

Discuss the following statement: the impact of the spanish empire on world histor...

[History](#), [Empires](#)



Section/# Spain – The Dominant Empire of the New World Firstly, in order to understand the scope of the question, it is necessary for the reader to understand the sheer size of the Spanish Empire. In the 1600's alone, the Spanish Empire encompassed over 50% of the New World. Large portions of the United States, the entirety of the Caribbean, every single country in South America (with the exception of Uruguay, Bolivia, Venezuela, and Brazil) and every single country of Central America were all controlled by Spain. Such was the extent and geographical power that Spain exerted. With this in mind, it is impossible to over-estimate the effect that this European nation had on the growth, development, governance, culture, norms, and eventual independence of the Spanish Empire.

Another item of noteworthy importance is that if one compares the Spanish Empire to that of the British or Dutch Empire as they related to the New World, Spain held on to its colonial possessions for hundreds of years longer than did the British or Dutch. Although such a feat is worthy of further study, it also notes the overall power that the Spanish held over their colonial possessions as compared with that of their other European counterparts. Naturally, this is partly the result of European politics coupled with aggressive revolutions that diminished Northern European power in the New World by the 1800's. However, Spain had its fair share of revolutions as well; however, due to careful management combined with a brutal repression style, these revolutions were not able to severely weaken Spain's holdings in the New World until the turn of the 19th century.

Likewise Spanish colonization was a complete process. Unlike the British or the Dutch that worked to exploit

key economic benefits from a given region, Spain did the same but also integrated the entire society into a model of Spanish organization, religion, and governance. Evidence of this can be seen in the fact that Catholicism is the most popular religion in the countries colonized by Spain. Percentage rates of over 90% of the population of South America, Central American, and Caribbean nations currently adhere to Roman Catholicism. The Dutch and British can claim no such success with respect to Anglicanism or Lutheranism. Likely, due to the fact that Spain pursued such a model of integration with its colonies is one of the single largest reasons as to why the Spanish colonies remained in her possession for nearly 400 years.\n\nFurthermore, Spain's Imperial legacy continues to effect the world economy and demographic dynamics of the world today in that over 400 million people currently speak Spanish as their first language. Of course geographic and political reasons contributed to English being the primary language of world commerce and education; however, the Dutch nor French can claim such high numbers; this serves as yet further evidence of Spain's Imperial might as it relates to its holdings in the New World and elsewhere.