I expected fewer invaded countries because of colonialism and the Spanish Empire's grip on the land.

The situation on the home continent of Europe is fairly balanced. Unsurprisingly so, because there were a lot of new sovereign nations created in Europe's recent history.

9. Conclusion

Even if my findings differ from the claims in Laycock's book, I think we would both agree that no matter how many countries the British invaded, the impact of the United Kingdom throughout history cannot be understated. European colonial powers shaped histories not only of their own continent, but also the histories of many countries that European explorers found on their expeditions in the Age of Discovery. And the British were arguably the most influential of the colonial powers. The fact that according to this thesis the British invaded "only" a little over 50% of the countries in the world does not mean they did not influence the nations that escaped British invasion.

The age of colonialism is over, and many Britons appreciate their colonial history and how they basically ruled the world. No wonder, in a nation that achieved such a powerful position on the world stage, many would be proud of what their ancestors did. How the British managed to resist Napoleon or the German Reich is truly admirable.

However, there is also the darker side of subjugating half of the world. When you have so much power, it is difficult to hold back the sense of superiority that fills one's mind. It is often forgotten, that for the affected, the era of colonialism was not a pleasant time. As stated in the beginning, it is important to acknowledge all sides of history, so that a better future can be build.

In summary, even when my findings differ from Laycock's claim a lot, the British influence on the world is present to this day. One video on Youtube also analyses Laycock's claims, and the results using rather flexible criteria were around 65%.[81] In the end, I think these numbers are more believable than what Laycock claims. It is not that "All the countries we have ever invaded and the few we never got around to" but rather: "Half of the world we have invaded, and the rest we never got around to."

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[81] **WonderWhy. 2018.** Have the British really invaded 90% of the countries in the world?. *Youtube* [Online]
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t86J_zZjjq4&t=308s

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11. List of pictures

Attachments

Attachment 1: List of countries, invasion status, and a continent of origin

	Country name	Invasion	Continent
1	Afghanistan	Y	Asia
2	Albania	N	Europe
3	Algeria	N	Africa
4	Andorra	N	Europe
5	Angola	N	Africa
6	Antigua and Barbuda	Y	North and Central America
7	Argentina	Y	South America
8	Armenia	N	Asia
9	Australia	Y	Australia and Oceania
10	Austria	Y	Europe
11	Azerbaijan	N	Asia
12	Bahamas	Y	North and Central America
13	Bahrain	Y	Asia
14	Bangladesh	N	Asia
15	Barbados	Y	North America
16	Belarus	N	Europe
17	Belgium	N	Europe
18	Belize	Y	North and Central America
19	Benin	N	Africa
20	Bhutan	Y	Asia
21	Bolivia	N	South America
22	Bosnia and Herzegovina	N	Europe
23	Botswana	Y	Africa
24	Brazil	Y	South America
25	Brunei Darussalam	Y	Asia
26	Bulgaria	Y	Europe
27	Burkina Faso	N	Africa
28	Burundi	N	Africa
29	Cabo Verde	N	Africa
30	Cambodia	N	Africa
31	Cameroon	N	Africa
32	Canada	Y	North and Central America
33	Central African Republic	N	Africa
34	Chad	N	Africa
35	Chile	N	South America
36	China	Y	Asia
37	Colombia	N	South America
38	Comoros	N	Africa
39	Congo	N	Africa
40	Costa Rica	N	North and Central America
41	Côte d'Ivoire	N	Africa

42	Croatia	N	Europe
43	Cuba	N	North and Central America
44	Cyprus	Y	Europe
45	Czech Republic	N	Europe
46	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Y	Asia
47	Democratic Republic of Congo	N	Africa
48	Denmark	Y	Europe
49	Djibouti	N	Africa
50	Dominica	Y	North and Central America
51	Dominican Republic	N	North and Central America
52	Ecuador	N	South America
53	Egypt	Y	Africa
54	El Salvador	N	North and Central America
55	Equatorial Guinea	N	Africa
56	Eritrea	Y	Africa
57	Estonia	N	Europe
58	Eswatini	Y	Africa
59	Ethiopia	Y	Africa
60	Fiji	Y	Australia and Oceania
61	Finland	Y	Europe
62	France	Y	Europe
63	Gabon	N	Africa
64	The Gambia	Y	Africa
65	Georgia	N	Asia
66	Germany	Y	Europe
67	Ghana	Y	Africa
68	Greece	Y	Europe
69	Grenada	Y	North and Central America
70	Guatemala	N	North and Central America
71	Guinea	N	Africa
72	Guinea Bissau	N	Africa
73	Guyana	Y	South America
74	Haiti	Y	North and Central America
75	Honduras	N	North and Central America
76	Hungary	Y	Europe
77	Iceland	Y	Europe
78	India	Y	Asia
79	Indonesia	N	Asia
80	Iran	Y	Asia
81	Iraq	Y	Asia
82	Ireland	Y	Europe
83	Israel	Y	Asia
84	Italy	Y	Europe
85	Jamaica	Y	North and Central America
86	Japan	Y	Asia
87	Jordan	Y	Asia

88	Kazakhstan	N	Asia
89	Kenya	Y	Africa
90	Kiribati	Y	Australia and Oceania
91	Kuwait	Y	Asia
92	Kyrgyzstan	N	Asia
93	Lao's People's Democratic Republic	N	Asia
94	Latvia	N	Europe
95	Lebanon	N	Asia
96	Lesotho	Y	Africa
97	Liberia	N	Africa
98	Libya	Y	Africa
99	Lichtenstein	N	Europe
100	Lithuania	Y	Europe
101	Luxembourg	N	Europe
102	Madagascar	Y	Africa
103	Malawi	Y	Africa
104	Malaysia	Y	Asia
105	Maldives	Y	Asia
106	Mali	N	Africa
107	Malta	Y	Europe
108	Marshall Islands	N	Australia and Oceania
109	Mauritania	N	Africa
110	Mauritius	Y	Africa
111	Mexico	Y	North and Central America
112	Federated States of Micronesia	N	Australia and Oceania
113	Monaco	N	Europe
114	Mongolia	N	Asia
115	Montenegro	N	Europe
116	Morocco	Y	Africa
117	Mozambique	N	Africa
118	Myanmar	Y	Asia
119	Namibia	N	Africa
120	Nauru	Y	Australia and Oceania
121	Nepal	Y	Asia
122	Netherlands	Y	Europe
123	New Zealand	Y	Australia and Oceania
124	Nicaragua	Y	North and Central America
125	Niger	N	Africa
126	Nigeria	Y	Africa
127	North Macedonia	N	Europe
128	Norway	Y	Europe
129	Oman	Y	Asia
130	Pakistan	Y	Asia
131	Palau	N	Australia and Oceania
132	Panama	N	South America
133	Papua New Guinea	N	Australia and Oceania

134	Paraguay	N	South America
135	Peru	N	South America
136	Philippines	N	Asia
137	Poland	N	Europe
138	Portugal	N	Europe
139	Qatar	Y	Asia
140	Republic of Korea	Y	Asia
141	Republic of Moldova	N	Europe
142	Romania	Y	Europe
143	Russian Federation	Y	Europe
144	Rwanda	N	Africa
145	Saint Kitts and Nevis	Y	North and Central America
146	Saint Lucia	Y	North and Central America
147	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Y	North and Central America
148	Samoa	Y	Australia and Oceania
149	San Marino	N	Europe
150	São Tomé and Príncipe	N	Africa
151	Saudi Arabia	N	Asia
152	Senegal	N	Africa
153	Serbia	Y	Europe
154	Seychelles	Y	Africa
155	Sierra Leone	Y	Africa
156	Singapore	Y	Asia
157	Slovakia	N	Europe
158	Slovenia	N	Europe
159	Solomon Islands	Y	Australia and Oceania
160	Somalia	Y	Africa
161	South Africa	Y	Africa
162	South Sudan	N	Africa
163	Spain	Y	Europe
164	Sri Lanka	Y	Asia
165	Sudan	Y	Africa
166	Suriname	N	South America
167	Sweden	N	Europe
168	Switzerland	N	Europe
169	Syrian Arab Republic	Y	Asia
170	Tajikistan	N	Asia
171	Thailand	Y	Asia
172	Timor-Leste	N	Australia and Oceania
173	Togo	N	Africa
174	Tonga	Y	Australia and Oceania
175	Trinidad and Tobago	Y	South America
176	Tunisia	N	Africa
177	Turkey	Y	Europe
178	Turkmenistan	N	Asia
179	Tuvalu	Y	Australia and Oceania

180	Uganda	Y	Africa
181	Ukraine	N	Europe
182	United Arab Emirates	Y	Asia
183	United Kingdom	-	Europe
184	United Republic of Tanzania	Y	Africa
185	United States of America	Y	North and Central America
186	Uruguay	Y	South America
187	Uzbekistan	N	Asia
188	Vanuatu	Y	Australia and Oceania
189	Venezuela	Y	South America
190	Vietnam	N	Asia
191	Yemen	N	Asia
192	Zambia	Y	Africa
193	Zimbabwe	Y	Africa