EAST MOUNTAIN TIGER, WEST MOUNTAIN TIGER: CHINA, THE WEST, AND “COLONIALISM” IN AFRICA

Barry Sautman and YAN Hairong

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(1)
## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFP</td>
<td>Agence France Presse</td>
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<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>Arab League</td>
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<td>AN</td>
<td>Africa News</td>
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<td>AP</td>
<td>Associated Press</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<td>BCMIR</td>
<td>BBC Monitoring International Reports</td>
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<td>BCAS</td>
<td>Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars</td>
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<tr>
<td>BD</td>
<td>Business Day (S. Africa)</td>
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<tr>
<td>BG</td>
<td>Boston Globe</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCP</td>
<td>Chinese Communist Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>China Daily</td>
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<td>CQ</td>
<td>China Quarterly</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSM</td>
<td>Christian Science Monitor</td>
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<tr>
<td>DM</td>
<td>Daily Mail (UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPA</td>
<td>Deutsche Presse Agentur</td>
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<tr>
<td>DT</td>
<td>Daily Telegraph</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAS</td>
<td>East African Standard (Kenya)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FA</td>
<td>Foreign Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investment</td>
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<td>FT</td>
<td>Financial Times (UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GER</td>
<td>General Enrollment Ratio</td>
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<td>IANS</td>
<td>Indo-Asian News Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>IFI</td>
<td>International Financial Institutions</td>
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<td>IHS</td>
<td>International History Review</td>
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<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>IPS</td>
<td>Inter Press Service</td>
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<td>IHT</td>
<td>International Herald Tribune (France)</td>
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<tr>
<td>JICH</td>
<td>Journal of Imperial &amp; Commonwealth History</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAT</td>
<td>Los Angeles Times</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAS</td>
<td>Modern Asian Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organization</td>
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<td>NR</td>
<td>National Review</td>
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<td>NS</td>
<td>New Statesman</td>
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<td>NYT</td>
<td>New York Times</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>PN</td>
<td>Pambazuka News</td>
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<td>PRC</td>
<td>People’s Republic of China</td>
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<td>SAP</td>
<td>Structural Adjustment Programs</td>
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<td>SC</td>
<td>Security Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCMP</td>
<td>South China Morning Post</td>
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<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>Sunday Telegraph</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TD</td>
<td>This Day (Nigeria)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>VAT</td>
<td>Value Added Tax</td>
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<td>WD</td>
<td>World Development</td>
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<td>WS</td>
<td>Weekly Standard</td>
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<td>WSJ</td>
<td>Wall Street Journal</td>
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<tr>
<td>XH</td>
<td>Xinhua</td>
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<td>ZS</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Standard</td>
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<td>ZI</td>
<td>Zimbabwe Independent</td>
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I. INTRODUCTION

A 2006 speech by Pope Benedict XVI controversially quoted a 14th Century Byzantine emperor who said Mohammed brought "things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached." Analysts argued that this view of Islam is tendentious: for a thousand years before the emperor's statement and a half-millennium thereafter, forced conversion to Christianity was also common and, it may be added, conversion was also used to justify the reduction of Africans to chattel slaves.1

Analysts went on to adduce reasons for the Pope using the quote to bolster his claim that the Islamic world lacks Christendom's efforts to render Faith and Reason compatible. His representation of Islam was said to have been intended to

1) demonstrate the superiority of Christianity;
2) combat what he calls the "dictatorship of relativism";
3) present Christianity as essential to European culture;
4) occlude the history of church offenses against non-Catholics;
5) vindicate his opposition to Turkey joining the European Union; and
6) deepen ties with Eastern Orthodoxy, whose center until 1453 was Byzantium.2

Since 2005, a claim analogous to the Pope's has unfolded through Western politicians and media representations of China practicing colonialism in Africa. This claim plays upon misapprehensions of modern colonialism which, as properly understood, bear no relationship to China's practices. One misconception, to which conservatives are committed, is that Western colonialism overwhelmingly benefited the colonized. Another misconception involves people who do not necessarily see colonialism as a glorious

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enterprise, but reduce it to one or more transnational economic or power asymmetries, and find Western colonialism to have redeeming aspects. While espousing a forgiving attitude toward Western colonialism, both groups construct a vilifying China-as-colonialist discourse.

The Pope’s implied assertion of historical Christianity as non-coercive was widely critiqued, but a vindicatory discourse of modern colonialism is largely accepted. We thus elaborately discuss colonialism’s characteristics; demonstrate that China-as-colonialist representations are inapt; and set out reasons for the emergence of the discourse, in light of its proponents’ view that they, like the Pope, face a global struggle with a formidable competitor. We also argue that a colonialist label is pinned on an “amoral” China in order to displace critiques of colonial legacies and neo-liberal policies imposed on Africa. Yet, while China does not engage in colonialism, it is a newly-capitalistic power pursuing its interests in Africa and thus inevitably behaves much like other long-established powers. In that sense, the East Mountain and West Mountain tigers both eat people.

II. COLONIALISM’S VINDICATORS

Charges of Chinese colonialism, neo-colonialism or imperialism in Africa have been made by US, Australian, (white) South African, French, and Swedish journalists, as well as by the US-funded

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opposition in Zimbabwe and Taiwan-funded opposition in Zambia. Most imputations, however, originate in Britain; often coming from journalists, but also from a very high government official. Jack Straw, Home Secretary from 1997 to 2001, Foreign Secretary from 2001 to 2006, and now Leader of the House of Commons, has stated “Most of what China has been doing in Africa today is what we did in Africa 150 years ago.” A German Development Ministry official has said of China, “Our African partners really have to watch out that they will not be facing a new process of colonization.” Such views are echoed in Western media. A New York Times article has asserted that in Africa, China’s goals are “not wholly unlike Euro-


pean objectives in Africa 150 years ago.”9 Other US and UK sources have informed readers that China stands accused of neo-colonialism.10 A UK newspaper headline queried whether China is a colonial power in Africa.11 US National Public Radio asked listeners to debate whether “China offers African nations a model for development or if Beijing is practicing neo-colonialism,” as if this binary includes the only possible characterizations of China’s links with Africa.12

It is unclear that Straw was making an accusation in implying that China engages in colonialism. He has said Britain welcomes China’s activity in Africa and he may believe colonialism was beneficial to Africans.13 In a 2002 interview, Straw remarked that there is “a lot wrong with imperialism,” but confined his critique to “historical errors” of British colonialism that affected his work as Foreign Secretary. None were connected with Africa, but rather Palestine (secret diplomacy), Afghanistan (“a less than glorious role”), India and Iraq (wrongful drawing of boundaries). Despite Tory fulminations,14 Straw’s statement fell short of condemning the Empire and complied with a seeming UK elite consensus that “colonization was sometimes unfortunate but mostly enlightened.”15

Other top UK politicians have affirmed colonialism as salutary for the colonized. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher opined in

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1988 that “the story of how Europeans explored and colonized – and yes, without apology – civilized much of the world, is an extraordinary tale of talent, skill and courage.”

Tony Blair was to tell the 1997 Labour Party conference “I am proud of the British Empire,” but a spin doctor intervened. Blair instead asked, rhetorically, “Consider a thousand years of British history and what does it tell us? An empire, the largest empire the world has ever known.”

Soon thereafter, Blair stated that “There is a lot of rubbish talked about the Empire. In my view, we should not either be apologizing for it or wringing our hands about it. It is a fact of our history. It was, in many ways, a most extraordinary achievement . . .”

Chancellor of the Exchequer and Prime Minister-in-waiting Gordon Brown has said Britons should be proud of the “traders, adventurers and missionaries who built the Empire” and that “[T]he days of Britain having to apologize for its colonial history are over . . . We should celebrate much of our past rather than apologize for it.” Brown is also said to have argued that British schools should treat colonial history positively.

In 2006, advocates of promoting a positive view of colonialism through the schools curriculum, such as Conservative Party history advisory panel chair Andrew Roberts, hailed the “excellent news” that their campaign had been fulfilled by a new syllabus emphasizing Empire.

Britain has not been the only former colonial power where colonialism has recently been re-affirmed. France’s law of 23 February 2005 (Law 2005-158), Article 4, specified that “School courses should recognize in particular the positive role of the French pres-

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ence overseas, notably in north Africa.”

This benign view of colonialism gave rise to demonstrations in metropolitan France and the French Caribbean, as well as strained relations with Algeria. The President was forced to have the Constitutional Council review the law, which declared it to be outside parliament’s power.

Conservative UK academic circles have long defended colonialism; for example, development economist Peter Bauer, held that “far from the West having caused the poverty in the Third World, contact with the West has been the principal agent of material progress there.”

He was made a life peer by Margaret Thatcher. Politically-influential UK popular historians now praise the colonial experience and recommend it to the US. Niall Ferguson, a financial historian, argues “empire is more necessary in the 21st century than ever before,” because British colonialism brought the colonized a beneficent modernity and liberal capitalism, while states in the developing world are often more exploitative, less growth-oriented, and more violent than was colonialism. Ferguson sees independence as a disaster for most poor countries and urges imposition of imperial governance, in which national sovereignty may be suspended for decades.

Andrew Roberts, a media-connected popular historian and Senior Honorary Scholar of Cambridge University, has written that the Empire brought “freedom and justice,” that for “the vast majority of its half millennium-long history the British Empire was an exemplary force for good,” and that “the British gave up their Empire largely without bloodshed, after having tried to educate their successor governments in the ways of democracy and representative institutions.” He claims “the British Empire delivered astonishing growth rates . . .” and advocates a re-colonizing of Africa, under British auspices, because “Africa has never known better times than under British rule, whereas before-hand there was anarchy . . .

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Ex-Sandhurst military historian and journalist Sir John Keegan has said Britain's Victorians "set out to bring civilization and good government to their colonies and to leave when they were no longer welcome . . . [T]he empire became in its last years highly benevolent and moralistic."  

A leading UK scholar of post-colonialism has dubbed writers such as Ferguson, Roberts, and Keegan the media's "semi-official historians," whose reconstructions of colonialism are "poisonous fairytales." Upholding Empire has also had fully-official nexuses. Robert Cooper, Blair's foreign policy guru, head of the Defense and Overseas Secretariat from 1999-2003, envoy to Afghanistan, and now a senior EU official, holds that "the need for colonialism is as great as it ever was in the 19th Century."  

He argues that the developed world must apply a double standard: 

Among ourselves, we act according to the rule of law and the principles of cooperative security. However, faced with more traditional kinds of nation, we have to revert to the more brutal methods of the past - use of force, preemptive attacks, deception . . . Among ourselves, we respect the law, but when we operate in the jungle, we need to apply the laws of the jungle.

Blair is said to agree with Cooper's "new liberal imperialism." The Home Office has also asserted colonialism created the rule of law and nations where there were none.


Claims that colonialism "civilized the natives" are redolent of persistent conservative justifications of slavery as needed to transform "savage" Africans.\textsuperscript{33} They accord with common "white man's burden" assumptions that subjugated peoples were incapable of creating industry, good governance, and progress. They echo utilitarian philosopher James Mill, author of a six volume \textit{History of British India} (1817), who averred that with colonialism "What glorious results might be expected for the whole of Asia . . . which even in its most favored parts has been in all ages condemned to semi-barbarism, and the miseries of despotic power." They are in line with the thinking of colonial entrepreneur Cecil Rhodes, who held that colonialism brought law, order, and development that colonized peoples could not themselves attain.\textsuperscript{34} They have a close fit with recent sentiments as well: one British journalist has claimed "Colonialism brought the industrial revolution to Asia. European empires may have assigned Asians the least prestigious and rewarding roles in the development, but the alternative to starting at the bottom was not starting at all."\textsuperscript{35} Another has said that the British planted coffee, cotton, and tobacco in Uganda but, if left to their own devices, the natives would have relied on nothing but bananas.\textsuperscript{36} Similarly, the British historian of colonialism D.K. Fieldhouse said of less developed regions that "If they had not become European possessions the majority would probably have remained very much as they were."\textsuperscript{37}

In contrast, Colonialists are represented as having developed the colonies, transferred the requisites of prosperous and equitable societies, and provided a benign transition to independence. Colonialism thus can be a model for a new imperialism, championed not only in Britain, but also by popular US historians, such as

\textsuperscript{33} See, e.g., Ulrich Bonnell Phillips, \textit{American Negro Slavery}, New York: Appleton, 1918, pp. 291-343 (plantations were schools for the slave's transition from barbarism to civilization).


Ernest Lefever. The ex-\textit{Wall Street Journal} and now Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) writer Max Boot has said that “troubled lands today cry out for the sort of enlightened foreign administration once provided by self-confident Englishmen in jodhpurs and pith helmets,” and proposes to sharply increase US forces because war and empire are inseparable. George W. Bush’s analogy of the conquest of Iraq to US colonization of the Philippines a century ago, in which 240,000 of the country’s eight million people died, indicates he too favors a kind of colonialism, as does his award of the highest civilian honor to neoconservative father-figure, Irving Kristol, who wants the US to see itself as an “imperial nation.”

Popular pro-colonialism US writers, including expatriate Canadians and Britons, argue “Colonialism was a transmission belt that brought to Asia, Africa, and South America the blessings of Western civilization,” that what is needed is a “new style of imperialism, legitimized by international institutions,” “de facto re-colonization,” “all the trappings of an imperial bureaucracy,” and a “respectable form of colonialism.” A British writer has argued that because colonial rule benefited India and, because the invaders of Afghanistan in 2001 had the same motives as the colonialists in India, “a responsible imperialism . . . might stand a chance of solving Afghanistan’s problems.” Another has said that the US in Iraq can take the British Empire — “a humanitarian undertaking” and “practical project” involving “the irrigation of Egypt and the Indus,

\begin{thebibliography}{99}


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the laying of railways and founding of schools” — as its guide.44 Similarly a US scholar has put it that “the British experience in India may be the key precedent for bringing democracy to an undemocratic and non-Western land like Iraq.”45

Most explicitly pro-colonialist writers are self-identified “conservatives.” Yet years before the demand for a new colonialism coalesced on the right, that path was pioneered by “liberals.” Frank Furedi has written of the emergence in the late-1980s of an across-the-spectrum “moral condemnation of the South,” linked to a vindication of colonialism that serves to boost the moral credibility of the West.46 For example, the liberal writer William Pfaff, argued in the CFR journal Foreign Affairs in 1994 that “Most of Africa lacks the crucial educated middle and professional classes and the mediating private and public institutions that compose a ‘civil society’ . . . Much of Africa needs, to put it plainly, what one could call a disinterested neo-colonialism.”47 Writers such as these publish in the most established UK and US media, the very outlets likely to allude to China practicing “neo-colonialism” in Africa.

III. CHARACTERIZING MODERN COLONIALISM

In the 1979 British film comedy Monty Python’s The Life of Brian, Reg, an insurgent leader in the ancient Holy Land, speaks of Roman oppression and poses the rhetorical question, “What have they have ever done for us?” His fellow rebels list many positive attributes, leading Reg to retort “All right, but apart from the sanitation, the medicine, education, wine, public order, irrigation, roads, a fresh water system, and public health, what have the Romans ever done for us?”

In thinking about colonialism, most people rightly have in mind European, Japanese and US practices of the last five centu-

ries, yet the view of many, including ex-colonial subjects, is Pythonesque: former natives may carp about colonialism, but actually it did them a lot of good. A usually critical UK journalist and ex-colonial subject offer that

Of course excellent, progressive developments happened during the long years of colonialism and imperialism. There is a long list of these – from the railways to the civil service, rule of law and education for the elites. We ex-colonials gained access to great writers, art, ideas, the wonderful English language.48

Moeletsi Mbeki, the businessman brother of South Africa’s President and deputy chair of the South African Institute of International Affairs, who advocates private property and free trade as the solution to Africa’s problems, has praised “the record of colonial governments who built the roads and cities that Africa depends on today” and opined that “Africans had been better off under colonial rule.”49 Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has said the British Empire was “an act of great enterprise, adventure, and creativity” committed to “fair play” and the rule of law.50 Taiwan’s Foreign Ministry, responding to Japanese Foreign Minister Aso Taro’s claim that Japan’s 1895-1945 colonization improved Taiwan’s educational standards, has stated that the assertion is understandable, because Japan “implemented education, farming and public infrastructure measures.”51 While the opportunism of such statements is clear to those familiar with India and Taiwan’s foreign policies, their stance is not rare among rulers of ex-colonized countries who value the privileges colonialism afforded their forbearers.

The view that colonialism developed the colonized, fostered the rule of law, and was benign to its subjects, at least in its final “compassionate years,” is however empirically false and politically self-serving; the vast literature on modern colonialism and anti-co-


colonial struggles refutes it. Yet, most definitions of colonialism capture only one aspect of what is distinctive about it and many confuse it with the larger category of empire or with settlement, transnational political influence, or disadvantageous trade and investment. Such characterizations have led to skewed or reductionist views of colonialism. We argue that as a particular regime of governance and accumulation, colonialism cannot be defined by any one dimension, but as a set of characteristics.

Colonialism has been equated with transnational hegemony, i.e. as hegemony over territory beyond a state’s border. It has included this characteristic, but so too have other transnational hegemones. For example, Nepal is dominated by India politically, but no one argues it is a colony and, because it is not, Nepal has policies that contravene those of India: it is friendlier to China than is India and has royal coups that India has opposed.

Modern colonialism has often been confused with historical empires. Modern colonialists have conquered and controlled other people’s land. So too did pre-modern empires, from Egypt’s taking of Nubian possessions 5,000 years ago through the Persian, Roman, Arab, Mongol, Mogul, Chinese and Ottoman empires. Each implanted military-civilian outposts in conquered territory. None, however, undertook the vast changes enacted by modern colonialism, in which “local religions, markets, and states were either extensively transformed or completely destroyed and replaced by new ones.”


The Roman Empire, although oppressive, exemplifies the contrast between modern colonialism and earlier forms of subordination. Economic domination scarcely played a role in it. Unlike modern colonialism, the Roman Empire was a conquest state, formed by expansion into contiguous areas. Even if they were not Roman citizens, a people who became subjects gained rights, such as immunity from slave-raiding. There was no color bar. Rome gave much more self-government and equality to the ruled than did modern colonialism. It gradually extended citizenship first to Italians and then the whole empire. Native religions were not displaced, but became part of a syncretic imperial cult; one of them, Christianity, even became the state religion. Provinceals were not compelled to adopt Latin culture; in the eastern Empire, Greek culture prevailed. Locals filled the bureaucracy, including many chief posts. By the Third Century, most Roman senators were not Italians, let alone from Rome, and one emperor was even Arab. Discontent with foreign rule did not cause the fall of the Empire, because by then Roman rule was not deemed foreign in any part of it.\textsuperscript{58} In contrast, as Partha Chatterjee notes, "the pedagogical aspect of civilizing has only worked in one direction in the modern era – educating the colonized into the status of modern citizens; never the other way, as in many ancient empires, of conquerors allowing themselves to be civilized by their subjects."\textsuperscript{59}

The Manchu expansion that began in mid-17th Century East Asia was arguably the last pre-modern empire. Created on the cusp of the modern era, it combined a conquest state in the southwest with an administrative system in the north/northwest that had aspects of modern colonialism, but also presented contrasts.\textsuperscript{60} The Manchus more deeply penetrated conquered areas than did European colonialists because of more robust historical and cultural ties between core and conquered areas. Until late in their reign, Manchu emperors were Chinese rulers to the Han and a cushion against Han domination for other ethnicities.\textsuperscript{61} There were racial

\begin{itemize}
  \item Partha Chatterjee, "Empire and Nation Revisited: 50 Years after Bandung," \textit{Inter-Asia Cultural Studies}, Vol. 6, No. 4 (2005), pp. 487-496.
\end{itemize}
aspects of Manchu rule, but these paled in comparison to the pervasive racism of modern colonies that arose as an ideological concomitant of chattel slavery and an effort to reconcile colonial domination with the ideas of freedom and equality. Manchu restrictions on intermarriage, for example, were not due to notions of racial superiority: Manchus freely married Mongols, Han and others enrolled in the “banner” (qi) military caste. While Manchu rule was oppressive, the peoples of China did gradually become fellow subjects of the multi-ethnic Qing empire. Unlike modern colonialism, the Manchu project was not driven by capital accumulation: lending and mercantile activities in conquered areas were incidental to the enterprise.

Modern colonialism (“imperialism as formal empire”) is also often conflated with modern imperialism per se. Not all major imperial powers have been large-scale colonizers however (the US), while weak colonizers (Denmark) have scarcely counted as imperialists. Imperial powers also informally exercise power in non-colonized countries, as the US has done in Latin America, while colonialism involves a degree of control of economic and political development inconceivable in informal dependencies, including a full-scale loss of sovereignty and often an almost total exclusion from power of local elites. Colonies are generally profitable to the


colonizers, while an empire can be envisaged with states politically subordinate, but unprofitable to the dominant state. The USSR, for example, actually subsidized its Eastern European dependencies, through cheap oil and raw materials and massive purchases of their finished products.69

Ghanaian leader Kwame Nkrumah borrowed the concept of neo-colonialism from Soviet theorists to argue that imperialism’s aim was direct economic dominance and indirect political control of ex-colonies.70 Fieldhouse observed that a prime objective of Western powers in late-colonial Africa was
to lay foundations for the continued close relationships with their one-time colonies . . . The colonies were important for particular metropolitan industries and interested groups, notably the big trading, mining, banking, and investment corporations . . . For all these and less specific reasons, the metropolitan states were clearly anxious to prepare an institutional framework within which African states might retain close links with their former masters.71

Neocolonialism has affected part of the post-colonial world, especially in Africa.72 It arguably persists in some countries, including through international financial institutions (IFIs). Scholars argue however that the concept of neocolonialism underestimates the significance of political independence,73 as the very idea of post-colonialism attests. Osterhammer speaks of “non-colonial ‘determi-

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nant’ influence” as typical of post-colonial asymmetry,74 while the present discourse of neo-colonialism — which emanates from its advocates not its critics — recognizes that colonial powers indeed exercise a different and higher degree of control than the broader category of imperial powers do.75

Alongside a problematic equation with empire per se, colonialism is often reduced to occupation.76 Most colonies have had a modicum of occupation, but some were sparsely garrisoned and others not at all: northern Nigeria’s colonial presence was only district commissioners and tax officials.77 Some occupations are not colonial (post-war Japan and Germany). In 1990, the US had garrisons of 1,000 or more troops in 21 countries; in 2003, it had a military presence in 153 of the world’s 191 states, with large deployments in 25.78 US troops were often there not to control these states, but to contain their neighbors. By the same token, an absence of troops does not always indicate a lack of determinative influence. The US retains a high degree of influence in the Philippines, even though Manila closed US bases there in the 1990s.79 Yet, the fact the bases were closed over US objections does illustrate a difference between imperialism in general and colonialism.

Colonialism is also sometimes reduced to settlement: Edward Said held it to be the implantation by dominating metropoles of

settlements on distant territory.\textsuperscript{80} Denoon defined it as “the movement of any group of settlers into territory claimed or occupied by others.”\textsuperscript{81} Finley even argued that as colonization implies expropriation and settlement of land, British-ruled Kenya was a colony, but British-ruled Uganda and Ghana, were not!\textsuperscript{82}

Colonialism, however, is not mere settlement; for European empires generally, the export of capital rapidly became much more important than the export of settlers.\textsuperscript{83} There were many times the number of Chinese than Spaniards, French and Dutch in the colonial Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia, but no one deemed those countries Chinese colonies. In fact, colonial control has often not included much of a settler population.\textsuperscript{84} In 1913, German East Africa had a population of 7.6 million, with some 5,000 Europeans.\textsuperscript{85} British India’s population was more than half the colonial world’s total. In 1930, there were but 30,000 Britons, including 12,000 civil servants, among 340 million Indians.\textsuperscript{86} They nonetheless managed to control and repress the sub-continent in a manner that caused Hitler’s “striking insistence that the Third Reich should copy in Russia British rule in India” and his view that because whoever shows any humanity in colonialism is lost, British conduct in India was exemplary, because of the disdain the colonialists showed for Indians.\textsuperscript{87}

A few definitions of colonialism capture its characteristics more comprehensively. Rupert Emerson, summarizing the understanding of the UN, defined colonialism as

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{81} Donald Denoon, "Colonialism," in Adam Kuper and Jessica Kuper, \textit{The Social Science Encyclopedia}, p. 106.
\item \textsuperscript{82} Moses Finley, “Colonies – an Attempt at a Typology,” \textit{Transactions of the Royal Historical Society}, Vol. 5, No. 26 (1976), pp. 178, 184.
\item \textsuperscript{84} Chris Dixon and Michael Heffernan, \textit{Colonialism and Development in the Contemporary World}, London: Mansell, 1991, p. 2.
\item \textsuperscript{87} Gerwin Strobl, \textit{The Germanic Isle: Nazi Perceptions of Britain}, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 91-92.
\end{itemize}
the establishment and maintenance, for an extended time, of rule over an alien people that is separate from and subordinate to the ruling power . . . Colonialism has now come to be identified with rule over peoples of different race inhabiting lands separated by salt water from the imperial center; more particularly, it signifies direct political control by European states or states settled by Europeans . . . over peoples of other races [and] Japan's rule over her dependent territories, lost after World War II. 88

Guyora Binder notes five characteristics of colonies: prior conquest by a state, minority rule, geographic separation of the territory from the remainder of the state, ethnic or cultural distinctiveness of the territory's population, and relative poverty. 89 Osterhammel presents variants of most of these elements in defining a colony as

A new political organization created by invasion (conquest and/or settlement colonization) but built on pre-colonial conditions. Its alien rulers are in sustained dependence on a geographically remote 'mother country' or imperial center, which claims exclusive rights of 'possession' of the colony. 90

These definitions note key aspects of colonialism, but still do not sufficiently capture the colonial mode of governance and exploitation. Modern colonialism, as we will show, typically has been a relationship in which alien Western or Japanese rulers in subdued overseas lands practiced exclusionary authoritarian rule; imposed an explicit racial hierarchy; enriched metropolitan and colonizing elites by monopoly exploitation of colonies' natural resources, labor, and trade; and often depleted and impoverished native peoples, while extirpating the cultures of the most vulnerable among them.

IV. THE COLONIAL MODE OF EXPLOITATION:
MONOPOLY COMPLEXES & FORCED DE-DEVELOPMENT

"The vilest scramble for loot that ever disfigured the history of human conscience"

Joseph Conrad on the late 19th Century, final colonization of Africa.\(^{91}\)

Colonialism was built on varied motives, but economic ones were often the most prominent. Colonial officials have known that profit for the metropole is a prime purpose of colonies. The French government in 1765 instructed a colonial governor

[not] to consider the colonies as provinces of France merely separated by the sea. They are in reality nothing but commercial establishments . . . Indeed, the administration of this kingdom strives to use their advantages exclusively for the nation . . . and this is the sole object of their establishment, and they should by all means be abandoned if they cease to fulfill it.\(^{92}\)

A 19th Century French official in Algeria stated that a colony’s utility equals the total of profits and advantages accruing to the metropole.\(^ {93}\) French law required each colony to provide France with goods of greater value than the funds France allocated to it.\(^ {94}\)

Colonialism’s benefits to the colonizers were most obvious in the British case.\(^ {95}\) Even late colonial Hong Kong was intended to guarantee a return.

[T]he imperial tradition . . . required colonial territories to invest their reserves in British and Commonwealth securities, to embrace the Sterling Area’s exchange controls, to procure supplies through the Crown Agents in London and to use British commercial and technical standards. Until the 1970s, these imperial conventions served to di-

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rect business towards the United Kingdom and to restrict market opportunities for the rest of the world. Defense arrangements, too, appeared to provide Hong Kong with a British garrison at an unnecessarily high price.  

The colonies brought great profits to metropoles at most times. The British Empire had 80% of colonized peoples and, during most of the colonial era, was hugely profitable. If colonies proved unprofitable, they were usually abandoned. When Spain lost most of its empire in the early 19th century,

[it] certainly had negative effects . . . on the Spanish economy. Trade in goods and services fell sharply and investment levels also declined. Domestic industry lost a protected market. The government’s fiscal difficulties increased significantly as a result of the loss of revenue . . . 

Von Albertini and Wirz noted that “the watchword in Berlin, as in other metropolitan capitals was, ‘the colonies must not cost anything,’ and it supported the colonial fisc to the minimum degree necessary to make good the claims of sovereignty.”

The fact that not every colony was profitable at all times hardly negates the importance of profit as a motive for creating colonies. Japan’s Manchukuo, in northeast China (1931-1945), turned out to be unprofitable, but was more a client-state than colony. The Empire’s benefits to Britain as a whole from 1850-1950 are not unequivocal, but no doubt exists about the benefits that accrued to

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96. Leo Goodstadt, Uneasy Partners: the Conflict Between public Interest and Private Profit in Hong Kong, Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2005, p. 55.


elites.\textsuperscript{102} The costs of colonialism were socialized, but profits enriched bankers, traders, colonizers and, usually, the state.\textsuperscript{103} For Portugal in Africa from the 1880s-1960s, shares of metropolitan output, investment and population diverted to the colonies did not have a large effect on the metropolitan economy, but brought in much-needed foreign currency from their exports to other countries.\textsuperscript{104} France's second empire, in Africa and Indochina, may or may not have yielded a net profit, but it was France's first or second commercial partner in the inter-war years and aided French war efforts.\textsuperscript{105} Dutch colonies spurred Holland's "explosive growth" from 1570-1670 and were greatly profitable through much of the 19th Century. From 1830-1870, profits from forced cropping in Indonesia brought in a third of Dutch state income and allowed generous compensation to slave owners on manumission in the Dutch West Indies, a rapid expansion of Dutch railways, and postponement of an income tax in the Netherlands.\textsuperscript{106} After 1870, the Dutch East Indies took in much investment capital. The Dutch economy reaped rewards through dividend and interest payments.\textsuperscript{107}

A key way in which a colonial mode of exploitation differs from ordinary capitalism is in the form monopoly takes. Commonplace monopoly grows out of competition and achieves dominance in one industry. The colonial mode of exploitation was built on multiple trade and investment monopolies that each metropole reserved for its citizens.

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\end{flushright}
The colonial monopoly complex, a systematic dominance of colonizers, is imposed in every major sphere of colonial economies and is achieved through politico-military control of territory. Baron de Montesquieu noted that “The object of colonies is to carry on commerce in better conditions than can be found with the neighboring peoples with whom advantages are reciprocal,” with “better conditions” being monopoly trade and investment. Monopoly is also implied in Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain’s description of Britain’s tropical colonies as her “great estate.” Japan monopolized manufacture and sale of key products in Taiwan and 90% of its foreign trade. When agriculture was commoditized by allotting much cultivated land to sugarcane for export to Japan, Taiwanese farmers had to deal mainly with large Japanese companies that received preferential state treatment. Many peasants were ruined and Taiwanese sugar mill owners driven under. Indigenous rice farmers who prospered in the last period of Japanese rule did so only because of growing demand in Japan and Japan’s political need to break indigenous landlords through land reform.

Colonial rule included forced labor, the imposition of cash crops and monoculture, the extraction of taxes and profits and a range of abuses associated with this monopoly of power. Colonial regimes seized land to give to settlers. They redistributed the impoverished rural population and forced it to grow cash crops to better maintain and regressive taxes to finance their administration. The resulting monoculture in many colonies – cocoa in the Gold Coast, rubber in Malaya – destroyed the bargaining position of colonized peoples. In Mozambique, Portuguese authori-

ties ordered peasants, on pain of a usually fatal imprisonment, to grow cotton for Portugal's textile mills.\textsuperscript{115}

Within monopoly complexes, colonies could only import products from the metropoles and had to maintain very low or no tariffs. Colonial exports could be made only to metropoles, often under a regime of monopsony (single buyer). Transport between colonies and metropoles was only on metropole ships. Such conditions, according to Bairoch, led to a lack of diffusion of industrial revolution to the colonies.\textsuperscript{116} In order to achieve their monopolies, colonial rulers typically limited the amount and kind of investment by others, in contrast to generic international investment,\textsuperscript{117} and curbed or banned native industries that competed with those of the metropole.\textsuperscript{118} In Africa generally, native entrepreneurs were so restricted they disappeared: "The colonial powers in Africa did not hesitate to destroy existing trade, if only to divert attention to the production and export of crops for European industries and importation of European manufactures."\textsuperscript{119} The same held true for Malaya.\textsuperscript{120} For a Mozambique African to act as a trader was a criminal offense.\textsuperscript{121} Not surprisingly, the growth of Africa's urban population stagnated at 10% during the colonial period, despite an influx of urban non-Africans; meanwhile, the world's urban population grew from 9% of the total in 1600 to 20% in 1900.\textsuperscript{122}

Colonial monopoly complexes resulted in forced demographic, economic and social de-development of key colonies. Jawaharlal Nehru observed that "those parts of India which have been longest under British rule are the poorest today. Indeed, some kind of chart might be drawn up to indicate the close connection between


\textsuperscript{122} Bayly, \textit{Birth of the Modern World}, pp. 183, 188.
the length of British rule and progressive growth of poverty.”

123 In colonies ranging from Britain's largest (India) to her nearest (Ireland), colonialism arguably brought de-industrialization or de-development, to use a term now applied to Russia, Palestine, and Africa. 125

From the outset, modern colonialism and its initial concomitant, slavery, produced demographic catastrophes in the colonies that contributed to colonized peoples’ de-development. American indigenous peoples decreased by 95%, Australian aborigines by 80%, and New Zealand Maoris by 60%. 126 The lands of depleted peoples were expropriated: by 1970, Maoris had 3% of their original land. 127 As many as 30 million people may have died in Indian famines rooted in colonial forced rural transition to cash relations, repression, and taxes. 128

Bairoch has observed that it is only a slight exaggeration to claim that all colonial histories before the mid-19th Century were also histories of slavery. 129 Slavery played a critical role in colonialism through the rise of multilateral trade in the Atlantic Basin and industrial capitalism in Europe and North America, especially in

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Britain. Africans were consumers and producers in this trade. By 1800, slave labor in the Americas constituted a third of the value of European commerce. As O’Brien notes,

Almost the whole of the increment to non-bullion trade between western Europe and the New World from 1600 to 1800 depended directly and indirectly on the exchange of tropical foodstuffs, tobacco and industrial raw materials, cultivated basically with slave labor and exchanged for manufactured goods and commercial services produced by Europeans.

Great losses occurred through African slavery and forced labor. Some 11-12 million Africans were carried away to the Americas, 2.6 million in British vessels. After the transatlantic slave trade was abolished, Europeans continued to support Africa’s domestic slave trade, by exchanging arms for slave-produced commodities. Europeans in countries that abolished the slave trade outfitted slavers of countries that had not and bought their slave-produced commodities, especially cotton from the southern US.

In large part due to slavery and colonialism, from 1650-1900 Africa’s population only grew from 100 to 120 million, while Europe’s rose from 103 to 423 and Asia’s from 257 to 857 million. Inkori estimates that absent the slave trade, sub-Saharan Africa would have had 112 million more people. Africa’s population stagnated or declined between 1750 and 1850; her share of world


population dropped from 13% in 1750 to 11% in 1900 and of Atlantic basin population from 30% in 1650 to 10% in 1850. Some scholars argue Africa’s population was actually halved by deaths from the seizure and export of slaves. Even in Mozambique, far from the West African center of the slave trade, about a million slaves were shipped off to the Americas, from a land of 3.5 million people. Deaths attending slavery also arose from slavers lowering food supplies by burning granaries, stealing crops and oxen, and disrupting harvests.

Demographic catastrophes occurred well into late colonialism, when Belgian Congo’s population fell by half — 10 million unnatural deaths attributable directly to colonialism, especially to forced labor. Colonizing countries, in contrast, gained the “demographic rewards of colonialism.” In 1750-1900, Britain’s population increased by five times, while India’s grew by less than three times. Wealth from the slave trade and colonies limited British emigration and reduced British mortality, while fertility grew as the accumulated capital created export industries and opportunities for child laborers.

Walter Rodney argued that the exchange of low-cost British goods for slaves de-industrialized Africa. For reasons related to


the weakening of Mogul state authority, 18th Century India, which had been industrializing, de-industrialized during the century of British East India Company encroachment.

India’s industrial debacle coincided with the establishment of British rule or hegemony . . . The potential competition of its economy could be stifled. No single episode was more decisive in the balance of the world’s resources than this shift in the sources [under British] control.

Colonial monopoly complexes contributed to the colonial world being subjected to “capitalist penetration without capitalist development.”

Colonial modes of production were precisely the circuits through which capital was drained out of the colonies in the form of bullion, consumption goods, raw materials and so on. The financing of primary accumulation outside the colonial world was their chief historical function . . . The colonial mode of production transmitted to the colonies the pressures of the accumulation process in the metropolis without unleashing any corresponding expansion in the forces of production.

There is debate over whether India further de-industrialized after direct colonialism began in 1857, but a renowned British historian of India has concluded that while on average over the years Indians’ income per capita was stagnant from 1757-1947, it likely


declined by more than 50% in the last half of the 19th Century.\textsuperscript{152} One study has shown that the real earnings of dependent cultivators (\textit{adimal}) in Chingleput was three times higher in 1795 than in 1976.\textsuperscript{153} British firms transferred so little technology to India that Indian entrepreneurs had to look for partners in other countries for that purpose.\textsuperscript{154} Meanwhile, Britain’s per capita income grew by 347% in the time it ruled India.\textsuperscript{155}

De-development in colonies was linked to both colonial profits being remitted for metropolitan industrialization and low-level spending by metropoles in their colonies. Only once before 1940 did British spending on colonial development exceed 0.1% of UK GDP,\textsuperscript{156} while income remitted from India alone was eight times that. Income from other colonies played a much larger role in metropolitan capital formation. In 1868-1930, the Dutch East Indies Company extracted 7.4%-10.3% of Indonesia’s national income per year — 17% in 1921-1938, with 10.5% remitted to Holland. Transfers from Indonesia amounted to between 5.5 and 8.9% of Dutch GDP.\textsuperscript{157} This ratio of colonial profits to GDP must be put in perspective. Comparing slavery’s contribution to British industrialization, Barbara Solow noted that in the US in 1980, the ratio of total corporate profits from domestic industries to GNP was 6%. The ratio of total corporate domestic profits to gross private domestic investment was over 40% and the ratio to investment in domestic plant and equipment was more than 55%.\textsuperscript{158} Thus, corporate profits of 6% of GNP could account most of US industrial investment. Transfers from Indonesia likely played a similar role in Dutch industrialization. If British spending on colonies is a guide to colonial

\textsuperscript{152} H.M. Hyndman, \textit{The Awakening of Asia}, London: Cassell & Co. 1919, p. 22.
spending generally, such transfers also far exceeded Dutch support for the colony.

Capital investment in colonies was typically very low; in India in 1860-1947 it averaged only 1-1.5%, with the vast majority involving railway building.\(^{159}\) India's annual growth in 1900-1946 was thus less than 1%.\(^{160}\) Some 60% of taxes went for defense and most of the oft-cited British contribution of schools, hospitals and roads was paid for by Indians themselves.\(^{161}\) In the 1950s, Britain still held that its colonies' development had to be financed mainly from their own resources.\(^{162}\)

Over two centuries, the distribution of world manufacturing output changed radically in favor of the now-developed states:

**Table 1: Distribution of world manufacturing output (in percentages)\(^{163}\)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>Other 3rd World</th>
<th>Developed states</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1750</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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While it is hard to fully gauge the degree of colonial de-industrialization, historians argue it was substantial. Colonizers crafted a folk wisdom that the West encountered already-impoverished Others. In fact, only among 10% of the world's population in 1770 was there "economic backwardness"; 90% were on a roughly equal plane of development. Parthasarathi found that 18th Century south Indian laborers had higher earnings than their British counterparts. Referring to a famed British commander, Goody notes:

On entering Murshidabad, the old capital of Bengal in 1757, Clive wrote: 'The city is extensive, populous and rich as the city of London, with this difference that there were individuals in the first possessing infinitely greater property than in the last city.' Similar words were used of Agra, Fatehpore, Lahore and many other Indian towns.

The de-industrialization of India led to growing dependence on agriculture, but rural development was in turn hampered by the high level of British taxation. Studies of pre-modern and early modern development levels and calculations by Bairoch and Maddison indicate the pre-colonial (future Third World) region had a higher level of urbanization than Europe and that much of the technology and forms of eco-

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nomic organization that Europe credits itself with inventing actually came from Asia and Africa.\textsuperscript{170} Bairoch concludes "there was a parity of income per capita for the average future Third World and developed countries before the latter region started to undergo the process of modern economic growth" that coincided with colonialism.\textsuperscript{171} Some countries were on a par with much of Western Europe until the early 19th Century.

Industries such as metal smelting, textiles and glass existed in pre-colonial Africa, especially West Africa,\textsuperscript{172} and, far from being anarchic, West Africa had structures that provided a modicum of law and order.\textsuperscript{173} Thornton shows West African iron and steel to have been at least as good as that of Europe at the outset of the slave trade. Colonizers blocked further African industrialization, even the production of consumer goods,\textsuperscript{174} and focused on extraction: mining accounted for 2% of African industry in 1910, but for most of it by the 1960 highpoint of decolonization.\textsuperscript{175} Western investment in Africa is still mainly in extractive industries: in 2003, 64% of US FDI in Africa was in oil.\textsuperscript{176}

Bairoch speaks of a "very large de-industrialization in India"\textsuperscript{177} and Von Albertini and Wirz state that "a drain of wealth engendered by India's dependency without doubt occurred."\textsuperscript{178} When the British intrusion began, India had a dynamic array of regions and states consolidating themselves and promoting industrialization and

\textsuperscript{170} Id.

\textsuperscript{171} Paul Bairoch, \textit{Economics and World History} . . . supra note 125, p. 108.


\textsuperscript{177} Paul Bairoch, \textit{Economics and World History} . . . supra note 125, pp. 88-92.

\textsuperscript{178} von Albertini and Wirz, \textit{European Colonial Rule} . . . supra note 96, p. 64.
urbanization. In the 18th and early 19th centuries, India produced a quarter of the world’s textiles, much of which was exported. India had native classes with requisite skills and capital to satisfy her demand for textiles. After the Crown took over in 1857, however, British textiles entered India duty-free, while Indian textiles were barred from Britain; 40-45% of British cotton textile exports went to India by 1873. In China, a measure of independence remained even after the two Opium Wars and, because the influx of Western goods started later, Bairoch finds a level of de-industrialization less than half that of India.

It is instructive to compare over time per-capita industrialization in parts of the world, including colonized India, semi-colonized China, Mexico (independent from 1821), Brazil (independent from 1822, but ruled by Portuguese monarchs until 1889), the whole Third World (mostly colonized), never-colonized Japan, and the whole developed world.

**Table 2: Comparative per capita industrialization**

(UK in 1900 = 100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>China</th>
<th>Brazil</th>
<th>Mexico</th>
<th>Third World</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>Developed States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1750</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
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<td>9</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Values</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
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<td>1980</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Industrialization levels for most countries were similar from 1750 to 1830, but in the next century of high colonialism, there was a growing divergence and strong correlation between colonization and de-industrialization or slow industrialization.

De-industrialization was only one aspect of de-development. India also paid for British military occupation, the salaries of its British officials, and interest on British loans.\textsuperscript{185} The huge indemnity exacted by Western powers and Japan after the Boxer Rebellion of 1900 “inhibited, if not incapacitated China’s economic growth.”\textsuperscript{186}

Colonial underdevelopment inflated metropolitan prosperity.\textsuperscript{187} Such development as took place was much more profitable for colonizing elites than for natives. To say a territory is a modern colony then is generally to convey that it profits its colonial masters at the expense of its colonial subjects. Nowhere was this more so than in Africa, which was reduced to exclusive European domains in disregard of pre-existing economic, cultural and linguistic ties among peoples. “Ruthless extractive action” shifted onto Africans the costs of rapidly establishing each European state’s dominions and protecting them from rivals.\textsuperscript{188} Colonial-era anthropological literature is replete with descriptions of “property dispossession,”

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“proletarianization,” and “rural depopulation,” while colonizers made themselves a herrenvolk or “race of bosses.”

The colonial master did not normally dig his own land physically, or clean his [place]. There was always a black man around to do the physical chores . . . [P]hysical work was the badge of the underprivileged, the lot of the lower castes. In this situation, it was the Black African.

Zambian colonial society, for example, was vertically stratified, with Europeans on top, Asians and Coloreds in the middle, and Africans at the bottom. The latter were employed in menial jobs and Europeans described African miners as their “tools.” There were huge differences in living standards between colonizers and colonized, the incomes of British in India, for example, were 100 times the Indian average.

The exploitation of modern colonies continues to adversely impact Africans, an impact aggravated by the neo-liberal policies fostered in recent decades by developed states and their IFIs. The attendant structural adjustment programs (SAPs) have reversed most gains made in the immediate post-colonial period and immiserated many Africans.

V. COLONIAL GOVERNANCE: POLITICAL AND RACIAL EXCLUSION

Natives in modern colonies have consistently been politically subordinate to colonizers. Discrimination was exceptionally harsh in Africa, but systematic even in such colonies as Hong Kong and the US possessions. The concept of a biological/cultural hierar-

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chy prevailed, epitomized by Ernest Renan’s claim that Chinese were by nature (dishonorable) manual workers, Africans were tillers of the soil, and Europeans masters and soldiers. Power resided with settlers or, in exploitation colonies, the governor and his expatriate lieutenants. All top bureaucrats were drawn from the metropole. India had the greatest native participation in administration, but in 135 years of British state rule, it was only in the last three decades, in anticipation of Britain’s retreat, that Indians were admitted to higher civil service ranks. A rough parity of Europeans and Indians was achieved only a few years before independence. \(198\)

In Hong Kong, the British governor appointed all members of governing institutions from 1842 until indirect elections were staged in 1985. Almost no Chinese served until after World War II.\(199\)

Elites claim colonialism had positive features, yet every colonial “achievement” was illusory. Colonialist “rule of law” did not include its basic prerequisite, legal equality. Until late, colonial legal systems were based on de jure racial discrimination and in their final days on race-based de facto inequalities. Western colonizers enacted harshly repressive laws, e.g. the French Code Noir of 1685, aimed specifically at denying slaves almost all rights.\(200\) Few colonized people were accorded citizenship.\(201\) In southern Vietnam in 1906, after 45 years of French rule, only 254 Vietnamese, of 15 million, were French citizens, by virtue of winning high French war decorations.\(202\) In Algeria, after a century of French colonization, only 7,817 of six million Algerians had qualified for citizenship, by


\(199\) Goodstadt, Uneasy Partners. . ., supra note 92, Ch. 5.


renouncing Islam. In French West Africa (apart from Senegal), of 15 million natives, fewer than 2,500 were citizens.

No colonies in their heyday saw natives enjoy rights equal to those of the colonialists.

The split of colonial law into one set of laws for foreigners and another for natives sometimes led to a blatant double standard of justice according to race, especially in settlement colonies such as Algeria, where there was an especially harsh and demeaning "code de l'indigénat" for the Algerians. A double standard of justice was also found in exploitation colonies such as Japanese Taiwan.

In Hong Kong, British judges punished Chinese defendants much more severely than Western defendants, while in colonial Taiwan 

[D]iscriminatory colonial measures . . . pertained to a wide range of matters, including education, intermarriage with Japanese, and requirements that Taiwanese firms acquire Japanese business partners. Many such measures were based on colonial ordinances (ritisrei) authorized by the governor-general. Among the harshest were the 1898 Bandit Punishment Ordinance, which in practice was applied only to the Taiwanese, and the 1904 Fine and Flogging Ordinance that related specifically to Taiwanese offenders.

Until the very late colonial era, Britain allowed assemblies only in settler colonies. Then, "making a virtue of necessity, [they] paid lip service to the idea [of using a Westminster model of government] and fancied that it had always been so." In India, British divide-and-rule policy undermined nation-building notions and racialized

and rigidified the caste system.\textsuperscript{209} Relying on traditional patronage networks, Britain set up an electoral system after World War I based on religious group electorates, leading to elections as ethnic censuses, inter-communal violence, excluded minority communities and, at independence, a partition in which hundreds of thousands of lives were lost.\textsuperscript{210} British India thus produced the patronage-laden, identity-based electoral politics that passes for democracy in India today, as well as a precedent for occupied Iraq.\textsuperscript{211}

The “rule of law” enforced new forms of land rights and contracts in India that led to vast increases in heritable indebtedness and rural landlessness, so that at independence more than half of India’s population lived under the (very low) poverty line.\textsuperscript{212} Wherever there was resistance in the British Empire, it was met with extra-legal repression, as seen for example in the horrific tortures, medical experiments and killings meted out to more than 80,000 Indian political prisoners sent to Andaman Islands from 1857 to 1939.\textsuperscript{213}

While aspects of the colonial economy, such as infrastructure creation, seemingly served colonizers and colonized, benefits were highly asymmetrical and training was minimal. Many ex-colonies ended up with little human capital.\textsuperscript{214} Colonial rail “networks” were much less dense than in the metropoles. Lines were designed to facilitate troop movements and extraction of natural resources under conditions of unequal exchange, to stimulate exports of commodities from interiors to ports to metropoles, rather than connecting local and regional markets, and to allow grain to be shipped out of colonies even during periods of scarcity. They were staffed by so


few of the colonized that, at independence, crises in continuing operations were inevitable.215

Contrary to colonialist claims that they brought social welfare to their subjects, the well-being of many colonized peoples actually deteriorated. The nutritional levels and general health of South Indian laborers declined in the second half of the 19th Century216 and from 1872-1921 — Rudyard Kipling's "glorious imperial half-century" — Indian life expectancy fell by 20%.217 Colonialists spent little on social benefits, like medical care. An early 20th Century governor in Ghana noted that "the Medical Establishment [was] maintained almost exclusively for the benefit of the European population."218 There were two doctors per 100,000 Vietnamese in 1939.219 The colonial regime in India hindered the development of the native drug industry.220 Some colonies received scattered social benefits in the "compassionate period," but this was more than counter-balanced by late colonial destructiveness.

In many colonies, all communication with government had to be in the colonizers' language and the imported church was privileged. In Macao, legal documents were only in Portuguese, the language of 2% of residents. The Catholic Church, representing 6% of the population, was charged with schooling the natives.221 French colonialists termed Vietnamese an inferior language, incapable of expressing abstract or scientific reasoning, and embarked on replacing the Chinese-based educational system with one that would cre-

ate an "Asiatic France." Lord Macaulay, future president of India's First Law Commission, stated that "A single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia," and sought to create a class of persons "Indian in color and blood, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect." The farcical insouciance of colonial education is exemplified by a generation of dark-hued children in French colonies assigned a history text that began "Nos ancêtres les Gaulois étaient grands et blonds" (our ancestors the Gauls were tall and blond).

Colonial education was deliberately underdeveloped. French West Africa's 20 million people in 1934 included 600 state secondary and post-secondary students. Sierra Leone had 3% of children attending school. The percentage was even lower in Gambia and Northern Nigeria. At the peak of colonial emancipation in 1961, 80% of Africans were illiterate. In Zambia, at independence, less than 0.5% of population had finished primary school. There were 120 university graduates. Tanzania's 12 million included 150 university graduates at independence; Mozambique's 10 million (98% illiterate) included less than 50. The Belgian Congo, a country of 14 million at independence, had 136 high school and a dozen university graduates, and no native secondary-school teachers. Vietnam in 1939 had 20 million people, but only one university with 700 students. Even in India, Britain's "jewel in the crown," some 85% of the population was illiterate at independence and there were perhaps 20,000 university students among 340 million peo-

ple. The very low level of colonial education in Africa contrasts with the “enormous progress made in the early post-independence period.” The 1960 gross enrollment ratio (GER) for primary schools in all of Sub-Saharan Africa was 36% (compared to 67% for Asia and 73% for Latin America); in 1980 it was 80%. The 1960 GER for secondary schools was 3% for Africa (compared to 21% for Asia and 14% for Latin America). The 1990 sub-Saharan African GER for secondary schools was 14%.

The transfer to colonies of democratic institutions is largely mythical. Colonial rulers pursued their interests at the expense of public welfare, so that after independence African elites inherited state structures and a style of governance from the colonial era that were illiberal and geared toward enforcing law and order rather than the promotion of citizen welfare. Traditions of authoritarian rule, paternalism, and dirigisme were embedded in the institutions the new leaders inherited and kept.

Contrary to the claims of Roberts and Keegan, quoted above, late colonialists were neither benevolent nor willing to leave. More than 100,000 Kikuyu in Kenya died, many by hangings and torture in concentration camps, as Britain fought anti-colonial rebels from 1952-1960. As many as a million Algerians were killed during the 1954-1962 colonialist attempt to keep Algeria French.


Colonial status carried a common experience of powerlessness. The contrast between colonizers' power, rights and interests and the powerlessness, lack of rights, and destruction of interests of the colonized, is evident in the work of historians and, in some periods, has been widely understood: in 1942, at the height of US promotion of goodwill toward wartime Britain, a poll found that 60% of Americans thought of the British as “oppressors.” They did so because they recognized the huge gap the world's principal colonialists had created between themselves and their colonial subjects.

As Kriekhaus has said of Europe and its peripheries, “by far the best colonial legacy was not to be colonized at all. Countries that avoided European colonization, as in select parts of Asia, frequently enjoyed highly efficacious states and societies, resulting in rapid economic growth.” Similarly, Walter Rodney held that “The only positive development in colonialism was when it ended.” Colonialism was a catastrophe for the colonized. The same, however, cannot be said about China's practices in Africa.

VI. CHINA'S BEHAVIOR IN AFRICA

China was a victim of semi-colonialism, particularly of Western impositions, yet is now accused of colonialism in Africa, above all by Western media. A journalist writing in the Guardian has claimed “China is driven by the same needs and compulsions that brought the Belgians to Congo, the British and the Dutch to South Africa, the Germans to Tanzania, the French to parts of the Sahara and the Portuguese to Angola and Mozambique. The west had it once; now it is China's turn.”RW Johnson of South Africa’s Sunday Times, has approvingly quoted an economist as stating, “The Chinese are

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240. See Kathy Walker, Chinese Modernity and the Peasant Path: Semicolonialism in the Northern Yangzi Delta, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999. Many Africans assume China’s experience makes it a more sympathetic partner: a Nigerian newspaper has editorialized that “What makes the relationship promising is that it is developing between two independent entities that have had similar and unpleasant experiences with colonialism, imperialism, exploitation and domination.” “The China Threat,” This Day (TD), December 12, 2006.
getting away with claiming that they aren’t like the other colonialists, but Africans aren’t fools. The Chinese are far more ruthless than the Brits ever were.” A Washington Post op-ed has queried “China Colonizing Africa?” and implied that it is.\textsuperscript{243}

Unlike the US, which passively or actively backed colonialism from the 1950s to 1970s\textsuperscript{244} and apartheid until the late 1980s,\textsuperscript{245} China opposed colonialism.\textsuperscript{246} Africans still acknowledge PRC support.\textsuperscript{247} Premier WEN Jiabao thus can argue “The hat of ‘neo-colonialism’ doesn’t fit China” because, as a victim of colonial aggression, it knows “the suffering caused by colonial rule and the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item See “Togolese President Eyes Beijing Summit for Africa-China Cornerstone,” \textit{XH}, October 21, 2006. “Ethiopian FM: China, Africa Stand on Firm Foundation of Trust, Confidence,” \textit{XH}, November 3, 2006. African elites often link China’s anti-colonial aid to current relations. Mozambique President Armando Guebuza has said that “Chinese cooperation with Africa is motivated by a genuine desire to help African countries achieve, as quickly as possible, their social and economic development – just as, in the past, China had helped them achieve liberation from colonial rule.” Agencia de Informacao de Mozambique, November 6, 2006, in \textit{Africa News (AN)}, November 6, 2006.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
need to fight colonialism.” Unlike Western conservatives who glorify colonialism, Chinese take umbrage when called colonialists:

[Some Westerners] are slandering China’s development of relations with Africa as ‘neo-colonialism,’ saying that China is ‘exploiting Africa’... But shouldn’t such words make Westerners blush with shame? They may use any other term to slander China, but they shouldn’t use this term ‘colonialism.’ As everyone knows, colonialism after the Industrial Revolution was the dirtiest page that the Western powers left in the history of world development... China has the moral commanding point in Africa.

Vice Premier WU Yi has contrasted “extremely barbarian [sic] economic depredation” of 19th and early 20th century powers with China’s “peaceful path to development.” Assistant Foreign Minister HE Yafei has said “Other major powers in history had grown through ‘colonization and exploitation and invasion and aggression, but these methods go nowhere in the current world.’” China publicizes statements of international and African officials who deny it is colonialist.


249. ZHANG Feng. Zhong Fei guanxi bei zhi xin zhiminhui: Shi shi Feizhou zhengzhengde huoban?(China-Africa relations accused of Being neo-colonialist: who is the true partner of Africa?), Huanqiu Shibao, September 5, 2006, p. 11. A member of HU Jintao's delegation on his February 2007 trip to Africa said that “Beijing had been stung by the suggestion that China could develop a colonial relationship with Africa.” Alec Russell, “Hu Breaks Silence to Allay Continent's Fears of Neo-Colonialism,” FT, February 8, 2007, p. 11. Understandings of colonialism may be problematic even in the PRC however. A Chinese Academy of Social Sciences scholar has been quoting as stating that “China’s behavior has more in common with that of the colonizers. Since we are mainly there to make money and get hold of their resources... It’s hard to see the difference.” “Human Rights are No Bar to China’s Hunt for Resources,” Economist, January 21, 2006.


example, has said “African leaders and their people will not be cheated by lies that China’s presence in Africa is neo-colonialism.”\textsuperscript{252} The full flavor of the PRC response to colonialism claims is seen in a diplomat’s article in a Kenyan newspaper.

Western powers committed numerous crimes, including the slave trade, in their exploitation of Africa. . . . [They] molded African countries into their material suppliers and product-dumping markets, which resulted in abnormal economic structures in many African countries [and] introduced divide-and-rule tactics to Africa . . . thereby undermining the traditional African social and economic order . . . As a result, African countries have been in a poor and backward state since they were granted independence. Even today, Western multinational corporations manipulate those industries that are of the utmost importance to African countries’ economies, such as heavy industry, mining and manufacturing . . . \textsuperscript{253}

PRC media have noted Jack Straw’s statement that China does in Africa today what Britain did there 150 years ago and Western depictions of China’s actions as “unbridled plunder of African raw materials and natural resources driven by narrow commercial interests.”\textsuperscript{254} They respond that such claims are made not by Africans, but by Westerners who “harbor evil intentions in a vain attempt to sow discord between China and Africa” and seek to block a “new Sino-African strategic partnership” by creating an “African version of the China threat theory.” PRC writers insist Africans “know best what colonialism is” and reject such accusations.\textsuperscript{255} A survey of

\textsuperscript{252} “Africa will not be Cheated by False Accusation against China: Kaunda,” \textit{XH}, October 26, 2006.

\textsuperscript{253} ZHU Jing, “China is a Sincere Friend of Africa,” \textit{The Nation (Kenya)}, October 18, 2006. For similar expositions, see “Who are the ‘Neo-Colonialists’ in Africa,” People’s Daily Online, June 18, 2006, <http://english.people’s.dailypress.cn/20060626/print20060626_277401.html>.

\textsuperscript{254} \textit{Xifang danyou zhanlue liyi shouzhiheng chuyan chouhua Feizhou guojia ‘xiang dong kan’: Wen Zong bo ‘xin zhimin zhuyi’}, (The West, worrying about its strategic interests, seeks a counterbalance through vilifying the African States’ policy of ‘Looking East’: premier Wen refutes ‘Neo-Colonialism’) \textit{Wen Wei Po} (WWP)(Hong Kong), August 19, 2006, p. A17.

African opinion leaders, carried out by Xinhua and the *International Herald Tribune*, is said to have found that most Africans do not support a "China threat" thesis.\textsuperscript{256}

To properly be regarded as colonialist, China would have to practice a colonial mode of accumulation through forcing African elites to make decisions it favors, engaging in racial oppression, and enriching China through monopolizing African resources, trade and labor. China does not directly control any African state. Instead, two states, the US and UK, directly control most of the island territories — now termed possessions, commonwealths, dependencies, protectorates or freely associated states — that have a total population of some two million and are the world's actually-existing colonies. The UN Committee of 24, which oversees decolonization, lists ten UK and three US colonies, as well as one French and one New Zealand colony.\textsuperscript{257} Puerto Rico, more populous than the other colonies combined, is also widely deemed one, despite its removal from the UN list under US pressure in 1953. Puerto Ricans lack voting representation in the US Congress and a vote in presidential elections. Puerto Rico is very poor compared to its metropole, with per capita income one-third the US average and half of residents living below the poverty line. Economically stagnant since the 1970s, it has high unemployment.\textsuperscript{258}


Western media cast two African states as indirectly controlled by China. Sudan and Zimbabwe, not coincidentally, these two states are among those that the US and UK deem "rogue states."\(^{259}\) Neither has been shown to be PRC-dominated. Instead, the UN’s envoy allegedly has headed a parallel military/civilian structure that issued orders to Sudanese authorities.\(^{260}\) Libya, Eritrea and Sudan have denounced UN “neocolonialism” in taking up a US demand to place UN forces in Darfur without Sudan’s consent, a demand the European Union (EU), African Union (AU) and Arab League (AL) also oppose.\(^{261}\)

Much has been written implying China influences Sudan by shielding it from UN sanctions and through arms sales, trade and investment.\(^{262}\) Contrary to Western media reports however,\(^{263}\) China has abstained from, not vetoed, Security Council (SC) resolutions on Sudan.\(^{264}\) It insists it uses its own channels to try to in-

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263. See, e.g., “Big Business Brings Beijing to Africa,” \(BBC News\), April 23, 2006 (“Beijing has used its veto at the United Nations to block pressure on Sudan’s leaders to halt the ongoing violence in Darfur”). Michael Vatikiotis, “Can China Remain Friends with Tyrants?” \(Straits Times\), November 10, 2006 (“China has blocked several UN resolutions aimed at forcing the government in Khartoum to prevent further violence in the Darfur region”).
264. “Outnumbered African Force to Stay in Darfur,” \(CSM\), September 22, 2006, p. 4. Speaking of Sudan, US Secretary of State Condeleeza Rice has said “we have been able to get Security Council resolutions with at least no Chinese effort to block them.” “Remarks by Secretary of State . . .,” Federal News Service, September 27, 2006. From 1972-2006, the PRC cast four vetoes: twice in 1972 (against Bangladesh’s UN admission and in opposition to a Western-sponsored resolution on the Middle East), and twice in the late 1990s over issues connected to Taiwan: the US cast 79 vetoes, about half were to support Israel and many others were (before 1989) to support apartheid South Africa. Global Policy Forum, “Subjects of UN Security Council Vetoes” (1946-2006), <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/membship/veto/vetosuj.htm>.
duce Sudan to modify its actions and, in 2006, the UN head of peacekeeping and US Special Envoy on Sudan praised the PRC for helping to persuade Sudan to accept a hybrid UN-AU force in Darfur. All permanent SC members, apart from the US, as well as the AU and AL, oppose economic sanctions against Sudan. While decrying “genocide” in Darfur, the White House itself opposed US legislation to further sanction Sudan and blocked SC expansion of the list of sanctioned officials to include Sudan’s intelligence head, who is linked to atrocities in Darfur, but has helped the US infiltrate Sudanese Islamists.

Contrary to US and UK media, China’s dislike of economic sanctions has a basis apart from oil. Its ambassador to South Africa has observed that “From a practical consideration, embargoes and sanctions can’t solve problems, just like armed invasion cannot

Britain is said to have “vetoed 32 resolutions on Zimbabwe, seven times acting alone.” Roland Watson, “Americans Face Prospect of War Without Britain,” The Times, Mar 12, 2003.


268. It is unclear whether the US administration believes the genocide charge it has made, one disputed by the UN and EU, whose inquiries found crimes against humanity, but not systematic genocide. Rupert Cornwell, “Darfur Killings Not Genocide, Says UN Group,” Independent, January 31, 2005; Rory Carroll, “Sudan Massacres are not Genocide, says EU,” Guardian, August 10, 2004. In 2005, Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick, in charge of the Darfur problem for the US, characterized it as “a tribal war that has been exacerbated by other conditions,” while Jendayi Frazer, the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, put the blame for violence in Darfur on “a mix of general banditry, rebel forces, and Arab militias who, she says, may be supported by the [Sudanese] government.” Jonathan Karl, “Dead End in Darfur?” WS Vol. 11, No. 13, December 12, 2005.


solve problems." A China Institute of International Studies researcher has said that “Sanctions cannot solve problems, it impoverishes local people.” Indeed, studies of sanctions imposed since the early 20th Century show they rarely have a positive impact. Their effect on peoples can be as severe as the use of force and they often strengthen the regimes they are supposed to weaken, while adversely affecting human rights.

Western media assert a unique role for China in Sudan, that “Chinese energy contracts with Sudan are freeing Khartoum to pursue its murderous campaign in Darfur.” Yet oil is highly fungible; Sudan can easily sell it on the tight world market. Because Sudan’s economy is booming, it attracts investment in oil and other industries from a variety of countries, most prominently United Arab Emirates, India, and Malaysia, yet only China is condemned for investing in Sudan. Contrary to the impression US media create, there is also no UN arms embargo against Sudan, but an US/EU

274. “Unscrupulous Investments,” Independent, November 18, 2006, p. 36
embargo. Russia is the primary supplier of arms to Sudan and China seemingly has not been much involved in recent sales.  

Sudan is thus not particularly dependent on China for sustaining the regime or waging war. The China-Sudan relationship is far from implicating even the degree of control the US exercises in Iraq through its involvement with security forces, promulgation of Iraq's legal code, propping up of particular political forces, etc.  

Still less does it resemble the high degree of dominance exercised by classic modern colonialists and neocolonialists.

There is also no indication China exercises substantial leverage in Zimbabwe. The Africanist Chris Alden has said that “for the Chinese there are limits to their engagements: they are not willing to commit themselves wholesale . . . In the end, Zimbabwe can hardly pay for the things China sells them. It is not a good market.”  

It was noted in 2005 that despite Zimbabwe’s “Look East” policy, China had to date only spent some US$100m on highly unstable Zimbabwe.  

China/Zimbabwe trade amounts to 0.5% of total PRC/Africa trade and even that is insecure, due to Zimbabwean leaders’ complaints about Chinese imports being too competitive.  

South Africa is in fact the country with leverage in


279. In a chapter on China and Zimbabwe in his 2006 book, Ian Taylor alludes to “Mugabe’s mortgaging of Zimbabwe to China” and to charges “China is ‘colonising’ Zimbabwe.” His empirical discussion, however, shows China engaging in unexceptional trade and investments, by African standards, and no indication of political dominance. Taylor, China and Africa . . ., supra note 236, pp. 125-126.  


281. “Mbeki Indicates He May Pay Off Mugabe’s IMF Debt,” South Scan (South Africa), July 31, 2005.  

Zimbabwe, whose electricity, grain and oil imports it controls. Scholars in South Africa term its position sub-imperialist or dominance of Zimbabwe.\footnote{283}

China has sold arms to Zimbabwe, but as with Sudan, there is a US/EU, rather than a UN arms embargo. Even the UK — which pushed for the embargo from the year 2000, after Zimbabwe renounced an IMF SAP and took farmland from British “kith and kin” — later sold Zimbabwe arms components.\footnote{284} US/EU economic sanctions have thus far mainly produced lowered standards of living for average Zimbabweans and the expulsion of NGOs from Zimbabwe.\footnote{285} As its opposition notes, Zimbabwe’s economy is now so precarious it cannot pay for the arms it purchases, actual investment by China is minimal, President Mugabe has himself complained of “very modest results” from the relationship, and PRC ties with Zimbabwe are so shaky that top officials do not visit.\footnote{286}

Politically, Zimbabwe and most African states recognize the PRC, not Taiwan, and vote for measures important to China in international organizations, such as the 2006 election of a Hong Kong person to head the World Health Organization.\footnote{287} That however hardly amounts to a “China-African empire,” as one Western writer


has dubbed it.\textsuperscript{288} Imperial links generally have a strategic-military aspect, yet as the \textit{New York Times} China/Africa specialist has noted “China cannot so far be accused of using its advance into Africa to bolster its strategic position in the world. Indeed, military concerns have played a remarkably small part in China’s return to the continent as a major player.”\textsuperscript{289}

China is also in no position to promote racial hierarchy in Africa. Our interviews with Chinese migrants in South Africa, Tanzania, Ghana and elsewhere reveal racial prejudice. Popular anti-black racism has been displayed for more than a quarter-century in reform-era China and ours and other scholars’ interviews show Africans there are well aware of prejudice.\textsuperscript{290} Racism, however, is not officially urged and censorship keeps racist views out of PRC media.\textsuperscript{291} A major PRC newspaper would not publish anything akin to what was said by Peregrine Worsthorne, editor of the \textit{Sunday Telegraph}, the unofficial organ of the UK’s then-ruling Conservative Party: “Africa will never enjoy the blessings of peace and prosperity and escape the curses of civil war, famine, pestilence and genocide, until the white man once again takes over political control.”\textsuperscript{292} Still less would PRC media justify slavery, as \textit{Washington Post} writer Robert Novak did in saying that “If it hadn’t been for slavery, [African-Americans] would not even be in America.”\textsuperscript{293}

Proponents of the China-as-colonialist discourse mischaracterize China-Africa economic asymmetries as colonialism. South African President Thabo Mbeki said in 2006 that he believes there is a danger China may act like a colonial power by buying Africa’s raw


materials, while selling her manufactured goods. That view mis-apprehends colonialism: raw material/manufactured goods trade has long characterized developed countries’ exchanges with both colonized and non-colonized less-developed lands, as well as urban-rural exchanges. As a Chinese scholar has put it, “We cannot mix colonialism with exploiting resources. If we view exploiting resources as colonial behavior, we will find the whole world is now conducting colonial actions.”

Colonial economic dominance featured much more than exploitation of raw materials or their exchange for manufactured goods. It was a systematic privileging of colonizers as to every major aspect of colonial economies, from which they excluded third parties. Raw materials sales under colonialism were often based on forced labor and cropping and involved colonial government or state-chartered company monopsony, as with sugar in Fiji, cotton in Zaire, and opium in India. Indeed, monopsony and oligopsony have returned to some African countries after IMF/World Bank SAPs that forced the abolition of developing states’ commodity boards. For example, after the Cote d’Ivoire cocoa marketing board was abolished, cocoa sales had to go largely to the three huge Western firms that account for two-thirds of world-wide purchases.

That Africa mainly exchanges raw materials for foreign manufactured goods does disadvantage Africa. That alone, however, does not indicate a colonial relationship — which presupposes the exercise of political control — but only a constant feature of capitalism. The supply of raw materials does not in itself create political

subordination. In 1837, German political economist Friedrich List noted that the US sold half its exports to Britain and these were all raw materials; one-sixth of British exports went to the US and these were all manufactured goods. The British ambassador to the US claimed that this put the Americans within Britain’s power. List replied that Britain could not do without US raw materials, which were factors in the manufacture of goods worth ten times the value of the raw materials, but the US could buy from other countries the same kind of goods it bought from Britain. He concluded “Consequently England is in the power of the United States in two ways.”

Again, this is not to contend that a raw materials/manufactured goods pattern of exchange is not exploitative, but that this pattern does not in itself create the political asymmetry always conditions colonialism. If it did, colonialists would not need to intervene politically, as they have always done.

It should also be noted that some economists are advising African countries to focus even more on selling commodities and “move out of manufactured goods,” because China’s emergence has lowered the price of manufactured goods and raised the price of many commodities. While the idea of putting industrialization on the back burner is (and should be) unacceptable to most Africans, the proposition is advanced by Westerners, not Chinese. Indeed, when Mbeki said a raw materials/manufactured goods exchange pattern could be colonial, he added that China’s leaders anticipated that prospect and “Therefore they took a decision they must work with the African continent in order to develop manufacturing capability.”

According to the PRC, nearly 50% of its exports to Africa in 2005 were “high value added products, such as machinery, electronic equipment and high- and new-tech products.”


reports indicate machinery and equipment are important PRC exports to the continent.\textsuperscript{302} Even a China-as-colonialist proponent has said “China has grabbed oil, minerals, wood and cotton in a mutually beneficial exchange for low-cost industrial machinery and high-tech equipment.”\textsuperscript{303}

Thabo Mbeki’s comments actually may have been made to induce China to buy more industrial goods from South Africa.\textsuperscript{304} In any case, while purchases of natural resources from Africa by more developed countries will continue to be exploitative, the degree of exploitation may be mitigated if China realizes a long-term strategy: it seeks to secure commodity assets at the source, through negotiations with African governments, thereby bypassing international market pricing set by the West’s major commodity exchanges.\textsuperscript{305}

While three-fourths of US FDI in Africa is in resources, where few local jobs are created, the World Bank reports that 64% of PRC FDI there from 1979-2000 was in manufacturing and 28% in resources.\textsuperscript{306} There are now many Chinese-owned factories in Africa.\textsuperscript{307} Chinese invest also in exploitative extraction, but their activities are arguably little different from that of other foreign investors and, where different, may not be worse. The Africanist Stephen Chan has noted that “Chinese investment in extractive industries is actually very thoughtful. If we look at Zambia for instance, India was in there before the Chinese in terms of the mining sector, on an


\textsuperscript{303} Stevenson, “Chinese Moves . . .,” \textit{supra} note 7.


asset stripping basis, and the Chinese are not doing that.” In terms of export competition, there is little overlap between China and Africa: in 2001, the export similarity index was 4%, by far the lowest export overlap between China and any region in the world. Significant only for textile exporters, such as South Africa and Lesotho, it was small for Uganda (8%), Ethiopia (4%) and Nigeria (1.7%). Concerns that Chinese firms are shrinking Africa’s industry are thus generally misplaced. As a South African researcher has emphasized,

These concerns seem to be arising from other foreign multinationals, since most of the areas in which Chinese corporates have shown an interest do not involve competition with local African companies, but rather with their foreign counterparts. . . [T]he products and services that Chinese companies offer, especially in terms of telecommunications and construction, are considerably less expensive than those of European or South African corporates.

There have been job losses in several African countries due in part to expanded PRC textile exports to the continent and the world. An OECD study notes, however, that Chinese have also invested in the African textile industry: for example, half the textile enterprises in Ghana and two-thirds in Benin are Chinese-funded and China has pledged to open textile processing centers and clothing production plants in other West African countries. Economic Partnership Agreements between the EU and African regions should encourage Chinese to produce in these regions, in order to


311. Some South African analysts argue that decline in their country’s textile and clothing industry has less to do with China than with the informalizing and deskilling of labor, which diminishes the quality and salability of goods. “Lesotho Shows Textile Woes Are About More than China.” BD, July 1, 2006.
access European markets.\textsuperscript{312} Meanwhile, China has capped its textile exports to South Africa.\textsuperscript{313} Textile industries in such countries as Lesotho and Madagascar, hard hit by the early 2005 end to US quotas on PRC textiles and garments, have recovered, due to state encouragement of production of higher value goods for niche markets.\textsuperscript{314}

The World Bank has identified poor infrastructure as a major endogenous factor inhibiting African growth.\textsuperscript{315} Its Vice President for Africa has remarked that the cost of making a shirt in many African countries is no different from that in China, but when the shirt leaves the factory, the costs of inefficient infrastructure is a factor that makes it much more expensive.\textsuperscript{316} Financing by China’s Exim Bank for African infrastructure in 2006 was $12.6b, much more than OECD aid for infrastructure.\textsuperscript{317} Developed countries largely stopped funding infrastructure projects decades ago. PRC firms are said to produce it for as little as 25 percent of the cost of Western firms.\textsuperscript{318} Western firms typically expect 15-25\% profits rates; most PRC firms expect less than 10\% and many accept 3-5\%.\textsuperscript{319} In 2006, there were over 600 Chinese infrastructure projects in Africa.\textsuperscript{320} PRC firms are carrying out about one-third of all ongoing road construction projects in Mozambique.\textsuperscript{321} China has a $3 billion trade with Nigeria alone in infrastructure construction, power generation and telecommunications and in 2006 was awarded an $8b contract to build a 1,315 km Lagos-Kano rail-


\textsuperscript{316} “What is Africa’s Next Biggest Challenge?” \textit{XH}, June 2, 2006.

\textsuperscript{317} David White, “A Spectacular Resurgence,” \textit{FT}, November 21, 2006, p. 2

\textsuperscript{318} Kurlantzick, “Beijing’s Safari . . .” \textit{supra} note 297, p. 4


A Western economist has noted that China’s contribution to infrastructure building has revalued Africa’s assets.\(^{323}\)

An African newspaper has said that China’s acceptance of natural resource swaps in lieu of payment helps some countries “go around the Byzantine international financial system.”\(^{324}\) Thus, China’s 2006 infrastructure loan to Equatorial Guinea of $2b is interest-free and repayable with oil. The interest rate on $3b in PRC loans to Angola, also repayable in oil, is 0.25%.\(^{325}\) An Angola expert notes that “Obviously, the financial profit motive was not the main driving force behind the Chinese deal.”\(^{326}\) A Sudanese imam has said of the 1,600 km, $15b, partly PRC-built, pipeline from southern Sudan to the Red Sea that it exists “through the administrative transfer mode, where ultimately we shall own it without having loans and interests to repay.”\(^{327}\)

PRC firms rarely compete with local firms in Africa’s construction and infrastructure sectors, usually employ many local workers and, when regulations are enforced, produce high standard work.\(^{328}\) Many Africans are pleased the West has an efficient competitor for such projects.\(^{329}\) PRC firms are often the only foreign bidders where work conditions are tough. Thus, four PRC firms and one domestic firm bid to build the Merawi dams in Ethiopia and Chinese companies are carrying out one third of ongoing road construction projects in Mozambique.\(^{330}\) The head of the US-Angola

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324. “We have Read Africa’s Future, and It is Written in Chinese . . .” *East African*, November 7, 2006.
329. “China is a Friend, but Let’s Watch it,” *Nation (Kenya)*, November 7, 2006.
China, the West, and “Colonialism” in Africa

Chamber of Commerce has said that Chinese “were the only ones on the horizon that were willing to come in” to build Angola’s infrastructure. An East African newspaper has opined that China is “investing in areas that Western aid agencies and private investors ignore, such as infrastructure, health, communications, industry and agriculture.”

Chinese who participate in African infrastructure projects live under circumstances not at all comparable to colonialists or, for that matter to most expatriate Westerners on the continent. Many, in fact, lead lives not very different from most Africans and are famous among them for their hard work, including participation in physical labor. Hundreds of thousands of Chinese have migrated to Africa in the past decade. Most work as small merchants or infrastructure project managers, engineers and workers. Chinese working on such projects receive a developing country salary, thus cutting costs to the host country. PRC engineers in Angola reportedly receive about US$500 a month, live 2-3 in a room and cook for themselves. There are no characteristic of large plantations in colonial Africa. The few Chinese-owned mines are not among the largest. In general then, Chinese in Africa are not yet a herrenvolk and not perceived as such by Africans.

There is thus no substantial resemblance between China’s activities in Africa and the colonial mode of exploitation, or even semi-colonialism — that “constellation of interventions, practices, institutions, and policies through which foreign imperialists established positions of advantage and semiautonomous operation – but

335. For example, the Chinese-owned Chambishi copper mine employs 2,200 of 39,000 Zambian copper miners. The country’s two largest copper mines are Canadian and Indian-owned, with other large mines owned by Canadian, South African and Swiss firms. Christian Aid, A Rich Seam: Who Benefits from Rising Commodity Prices?, London: Christian Aid, 2007, p. 21.
not rule – for economic exploitation.”336 Foreigners gained privileges in semi-colonial lands by armed intrusions and forcing subordinate countries to alter their political and economic systems in exchange for loans and aid, practices now associated with Western powers, not China. The US has a “one percent doctrine,” in which force or threat is used “to guide the behavior of anyone with the temerity to acquire destructive weapons or, in any way, flout the authority of the United States”337. Meanwhile, China is said to be “keen to differentiate its Africa policy from those of the former colonial powers by stressing its hands-off approach;” a PRC diplomat in South Africa has put it that “Nonintervention is our brand, like intervention is the Americans’ brand.”338 China’s development discourse “is explicitly non-prescriptive, employing a language of ‘no strings attached,’ equality and mutual benefit.”339 Even Botswana President Festus Mogae, a leader thoroughly associated with liberal democracy, has said that “China treats us as equals, while the west treats us as former subjects.”340

Finally, many Western analysts who do not call China colonialist nevertheless term PRC Africa policies “mercantilist.”341 Mercantilism was a 17th and 18th century system that posited a finite global volume of trade. UK editorialists even refer to “naked” or “crude” mercantilism342 and confuse it with raw materials/manufactured goods exchanges or efforts to buy resources. Based on private firm activity, it involved state promotion of specific exports, restriction of specific imports, high tariff barriers, and pursuit of gold bullion and trade surpluses. Mercantilist Britain, for example, enforced laws intended to exclude all foreign merchants from its

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southern American colonies and require that manufactured goods, slaves, capital and credit all be obtained from British sources.\textsuperscript{343}

China’s behavior in Africa contains no mercantilist elements. The PRC does not seek a trade surplus with Africa, but has something of a deficit.\textsuperscript{344} It does not push specific exports to Africa,\textsuperscript{345} but supports trade generally; it does not restrict most imports from Africa, but facilitates many by abolishing or lowering tariffs.\textsuperscript{346} In contrast, the US and EU curb, through high tariffs, certain agricultural imports from Africa and subsidize their own farmers.\textsuperscript{347} It is also reductionist to single out PRC efforts to obtain commodities as “mercantilism.” Developed countries that require products take the same approach to getting them. It has been noted, for example, that

In the two other African countries [apart from Sudan] most often cited as cases of Chinese disregard of human rights, Angola and Equatorial Guinea, Western and Asian oil companies are no less enthusiastic than their Chinese


counterparts in seeking contracts, but are getting outbid by Beijing’s willingness to pay high prices and to bundle oil contracts with generous government loans and investment.\textsuperscript{348}

“Mercantilism” is used as a political caricature, not an analytical category. It was a system well-suited to developing European colonialism and is out-of-sync with modern economics; hence the attempt to attach it to PRC activities in Africa. As a group of South African economic analysts have stressed, China’s involvement is reinvigorating African economies largely played-out by Western forces, so that “In terms of historical precedent, Africa is to China today what Australia and Argentina were to the US and continental Europe in the late 19th century: a resource-rich region supplying resource-short regions going through their most resource-intensive stage of economic development — industrial takeoff and the massive urbanization associated with it.”\textsuperscript{349}

\section*{VII. POLITICS OF THE CHINA-AS-COLONIALIST DISCOURSE}

The China-as-colonialist discourse has ideological aims analogous to those that analysts adumbrate for the Pope’s characterization of Islam. The discourse serves to

1) demonstrate the superiority of liberal political systems
2) combat relativism in the political sphere
3) present Western influence as necessary to African advancement
4) occlude the history of colonial offenses against colonized peoples
5) vindicate Western neo-liberal opposition to so-called state-centered development
6) boost nationalism in the historically colonizing countries, while facilitating their future competition with China.

The objectives of the Pope and China-as-colonialist proponents are analogous because both concern strategic competitors. The Pope’s

\textsuperscript{348} Shu-ching Jean CHEN, “China’s Oil Safari,” \textit{Forbes}, October 6, 2006.
are Islamist and secular forces. China’s critics believe a Beijing Consensus — “a more equitable paradigm of development” and way for countries “to be truly independent, to protect their way of life and political choices” — rivals the Washington Consensus, in what some see as a bipolar world.\footnote{350} Because of this perceived rivalry, China’s activities in Africa are overwhelmingly portrayed in the West as taking advantage of helpless Africans. As one analyst has observed “Most coverage of China’s influence in Africa has trodden this line – that Africa is poverty stricken, corrupt and incapable of managing its own affairs properly, and China is greedy and untrustworthy, so the result can only be disaster.”\footnote{351}

The China-as-colonialist discourse is supposed to demonstrate the superiority of liberal political systems and combat relativism in the political sphere, by contrasting Western benevolence toward Africa with China’s “very self-serving, if not predatory” practices in the continent.\footnote{352} Because the contrast cannot be sustained based on trade and investment, given Western firms’ role in exploiting African natural resources,\footnote{353} claims of Western concern for Africa are based on grants and loans. These however are equally problematic: Africa received $530b in grants and loans from 1970-2002 from Western and Western-controlled entities, but repaid $540b in debt service. Sub-Saharan Africa paid $8.6b in loan interest in 2003 alone. The G8 and IFIs cancelled the debt of 14 states in 2005, but Africa’s debt still stands at about US$300b. An additional $50b in aid was promised Africa in 2005, but more than half was double-counted or involved money already pledged. Debt relief for Africa and refugee-related expenditures in developed countries are also counted as development aid. The proportion of aid to agriculture, which employs 60% of Africa’s work force, fell 43% from 1990 to 2002. The proportion of all aid that went to programs and projects, as opposed to emergency and food aid, administrative costs, etc.,


\footnote{351. Furniss, “The Hungry Dragon . . . ,” supra note 287, p. 58.}


fell from 62% in 1980 to 41% in 2005.\textsuperscript{354} Aid and debt relief are often conditioned on adoption of neo-liberal policies, especially trade liberalization and privatization.\textsuperscript{355} A 2005 report for Christian Aid calculated that trade liberalization cost sub-Saharan Africa $272b over the past 20 years.\textsuperscript{356} An analysis of IFI programs in 20 countries found that 18 included privatization,\textsuperscript{357} despite IMF economists' recognition that privatization produces significant reductions in employment.\textsuperscript{358}

China’s high level of infrastructure lending to Africa\textsuperscript{359} has caused a Western analyst to denounce them as "rogue development aid."\textsuperscript{360} By late 2004, poor countries owed US$5 billion to China,\textsuperscript{361} yet PRC low or no interest loans to Africa are mostly “forgiven on an orderly timetable.”\textsuperscript{362} Before 2006, China cancelled US$1.4b owed by heavily-indebted African states. In 2006, it cancelled poor-


\textsuperscript{359} Andrea Goldstein, “A Tempting Foreign Role Model,” \textit{SCMP}, February 14, 2007, p. A14, has stated that China has recently lent as much as US$17 billion annually to Africa.


country African debt due at the end of 2005. Warnings to China from World Bank head Paul Wolfowitz and the IMF to not put Africa in a debt trap are thus incongruous, as a Ghanaian newspaper notes.

This ‘friendly advice’ coming from a Bretton Woods institution must itself be looked at very carefully so as not to miss the propaganda element . . . [China] has become a counter-balance and competitor to the Bretton Woods institutions. Could that be the reason for the ‘friendly advice’?

China’s aid disproportionately goes to Africa, which recently received 44% of China’s total development assistance. In contrast, some two-thirds of US foreign aid goes to two countries, Israel and Egypt and, as the New York Times has editorialized, most US aid is “for strategically important, but not particularly needy, friends . . . This furthers American interests but should not be confused with development aid.” A Nigerian newspaper notes China’s aid to Africa has “increased exponentially in the past decade, reaching $4.7 billion in 2005. That’s up from about $100 million a decade before. This has put it far above other donors, including the U.S., France and Japan.”

PRC aid projects soft power, but unlike colonial “development” and much Western aid today, does not appear aimed at cre-

365. “Sitting on Time Bomb. Friendly Advice or Propaganda,” Accra Mail, November 8, 2006. Unlike the IFFs, China does not insist on being treated as a “preferred creditor” that is not required to provide debt relief. See Lex Rieffel, “China Heralds a New Age of Credit,” BD, February 16, 2007.
ating economic dependence or political domination. The German Social Democratic Party's Friedrich Ebert Foundation has thus asserted that "The classic relationship pattern of Africa being dependent on (aid from) Europe and the US has been broken up by China," with Africans' feeling of being equal partners to China standing in contrast to Western perceptions of "poor and needy Africa."369

While most Western aid can only be used for private initiatives, China's aid can be used for state-initiated projects. As most aid is for infrastructure projects, it is less likely than Western government-to-government aid to line the pockets of African officials370 and more likely to produce a socially-useful result, e.g. "hydroelectric power dams, railroads, roads and fiber-optic cables, which have the potential to benefit ordinary people, no matter how corrupt the regime under which they live."371 Most Western states (but not Britain) tie aid; about 80% of US aid is tied to purchases of US goods and services. The UN estimates that in 2003, tied aid reduced the value of bilateral aid to Africa by $1.6-2.3b, out of a total of $17b. China's aid is usually not directly tied; for example, the $2b loan extended by China to Angola for infrastructure projects stipulated that Angolan firms were reserved 30% of the work; the other 70% was open to bids.372

The most effective PRC aid programs provide education, training, and health services to Africans. By 2006, an estimated 20,000 African students had received PRC scholarships to study in China and by 2009, an estimated 4,000 Africans a year will do so.373 Unlike natives trained as clerks under the colonial dispensation, most

become doctors, engineers, agronomists, and scientists. Some 11,000 African (mainly state-employed) professionals had training courses in China in 2004-2006; 15,000 more will be trained in 2007-2009. More than 10,000 PRC agro-technicians have gone to Africa since the 1960s and worked on some 200 projects, including in agriculture and personnel training. According to the PRC Ministry of Health, 20,000 PRC medical personnel in 47 African states have treated more than 200m patients since 1963. Their role differs sharply from colonial practitioners, who contended Africans were physiologically and mentally inferior and thus peculiarly subject to certain pathologies, who disrupted indigenous health systems and caused the disappearance of local health knowledge, and who formed a professionalized African medical order that even today rejects adopting the (Chinese) “barefoot doctor” model that may be more appropriate to African health needs. The current “brain gain” from training Africans in China and dispatching PRC specialists to Africa stands in marked contrast to the African “brain drain” to the US and former European colonial states.

The China-as-colonialist discourse is part of an effort to present Western influence as necessary and better for the advancement of Africa because, as a Senegalese economist notes, “The fact that China, within a decade, has overhauled Africa’s balance of power, relegating the US and the UK to third and fourth place and challenging France for first place as the continent’s main economic and commercial partner, has irked these competitors.”

374 Interviews with African students in Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen, December-January 2005-2006.
376 “Focus is on Aid and Support for Africa,” BD, October 1, 2004, p. 23.
has ended the solid support once given to the Washington Consensus by African elites. A Nigerian scholar has said that

China as ‘alternative’ political and economic model to Western prescriptions appears to be a pervasive optic among African politicians, intellectuals, civil society and media . . . African intellectuals . . . hope that it may herald a return to global multi-polarity, in which milieu Africa and the developing countries will have a greater role on the global stage than they currently do . . . China’s emergence as a major economic power in the 1990s despite not being a democracy or adopting economic policies typically recommended by the [IFIs] has become a source of great interest for both Africa’s rulers and ruled.\footnote{Ndubisi Obiorah, “Who’s Afraid of China in Africa?” \textit{PN}, December 14, 2006, \url{http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/comment/38853}.}

A former US ambassador to Ethiopia has said that “China today enjoys a generally good reputation in Africa in nearly all aspects of its interaction, including trade and investment.”\footnote{Shinn, \textit{supra} note 332.} To deal with complaints Africans have about China’s economic conduct, however, the PRC State Council issued in late 2006 “Nine Principles to Encourage and Standardize Enterprises’ Overseas Investment,” requiring Chinese enterprises to abide by local laws, bid for contracts based on transparency and equality, protect labor rights of local employees, protect the environment, be corporately responsible, etc.\footnote{Stephen Marks, “The Summit in Beijing,” \textit{PN}, December 14, 2006, \url{http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/features/38845}.} Whether such principles will be implemented remains to be seen, but China did agree to cap clothing exports to South Africa and has hired more Africans on infrastructure projects.\footnote{“Chinese: Boon or Burden?,” \textit{supra} note 317.} If China is made to appear a new colonialist in Africa, however, its reputation as an alternative model and another geopolitical pole will surely be put at risk.

The attempt to occlude the history of colonial offenses against colonized peoples is more an argument about the future than the past. Western admirers of colonialism want to redeem it to facilitate the moral denigration of the developing world and thereby pave the way for sanctions and armed interventions against “rogue” states. If colonialism is redeemed, colonial-like occupations are defensible.
For Western neo-liberals, vindication of opposition to state-centered development is necessary because talk of a "Chinese model" is common in Africa's principal states. 385 Even in those aligned with the US, there is praise for state-led aspects of the "model," 386 which, because it is often conceived of as rejecting liberal democracy as a prerequisite of development, 387 challenges ostensible Western political prescriptions as well. The most-successful PRC aid programs continue those of China's socialist phase, such as work on state infrastructure. That aspect is derided in Western analysis, but Africans often praise construction of government buildings, stadiums, etc. A Guinea-Bissau security guard, asked about the new PRC-built parliament building he was guarding, has commented:

In a corrupt country, it's better to come and build something big like this where the people can come and discuss politics. At least there is something we can see. Other countries give us money, but the politicians eat it, and people like me never see anything of it. 388

The charge that China practices colonialism in Africa serves to boost nationalism among Western conservatives by affirming their proposition that colonialism was unavoidable — after all, even China is now doing it. It also facilitates both nationalism and Western states' competition with China by convincing more liberal Westerners that China is now practicing a retrograde and oppressive system that their states have long-since abandoned in favor of promoting "freedom."

VIII. CONCLUSION: COLONIALISM UNREDEEMED; CHINA'S "ORDINARY CAPITALISM" IN AFRICA

In an award-winning 1970s film Soldaat van Oranje (Soldier of Orange), applicants to a late 1930s Dutch fraternity crawl about, while members shout queries and beat them if they don’t like their

answers. A burly member demands of an applicant, Erik, “What do you think about Hitler?” While not pro-Nazi, Erik answers “He builds good roads.” A similar view pervades much thinking about colonialism: it must have had redeeming aspects; to hold otherwise is to demean the West and the modernity it dispensed.

The Turkish critic Taner Akcam has argued that acknowledging the Armenian genocide requires Turks to accept that modern Turkey’s fathers were war criminals. Recognizing colonialism as generally a calamity for colonized peoples is to acknowledge that the historical Western dominance was constructed on political exclusion, racial oppression, and monopolized exploitation. To argue that colonialism is irredeemable is not to ignore the role of post-colonial rulers in the immiseration of most Africans, nor to assert that everyone within colonial systems oppressed native peoples; still less is it to sweepingly implicate members of ex-colonizing nations in their forefathers’ acts. Armenia’s Foreign Minister has observed, in relation to the Ottoman Armenian genocide that “Today’s Turks do not bear the guilt of the perpetrators, unless they choose to defend and identify with them.” Those who today identify with colonial perpetrators do share their guilt, which they are now trying to transfer to potential rivals in the PRC. Many people today do not glorify colonialism, but still cling to the idea that it must have had positive features; yet, even the seemingly anodyne and obvious — that “Hitler built good roads” — is problematic: the highways he ordered were constructed in part with forced labor and were explicitly designed to facilitate the mass movement of war materiel, especially tanks, to expected fronts. In the 1930s, the usually astute African-American historian W.E.B. Dubois wrote that Germans were content because they had low unemployment, new infrastructure, and no crime and that Hitler’s dictatorship was “‘absolutely necessary to put the state in order.’” Dubois made this argument, despite knowing of the regime’s political and ethnic persecutions, on the ground that such a popular regime must have good features. Not one of his claims was empirically accurate however; there were in fact no redeeming features to the regime.


In the China-as-colonialist discourse, "colonialism" is deployed as a rhetorical device against the West's putative Chinese rival, often by same forces that defend or excuse actually-existed colonialism.\(^{392}\) To argue China is not engaged in African colonialism is not to contend that no Chinese exploit and oppress Africans. China is piggybacking on an entrenched system of ordinary post-colonial capitalism in Africa derived from, but not identical to, patterns of gross inequality and power asymmetry first created by colonialism. The PRC, as a trade-driven industrial power, integrated into a world system that uses realpolitik to aggrandize national wealth and power, impacts Africa through "neo-liberalism with Chinese characteristics." It thus replicates in key ways developed state policies of disadvantageous terms of trade, exploitation of natural resources,\(^{393}\) oppressive labor regimes,\(^{394}\) and support for authoritarian rulers. The convergence is not surprising. China's economy is itself highly penetrated by transnational capital. Foreign-owned producers in the PRC contribute 60% of the value of PRC exports. With Western firms now on a "buying-binge" of PRC assets, the percentage is expected to increase.\(^{395}\)

The commonalities of PRC and Western approaches to post-colonial capitalism in Africa are fundamental, but not well-known, because Western analyses of China-Africa links focus on exploitative and oppressive aspects, while seldom putting these dimensions in comparative perspective. China's ties to Sudan and Zimbabwe are always discussed, while US, UK, and French links to other African authoritarian regimes, e.g. Gabon, Congo-Brazzaville, and Equatorial Guinea, are seldom noted. Among the oft-mentioned aspects of PRC ordinary capitalism in Africa are low pay and un-

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safe working conditions at some Chinese-owned enterprises,\textsuperscript{396} resentment by Africans at competition from PRC firms and goods,\textsuperscript{397} and Chinese purchases of illegal timber and other environment-damaging activities.\textsuperscript{398} Criticism of such practices is justified and essential to ending them.\textsuperscript{399} Representations of China as uniquely engaged in such activities, however, are attempts to avoid a moral equivalence of Chinese and Western practitioners of ordinary capitalism. Western firms in Africa engage in all the same conduct attributed to China. They do so not just in Africa, but also in China. Thus, Western firms are determined to derail a proposed PRC law to grant new rights to highly-exploited Chinese workers.\textsuperscript{400} Many domestic PRC industries now find it difficult to compete with huge Western firms widely marketing their products in China.\textsuperscript{401} Chinese accuse Western firms operating in China of "environmental colonialism," due to their transfer of resource-intensive, polluting industries to China, where they bear little environmental responsibility.\textsuperscript{402}

If China is not now a colonial power in Africa, might it become one? Colonialism is well-regarded by some Western political elites, but not by most people, including most Westerners who know its effects. Its resurrection would be ideologically anachronistic and stir great opposition, especially as to explicit racial dominance. Decolonization in large measure resulted from popularization of anti-colonial ideas, which were an effective moral critique of those colonizing elites who claimed that their ideal of freedom corre-


\textsuperscript{397} "Contractors Feel Threatened by Foreigners," \textit{New Era (Namibia)}, April 13, 2006.

\textsuperscript{398} Michelle Chan-Fishel, "Environmental Impact: More of the Same?" \textit{PN}, December 14, 2006.

\textsuperscript{399} During Pres. Hu Jintao's 2007 visit to Africa, he was to "warn Chinese employers to halt unwelcome behavior that poisons their reputation among locals." Laurence, "Vying . . . " \textit{supra} note 288.


\textsuperscript{401} "Is the World Chemical Industry Becoming Excessively Dependent on China?" \textit{Nandini Online Journal}, September. 2006, \texttt{<http://www.nandinichemical.com_online_journal/sep06_nandini_chemical_journal.htm>}

responded to those of the anti-colonialists. Just before and after the Iraq war began, neo-conservatives did propose to make semi-colonies out of “failed states” and Afghanistan and Iraq are now deemed just that by both supporters and opponents of the occupations. Their instability, however, now hardly recommends them as models. Former US National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, for example, has said that “America is acting like a colonial power in Iraq. But the age of colonialism is over.”

While China is even less likely than the West to turn to “real” colonialism, there are signs some PRC elites, desirous of developed country national wealth and power and willing to imitate and ingratiate the West, are no longer beyond a positive imagining of colonialism. The “Rise of the Great Powers” (da guo jueqi), a 2006, 12-part TV documentary put together by elite PRC historians who briefed the CCP Politburo on its content, dealt with the reasons nine nations became great powers. It analyzed their emergence “as achievements worthy of emulation, reviewing the globe-spanning colonies of the imperial powers in admiring terms.” Contributors to a PRC chat room noted that the series was devoid of criticism of colonialism and “systematically adopted an appreciative perspective to learn from the rise of the world powers.” Another example is a PRC official in charge of Chinese language courses for Nigerian officials and business people who has stated that he and his colleagues are “inspired by the European colonialists, who taught generations of Africans to speak English and French.”


Regardless of any musings on colonialism among Chinese, China’s Africa policy is being aligned ever more closely with that of the “international community,” as the main developed countries like to style their joint global hegemony. It has been noted that while keen to promote a range of development concerns, from aid, health, education, and even the environment, Beijing operates within prevailing international standards, including the Millennium Development Goals, and does not seek to challenge these.  

China has sent officials “to study how the United States structures USAID and the new Millennium Challenge Corporation.” China and the World Bank are planning joint aid ventures in Africa and China and the US are discussing working together there on anti-poverty efforts and anti-terrorism. As the head of a major PRC oil firm has put it, China’s goal is not “to overturn the world order . . . but to participate in this order . . . and to profit from it.” These are signs that not only are China’s on-the-ground activities in Africa part of ordinary capitalism, but also that China, barring a change in direction, is becoming the US’s hoped-for “stakeholder” in the international system. That system is so disadvantageous to Africa that the continent has the highest ratio of extra regional trade to GDP — 45.6% in 1990, compared to 12.8% for Europe, 13.2% for N. America, 15.2% for Asia and 23.7% for Latin America — but a GDP per capita that is only 21% of the world average and 6% that of developed countries.

While China is thus much like Western states in regard to many activities in Africa and may become even more so, significant differences remain. For example, there is no evidence yet that China is significantly involved in the huge losses to Africa through

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410. Large “As the Beginning Ends . . .,” supra note 325.
411. Kurlantzick, “Beijing’s Safari . . .,” supra note 297
corporate tax avoidance and capital flight. The AU estimates these losses to be more than US$150 billion annually, with 30% of Sub-Saharan Africa’s annual GDP moved to tax havens, 80% of them offshore and many under British jurisdiction. The NGO Tax Justice Network has stated that Africa’s wealth, in the form of “proceeds of political corruption, fraud, embezzlement and illicit arms trading,” flows to banks in Monaco, Switzerland, and London, while a British scholar has told the UK parliamentary group on Africa that Western “bankers, lawyers, accountants, art dealers, health authorities, universities, estate agents, and embassies have been actively or passively encouraging wealth out of Africa into the West’s economies.” At the same time, corporate taxes and royalty payments to governments in minerals-producing countries like Tanzania and Zambia have sharply fallen, after mines were privatized in response to IFI demands. The IFIs have required other African states, such as Ghana and Nigeria, to levy VAT on fuel, sparking inflation, as transport costs rise, and spurring desertification as the poor forsake gas stoves and fall forests for fuel. Chinese are, at this point, not obviously involved in facilitating tax evasion and capital flight or forcing privatization.

By the same token, the PRC government, unlike those of the West, can order its firms to earn minimal or no profits and persuade private PRC firms that it is in their interests to not attempt to maximize profits either, despite Africa being the place where companies willing to take the plunge enjoy the highest rate of profits in the world, 29% according to a 1990s UNCTAD study. Chinese firms can afford to follow such orders or prescriptions precisely because the state will support them even in high risk, low profit ventures. In that way, China is doing well enough in Africa by using ordinary capitalism that it does not need to “colonize” Africa, even in a metaphorical sense of the term.

