Colonialism and Postcolonialism

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An important work on the educational uses of codes of ethics, as well as the classic statement of the distinction between rules and guidelines.


Michael Davis
Revised by Davis

COLONIALISM AND POSTColonIALISM

Colonialism, understood provisionally as the European annexation and administration of lands and populations in the Americas, Africa, and Asia, has been intertwined with science, technology, and ethics since the Renaissance. Certainly one prelude to colonial expansion was the European acquisition of military and navigational technologies superior to those found on other continents. But the colonial experience also had a formative impact on the nascent European science, because it permitted the region’s scholars to come into contact with new environments and data and provided access to alternative systems of knowledge developed by other cultures. In fact, the requirement of controlling and cataloging colonial populations and resources led to the creation of new disciplines in the social sciences, such as ethnography, linguistics, and archaeology. Moreover, this impact has continued into the early twenty-first century, as a new scientific discipline, ecology, has found inspiration in the practices of non-Western precolonial cultures and in the nineteenth-century British and French “colonial conservatism” that attempted to deal with the degradation caused by the exploitation of recently acquired environments and was “able to foresee, with remarkable precision, the apparently unmanageable environmental problems of today” (Grove 1995, 12).

Indeed, colonialism had an indirect, though profound, impact on European culture. In reaction to the frequently genocidal military tactics used by Europeans and the exploitation of indigenous populations that characterized the administration of colonies, few, if any, other historical events did more to promote the extension of ethics into the political, social, and legal spheres. In politics, such central contemporary concepts as human rights, representative democracy, and socialism developed, at least in part, as reactions to the brutality of the process of colonization and to the contact with non-European cultures and their political systems. Moreover,
colonialism, by transferring enormous amounts of gold and silver from the Americas to Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, thereby permitting the development of a money economy, may be seen as a factor that contributed to the development of both capitalism and the science that studies it, economics. The European colonization of Africa, the Americas, and Asia is thus one of the founding experiences of modernity, its impact felt on every aspect of contemporary life, even in countries that did not embark on colonial adventures.

CONCEPTUAL ISSUES
Despite its importance, however, any attempt to define colonialism in a manner that goes beyond the mere recounting of a set of historical facts runs into a series of conceptual problems. The difficulty in defining colonialism and related concepts—such as imperialism, anticolonialism, neocolonialism, or even postcolonialism—is that they can be interpreted as linked to social phenomena existing since antiquity throughout the world. Yet it is customary to see colonialism as bounded, on the one hand, by a European expansion that began in the fifteenth century with the Portuguese and Spanish forays into Africa and the Americas and, on the other, by the decolonization of Asia and Africa, a process that concluded in 1975 with the independence of the last Portuguese dominions, Mozambique and Angola. Although the United Nations reported that, as of 2012, there were still sixteen “non-self-governing territories,” colonialism, as customarily defined, is no longer at the core of the world economy, and the impetus for self-governance, while not fully realized, concerns smaller populations and areas.

These temporal boundaries are justified by a central difference between classical and modern empires. In the latter, colonization was characterized not only by the conquest of a territory and its population, or by the extraction of monetary, human, or material resources, as was the case in antiquity, but also by a thorough restructuring of the colonial economy for the benefit of the economic interests of the metropolis. The securing of raw materials to be used exclusively by imperial industries or the restrictions placed on the production of goods in the colonies in order to transform them into exclusive markets for metropolitan products are examples of such restructuring.

In addition to reshaping economic structures, modern colonialism also attempted to change the cultures of the populations conquered. The successful catechization of Latin America in the sixteenth century, despite the frequently syncretic character of the resulting religion (that is, its being a combination of originally Amerindian and European beliefs), is a case in point. In fact, this cultural change was often a prerequisite for the economic exploitation of the acquired territories, because traditional labor patterns and economic structures had to be transformed according to the economic requirements of European industries and settlers. Colonialism’s practical emphasis on the modification of the cultures of the conquered populations and the concomitant resistance of the latter, as well as the unavoidable hybrid identities generated by this encounter, have become key objects of study for contemporary theorists.

But the difficulties to be found in conceptually delimiting colonialism remain implicit in such a description. The most obvious problem is that processes of colonization and decolonization are not discrete and chronological. In fact, the first postcolonial societies in the Americas arose before the second wave of European imperialist expansion crested in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, as José Carlos Mariátegui (1894–1930) noted in the 1920s, colonial practices, institutions, and ideologies did not disappear with formal independence but frequently constituted the bases on which the new nations were built. Thus, it becomes possible to talk of an internal colonialism present in politically independent nations in which cultural, racial, ethnic, religious, linguistic, or caste differences form the basis for the institutionalized economic exploitation of one group by another. Then, moreover, there is the unique case of the United States: a postcolonial society that itself became a full-fledged colonial power in the second half of the nineteenth century through the annexation of Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Hawaii and that in the twentieth century helped establish new patterns of international domination and unequal resource flows. Given this inequality, it is possible to argue that current international economic structures and relationships among different national and regional economies constitute a continuation and development of colonialism rather than its abolition.

IMPERIAL DIFFERENCES
Critics have questioned the validity of the chronology proposed above by distinguishing Spanish and Portuguese colonialism, on one side, and the later French and British empires, on another. Unlike the more fully capitalist British or French colonial regimes, the earlier Iberian empires were frequently mercantilist and precapitalist, even medieval. While the former restructured the new colonies’ economies so as to propel metropolitan capitalist growth, the latter colonial enterprises were based mainly on the acquisition or extraction of directly marketable resources, such as gold or spices, and on the taxation of native and settler populations as direct sources of income. From this perspective, colonialism as a fully modern
capitalist undertaking must be differentiated from earlier Iberian empire building. In fact, critics have argued that terms such as colonialism, imperialism, or postcolonialism “evidence the history of British colonial/imperial involvement with Ireland, India, and South Africa” and that their use leads to the “(mis)understanding and (mis)labeling of the so-called colonial American situation” (Klor de Alva 1995, 264). Thus, mainstream analyses of colonialism would be applicable only to the European empires built in Asia and Africa during the eighteenth and particularly the nineteenth centuries.

A concept frequently used to separate earlier Iberian and later colonialisms is that of imperialism. In 1917 Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870–1924), arguably the most influential critic of imperialism, claimed that it constituted “the monopoly stage of capitalism.” For him, colonial expansion responded to the needs of monopolistic finance capital, which he believed to be the hegemonic sector in a modern economy, to find a “guarantee against all contingencies in the struggle against competitors” by ensuring access to markets and resources (Lenin 1974, 260). Because Lenin saw finance capital as firmly national, imperialism necessarily led to war as the colonial powers attempted to acquire “precapitalist” areas, to forcibly take over each other’s colonies or even to try to gain access to the natural resources located in Europe. (World War I [1914–1918] was Lenin’s prime example of how the hegemony of financial monopoly capital invariably led to war.)

Critics have noted, however, that one can free Lenin’s arguments from his national, political, and military framework. In this way it becomes possible to speak of a US imperialism that is no longer based on the formal possession of colonies, as Harry Magdoff (1969) first argued; or of a neocolonialism in which first world nations use international economic, political, and cultural structures and institutions to maintain their political and economic control over nominally independent nations, as the Ghanaian independence leader Kwame Nkrumah (1909–1972) proposed in 1965. In their 2000 book Empire, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri have taken this loosening of the ties between economic relations and the national sphere to its ultimate conclusion. For them, globalization has led to the creation of a true empire of capital in which unequal flows of resources are organized by means of a “decentered and deterritorializing apparatus of rule” that no longer has a geographically defined direction (Hardt and Negri 2000, xii). While inequality is seen as probably growing, the concept of imperialism, based on notions of metropolises and colonies, as well as its dependency-theory derivation of center and periphery, is, therefore, obsolete.

Paradoxically, this postmodern interpretation of empire has been proposed at precisely the moment when the United States has acquired unparalleled economic, military, and technological superiority and has claimed the right to use military force to achieve its goals, exercising this “right” first in Afghanistan (2001) and then in Iraq (2003). Indeed, critics as well as supporters of contemporary US foreign policy frequently describe it as imperial. Thus, current discussions of imperialism and empire frequently attempt to elucidate the role played by the United States in international economic inequalities. For instance, Aijaz Ahmad (2000) argues “what we actually have is, finally, for the first time in history, a globalised empire of capital itself, in all its nakedness, in which the United States imperium plays the dominant role, financially, militarily, institutionally, ideologically.” Whether this new globalized capitalism is a dramatically new stage in capitalism that invalidates earlier analyses whether Marxist or not, as Hardt and Negri argue, or simply an intensification and elaboration of the basic traits of capitalism and imperialism—as analyzed by Karl Marx (1818–1883) and Lenin—as Ahmad and others propose, is a matter of disagreement.

The standard chronology of colonialism has also been put into question by arguments that in order to understand European colonization it is necessary to analyze its underlying discursive and ideological underpinnings. Thus, in his 1978 book Orientalism, arguably the foundational text of postcolonial studies, Edward W. Said (1935–2003) traces the construction of the “Orient” back to early modern and even Greek sources, analyzes its influence on the self-construction of the “West,” and notes how this European production of knowledge affected colonialist practice in the region. From a related perspective, Nelson Manrique (1993) has emphasized the manner in which the mind-set formed by seven hundred years of contradictory interaction among Christians, Muslims, and Jews was transplanted by the Spanish conquistadores to very different American realities. According to these and related studies, the conventional chronology of European colonialism leads only to the distortion, even the mutilation, of history.

Given these difficulties in establishing a clearly bounded definition of colonialism and related terms, these must be seen as constituting a semantic field in which conceptual boundaries blur into one another and in which historical frameworks, though necessary, necessarily break down. But underlying the semantic field there exists a continuum of unequal and exploitative economic, social, and political phenomena that directly affects the relationships among science and technology and has ethical consequences that have yet to be fully explored.

COLONIALISM AS TURNING POINT

Iberian colonialism nevertheless signaled a turning point in world history. Not only did European power and
culture begin its process of expansion and imposition throughout lands and populations unknown by the West, but also new unequal flows of resources favoring colonial powers were for the first time established on a planetary scale. British and French colonialism, even contemporary international trade relations, are subsequent capitalist developments within this unequal planetary framework. Furthermore, the pivotal role played by the Iberian empires is evidenced by the way they developed two of the central institutions characteristic of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century colonialism and beyond—slavery and the plantation system—as well as the ultimate ideological basis on which colonialism would be built: racism. As the Spanish philosopher Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (1490–1572 or 1573) argued, the colonization of the Americas and the exploitation of the Amerindians was justified because these were “as inferior to Spaniards as children are to adults and women to men … and there being between them [Amerindians and Spaniards] as much difference as there is between … monkeys and men” (Sepúlveda 1951 [1547], 33). Although the mixing of races was more frequent in Iberian colonies than in those of France or England, it was the product of necessity, given the limited number of women who traveled with the conquistadores, and was not incompatible with the development of intricate racial hierarchies that became legacies of the Spanish and Portuguese empires. Indeed, the scientific racialism of the nineteenth century would ground a similar discourse, not on philosophical and religious reasons, as Sepúlveda did, but on (pseudo)scientific ones.

Colonialism is thus more than a set of institutions or practices that permit the establishment and maintenance of unequal economic exchanges among regions or countries. Underlying colonial economic relations and institutions are evolving beliefs or ideologies that make possible the permanence and reproduction of colonialism. For instance, the Spanish conquistadores saw even their most brutal actions justified by their role in spreading the Catholic religion. It is reported that Hernán Cortés (1485–1547), the conqueror of Mexico, claimed that “the main reason why we came … is to praise and preach the faith of Christ, even if together with this we can achieve honor and profit” (quoted in Zavala 1972, 25). In a similar vein, the British and French empires found their justification in supposedly bringing civilization to “primitive” regions of the world.

Western culture is thus permeated by pseudorational justifications of racial hierarchies, which would seem to ground colonialism on nature. Even the usually skeptical David Hume (1711–1776) accepted colonial racial hierarchies when he states in his 1752 essay “On National Characteristics” that he considered “the Negroes and in general all other species of men (for there are four or five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to the whites. There never was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor even any individual eminent either in action or speculation” (Hume 1994 [1752], 86). Writing about “[John] Locke, Hume, and empiricism,” Said has argued “that there is an explicit connection in these classic writers between their philosophic doctrines [and] racial theory, justifications of slavery [and] arguments for colonial exploitation” (Said 1978, 13). Other canonic names are easily added to that of Hume, and many other disciplines to that of philosophy, from evolutionary biology—which, despite the misgivings of Charles Darwin (1809–1882), ended up applying its notions of competition to humanity—to historical linguistics, which helped provide a pseudoscientific basis for the racist celebration of the so-called Aryan race.

ANTICOLONIALISM

Yet just as colonialism found occasional supporters among its subjects in the Americas, Africa, and Asia, the European reaction to colonialism was not homogeneous. There was an important streak of anticolonial thought and action in Europe as long as colonies existed, and this too left an imprint on Western thought. Indeed, colonialism not only permeated Western culture, it also established the framework within which anticolonialist thought and action frequently developed. Because of the central role played by Catholicism in the justification of Spanish expansion, the anticolonialist reaction in sixteenth-century Spain used the intellectual tools provided by the church. Thus, Bartolomé de Las Casas (1474–1566), the greatest critic of the Spanish conquest, used biblical exegesis, scholastic philosophy, canonic law, historiography, and his own and others’ eyewitness accounts to convince the Spanish court and the church of the humanity of the Native American populations and to achieve partial recognition of their rights. In fact, the arguments of Las Casas and other like-minded contemporary critics of colonialism, such as Francisco de Vitoria (c. 1486–1546), are the seeds from which contemporary notions of human rights and international law have sprung. But Las Casas did not deny the need to evangelize Native Americans or fail to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Spanish monarchy over them, even as he vindicated their right to self-government and to be treated as human beings.

Even texts produced in the Americas that are generally taken to be expressions of indigenous cultures, such as the Popol Vuh, an anonymous seventeenth-century compilation of Meso-American myths, or the Andean chronicle Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala’s El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno (The first new chronicle and good government), also finished in the early seventeenth century, were intellectually framed by Catholicism. While the Popol Vuh uses Latin script to
reconstruct the Mayan hieroglyphic books destroyed during the Spanish catechization, and can, therefore, be considered an act of absolute resistance to the Spanish conquest, its anonymous author describes the text as written “in Christendom.” Although Guaman Poma de Ayala’s very title implies criticism of Spanish rule, it is a hybrid text in which traditional Andean structures, such as the *hanan/hurin* (upper/masculine–lower/feminine) binary, are maintained while acknowledging Catholicism and incorporating into its narrative idiosyncratic versions of biblical stories.

This dependence on European thought, even on some of the basic presuppositions of colonialism itself, will be continued by most oppositional movements and texts produced after the first moment of resistance to European invasion. For instance, while for Lenin imperialism is rooted in the nation and in national capital, anti-imperial movements will likewise be national movements struggling to achieve independence. If the spread of “civilization” is seen in the nineteenth century as validating colonial expansion, the Cuban anticolonial activist, revolutionary, and scholar José Martí (1853–1895), in his classic essay “Our America,” proposed the establishment of the “American University,” in which a decolonized curriculum would, for example, privilege the Incas and not the Greeks as the foundation of culture. Even the appeal of Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) to nonviolence as the basis of the struggle against colonial oppression, while rooted in his reading of the Bhagavad Gita, is also a reinterpretation of principles first proposed by Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) and developed by Leo Tolstoy (1828–1910), with whom the great Indian leader corresponded.

A similar appropriation and modification of Western discourse can be found in twentieth-century anticolonialism’s relationship with Marxism, even if in this case, as in that of nonviolence, it is an oppositional rather than a hegemonic one that is being used. Thus, Mariátegui (2011, 130) argued that “[socialism] must be a heroic creation. We have to give life to an Indo-American socialism reflecting our own reality and in our own language.” And this attempt at translating Marxism into local cultural traditions was replicated throughout most of the colonial and neocolonial world, as authors as diverse as Ernesto “Che” Guevara (1928–1967), Amilcar Cabral (1921–1973), and Mao Zedong (1893–1976) attempted to create “socialisms” not only compatible with the social and cultural conditions of Latin America, Lusophone (Portuguese-speaking) Africa, and China, respectively, but also rooted in them. Precisely because of the importance given to local conditions, this anticolonial and nationalist Marxism was characterized by an emphasis on the cultural effects of political actions, and vice versa. Although not completely ignored, culture and nation did not play prominent positive roles in the works of classic European revolutionary authors, such as Marx, Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), and even Lenin. The subsequent preoccupation with culture is a link between anticolonial Marxism and postcolonialism, understood as a cultural and political critique of the surviving colonial and developing neocolonial structures and discourses.

**POSTCOLONIALISM**

But questions remain regarding postcolonialism. Is the *post* in *postcolonialism* merely a temporal marker? If so, all postindependence literary and critical production in all former colonies, regardless of whether they deal with or promote cultural and structural decolonization, would be postcolonial. Or is it a reference to those writings that attempt to deal with the aftermath of colonialism, with the social and cultural restructuring and healing necessary after the expulsion of the European colonists? In this case the novels of James Fenimore Cooper (1789–1851) and even those of Henry James (1843–1916), all of which, in one way or another, deal with the problem of establishing a US identity distinct from those of England and Europe, could be classified as “postcolonial.” In Latin America, several figures would qualify as postcolonial thinkers, including the nineteenth-century polymath Andrés Bello (1781–1865), with his didactic poetry praising and, therefore, promoting “tropical agriculture,” and his attempt at modifying Spanish orthography so as to reflect Spanish American pronunciation; the Cuban scholar Fernando Ortiz (1881–1969), producer of pioneering studies of the cultural hybridity characteristic of the colonial and postcolonial experiences for which he coined the term *transculturation*; and, as well, the aforementioned Martí and Mariátegui, who among others, initiated in the region the systematic criticism of neocolonialism, internal colonialism, racism, and cultural dependence.

Or is the *post* in the term a not-so-implicit alignment with poststructuralism and postmodernism—that is, with the anti-foundational philosophies developed by, among others, Jacques Derrida (1930–2004), Gilles Deleuze (1925–1995) and Félix Guattari (1930–1992), and Michel Foucault (1926–1984)? If so, despite the existence of transitional figures such as Frantz Fanon, whose writings combine anticolonial agitation, Marxism, French philosophy, and psychoanalysis, postcolonialism could be seen as opposed to Marxist and non-Marxist anticolonialism and to mainstream attempts at understanding and undermining neocolonialism. From this anti-foundational perspective, if the stress on cultural topics characteristic of anticolonial and postindependence fictional and theoretical texts establishes a connection with postcolonialism, their frequent essentialism, occasional blindness toward gender hierarchies, and emphasis on politics and
economics over constructions of subjectivity make them at best flawed precursors. And from the point of view of scholars who claim to be developing the perspectives proposed by anticolonial theorists—Marxist or otherwise—postcolonialism can be interpreted as the direct application of theories developed in Europe and the United States that disregard earlier local theorizations and mediations.

Regardless of how one understands its relationship with anticolonial thought, this postcolonialism as exemplified by the works of Said, Homi K. Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, among others, has generated challenging analyses of the role of gender within colonial and postcolonial institutions, of the political implications of hybridity and diaspora, of racism, and of the importance of constructions of identity within colonial, neocolonial, and postcolonial situations. Moreover, it has permitted the extension of its analyses of subjectivity and of heterogeneous social groupings to the colonial archive, permitting the elaboration of innovative historical reconstructions that go beyond the obsession with facts and events of conventional historiography or the frequently exclusive preoccupation with classes and economic structures characteristic of Marxism.

ASSESSMENT
The study of colonial and postcolonial structures and ideologies is important because contemporary international economic and cultural relations and realities, rather than being their negation, can be read as their continuation. In fact, contemporary American, African, and Asian national boundaries are part of the colonial inheritance. These borders, drawn according to purely administrative and political criteria by the imperial powers without taking into account cultural, ethnic, linguistic, or historical differences among the diverse populations thus brought together, have been a contributing factor to the ethnic and national violence that have plagued postcolonial areas.

But international economic inequality is the most egregious legacy of empire. The depth of this continuing disparity is such that, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, of the 850 million people classified as undernourished between 2006 and 2008, 839.4 million lived in postcolonial areas (FAO 2011). A similar inequality, although undeniably less dramatic in its immediate consequences, is present in the fields of science and technology. For instance, Latin America holds only 0.2 percent of all patents (Castro Díaz-Balart and Pérez Rojas 2002). While this is the direct result of the countries of the so-called developing world investing only 0.3 percent to 0.5 percent of their gross domestic product in the fields of science and technology—in contrast, first world countries set aside 2 percent to 5 percent for the same purpose (Castro Díaz-Balart and Pérez Rojas 2002)—it is also a consequence of the unequal manner in which the contemporary global economy is structured, which transforms scientific and technological research into a luxury. Moreover, this low investment in science and technology constitutes a contributing factor to the perpetuation of this international inequality (Castro Díaz-Balart and Pérez Rojas 2002). Furthermore, colonialism and the continuing global inequality it created can be seen as determining the patterns of consumption of natural resources that have played a central role in past and current exploitation and the destruction of colonial and postcolonial environments. For instance, Richard P. Tucker (2000, 2) has noted that the United States, as a neocolonial power, has come “to be inseparably linked to the worldwide degradation of the biosphere.” Thus, the inheritance of colonialism, described by the constellation of the heterogeneous terms postcolonialism, neocolonialism, or imperialism—in both its territorialized and deterritorialized conceptualizations—not only constitutes a central problematic in the fields of science and technology but also is at the core of the major ethical dilemmas faced by humanity in the early twenty-first century.

SEE ALSO Development Ethics; Globalization; Industrial Revolution; Scientific Revolution.

BIBLIOGRAPHY
A broad, comparative study of the history of European responses to the cultures of sub-Saharan Africa, India, and China that emphasizes the role played by Western evaluations of technological differences.

Ahmad, an Indian poet and literary critic, provides a stringent critique of postcolonial theory and a defense of the continuing relevance of Marxist analysis to the understanding of colonial and neocolonial literatures, cultures, and politics.

In this article, Ahmad provides a Marxist analysis of globalization.

This is a selection of essays and didactic poetry by the most influential cultures, and politics.

Bhabha analyzes the manner in which cultural mixture undermines colonial and postcolonial projects.
Colonialism and Postcolonialism


Arguably the foundational text in the new literature of case studies on the relationship between Western science and colonialism.


In this collection of his writings, Cabral, the main leader of the struggle for the independence of Guinea-Bissau, provides sophisticated Marxist analyses of the roles played by culture and nationalism in anticolonial revolutions.


A study of contemporary international inequalities in scientific research and their impact on development.


Fanon, at the time deeply involved in the struggle for Algerian independence, applies insights from psychoanalysis, Sartrean existentialism, and Marxism to the colonial situation in Africa. Originally published 1961.


In this book, Fanon, a trained psychoanalyst, studies the influence of colonialism on black colonial subjects. Originally published 1954.


Extended narrative stressing how technological inventiveness was often stimulated by problems encountered in colonial settings.


Useful collection of essays, speeches, and interviews by the spiritual leader of India’s independence movement.


Argues that modern notions of ecology are heavily dependent on the colonial experience, and especially professional scientists working in the Dutch, French, and British colonies.

Guaman Poma de Ayala, Felipe. 1978. Letter to a King: A Peruvian Chief’s Account of Life under the Incas and under Spanish Rule. Edited and translated by Christopher Dilke. New York: Dutton. Finished circa 1615 and known in its original Spanish language as El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno [The first new chronicle and good government]. (Spanish version is available from http://www.kb.dk/elib/mss/poma/)

Written by a regional noble, this early seventeenth-century illustrated chronicle is not only the most thorough expression of the indigenous perspective on the conquest of Peru, but its 398 drawings provide an invaluable visual record of life during the first years of the colony.


Comprehensive selection of essays and speeches by the Argentine-born leader of the Cuban revolution who became the international symbol for anti-imperialist and anticapitalist struggles.


Influential attempt to apply poststructuralist theories to the analysis of contemporary international economic reality.


This essay exhibits most clearly the racist ideas held by the eminent empiricist philosopher.


Study of the influence of Iroquois political institutions on those of the United States.


Analysis of the difficulties found in the application of postcolonial theory to the Latin American colonial experience.


A devastating account of the genocide of the Amerindians by the Spanish conquistadores written by the foremost sixteenth-century defender of indigenous rights.


Classic Marxist analysis of nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century imperialism.


Careful introduction to the history of colonialism and its contemporary incarnations and to the different theoretical approaches to the topic.


Collection of essays that analyze from an economic perspective how US imperialism works.


Well-documented reconstruction of the evolution of the "mental world" of medieval Spain that helped determine the attitudes and actions of the Spanish conquistadores in the New World.
Columbia Accident


Sepúlveda, Juan Ginés de. 1951. Demócrates segundo; o, De las justas causas de la guerra contra los indios. [The second Demócrates; or, Of the just causes for the war against the Indians]. Edited by Ángel Losada. Madrid: Instituto Francisco de Vitoria. Justification of the conquest originally written in 1547 by Las Casas’s main ideological rival and one of Spain’s foremost Renaissance Aristotelians.


Juan E. de Castro Revised by De Castro

COLUMBIA ACCIDENT

SEE Space Shuttles Challenger and Columbia Accidents.

COMMON HERITAGE PRINCIPLE

The common heritage principle (CHP)—also known as the common heritage of mankind or common heritage of humanity principle—as it was presented to the United Nations General Assembly in various declarations and treaties, and as it is understood in the twenty-first century, affirms that the natural resources of the deep seabed and of outer space are held in common by all nations, and should be distributed equitably for the benefit of all humankind. Specifically, the CHP of the 1979 Treaty Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (Moon Treaty), refers to the equitable sharing of outer space resources; the nonappropriation of in-place resources, particularly with regard to outer space mining activities; and the institution of an international regime to supervise commercial activities in space.

The CHP was presented with the understanding that it was crucial to plan for future exploration and uses of these important regions in order not only to ensure an equitable distribution of their natural resources but to prevent conflicts among nations as have occurred during