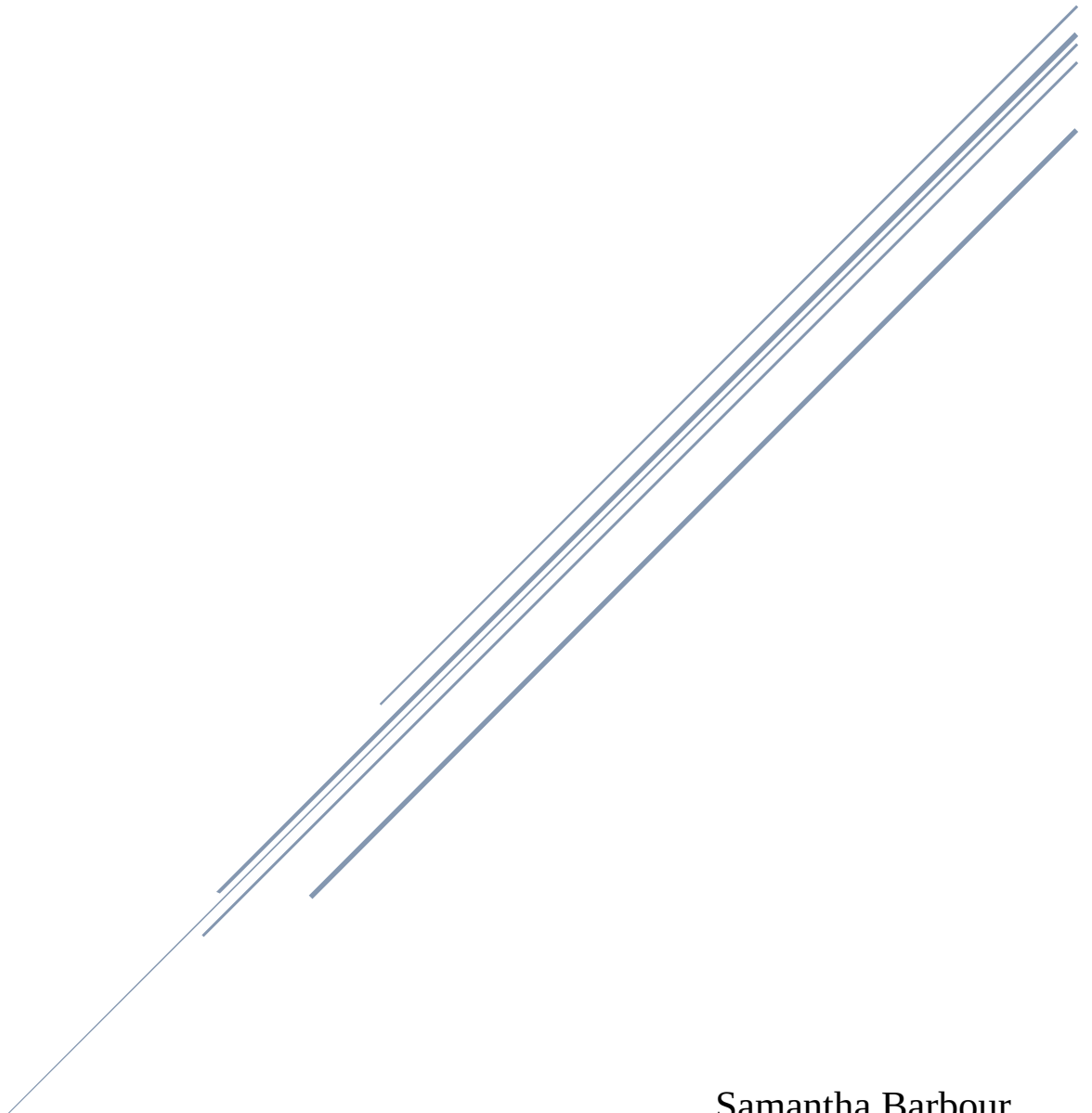


INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, GLOBAL POLITICS AND THE EMPIRE



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The Colonial Project

Through research regarding international Development and the Empire, politics played and continues to play an important role in a country's development during and after colonialism. Before proceeding, we must first comprehend what international Development and Global Politics as a discipline is, its role in the past and future development of countries post-colonization. International Development "focuses on...inequalities, and possible solutions. It...studies post-colonial societies and cultural psychology...patterns, connections, and inequalities in global health. The Global Politics aspect...complements and reinforces the practical work and the study of international development." (www.uwtsd.ac.uk, n.d.). This essay aims to examine how countries have been affected by International Development, what implications transnational politics have on developing countries, and the problems arising from this subject.

Colonization and colonialism establish control over an indigenous population by establishing colonies. The colonizers exercise economic and social dominance through military might and forcibly introduce their religion, language, culture, ideologies, and economic practices to the controlled people and area. (Oxford Languages, 2022). One such system was slavery, a well-known practice that spanned many decades. In Ancient Rome, enslaved people could purchase their freedom as they were paid for their work. Over time, this changed as society saw slaves as a lesser race that should not reap the economic benefit for their work. This meant work would get done without paying for labor, thus maximizing profits laying the groundwork for imperial infrastructure. England, France, and Spain had well-established colonies along Africa's West Coast and India by the fifteenth century. In Columbus' bid to create a faster trade route, he devised a plan to sail west to India. This led to his arrival in the Americas, and for lack of accuracy, called it the Indies.

The Islands Columbus "discovered" were already inhabited by Amerindian tribes. They welcomed Columbus and treated him and his crew like gods because they had never seen anyone with such fair skin before. The Amerindians were not as technologically advanced as the European conquistadors. The Europeans used this superiority to conquer and claim the islands in the name of their respective empires. An empire comprises of a group of states, territories, countries, or people ruled over by a single monarch. (Oxford Languages, 2022). According to Columbus' records, the natives lacked proper tools and clothing and had never seen a sword before. In the years that followed, the indigenous people of the Americas were exploited to the point of near extinction. When Colonizers realized that the Amerindians were not built for such harsh labor, the slave trade originating from Africa was introduced as a means of getting robust able-bodied men, women, and children to work on plantations. These estates were established on the islands to benefit the empire using the fertile soil and tropical climate.

Many countries grapple with the effects of colonization and the influence it has had on the development of people and the country as a whole. This undoubtedly yielded many benefits but also coupled with ramifications that came with colonization and post-colonization, such as international development and globalization. Post-colonization is concerned with the lasting impact on a country's cultural, political, and economic legacy due to colonization. (Oxford Languages, 2022). From this, one can understand that colonization has a lasting impact on citizens' views of their former masters and how colonialization has shaped the economies of "third world" countries. When small nations such as Haiti sought to exert their independence, colonial powerhouses such as France thought it necessary to cripple them socially, psychologically, and financially. This can be seen when Haiti was forced to pay former slave and plantation owners' reparations well into the Twentieth Century,

1947 to be precise. “Indeed, even after Haiti serviced its full debt to American financiers in 1947, 120 years after the French indemnity, the legacy of the American occupation can be seen in the uprooted labor force. Today, the Haitian diaspora consists of a proto-Haitian peasantry of migrant laborers scattered throughout the Caribbean economies of the Bahamas and most notably the Dominican Republic.” (jacobinmag.com, n.d.).

Haitians were forced to pay to keep their freedom and be recognized as an independent nation by France and the rest of the world. This, however, was not the only time that another first-world country exploited this nation. In the early nineteenth century, the United States sought to control Haiti's finances. By the end of 1947, the U.S had siphoned away about forty percent of Haiti's national income to service debt repayments to the U.S and France. (Rosalsky, 2021). This was also evident where French authorities took possession of and redistributed land used by tribes in Algeria. (Google.com,2019).

Globalization is "the process by which businesses or other organizations develop international influence or start operating on an international scale." It is the interaction and integration of the world's people, cultures, and economies. (velocity global, 2020). Three main theories of globalization are The World-system Theory, the World Polity Theory, and the World Culture Theory. The world system theory is described as a historical, social system with many interdependent parts that operate with distinct rules. It is recognized as the capitalist system that originated around 1500 AD in Europe, which has expanded and absorbed mini-systems, empires, and economies to establish production and market networks that created a single worldwide structure that has incorporated the entire planet (Robinson, n.d.). The theory divides the world into three hierarchically organized tiers; firstly, the

core is the most militarily powerful and economically developed controllers of the system consisting of western Europe and the United States of America.

Secondly, the periphery, which are the least economically developed countries, provide raw materials and cheap labor for production; this can be seen in Present-day call centers in India. Most of these states were formally colonies of core countries such as South American, Asian, African countries, and Caribbean islands. Lastly, the Semi-periphery which have more diverse economies. They were either core states that lost their strength, such as Mediterranean Europe, e.g., Greece, which is now heavily indebted and forced to take austerity measures from the IMF, or countries that have grown and graduated from the periphery such as China. While some persons may now consider China a core country, one must be a democratic state to be considered a core country by definition of core countries. While China is a communist regime and cannot be considered a core country, it may very well be one of the few exceptions to the rule.

The world culture theory focuses on the individuals giving meaning to the world becoming conscious of the world as a single cultural unit. Recognizing the need for international relations and states becoming interdependent. It encompasses the relationships between four main actors: societies, the international system, individual selves, and humankind. The interaction of varying persons and groups with differing ideologies causes sharing and adoption of beliefs such as Christianity. It involves the formation, codification, and propagation of a single world culture. This is most often caused by the input of international nongovernmental organizations and political interference. History has shown that countries with powerful militaries most often impose their value system, e.g., cultures, beliefs, and religion on others to gain wealth.

Global Development refers to "the actions countries or organizations take to lend aid to other countries in need around the world." (The Borgen Project, 2019). It seeks to improve the lives of people in poor countries through economic growth as well as human advancements. This Development includes improvement in areas such as health care, nutrition, education, and improved standards of living such as access to clean water, housing, and sanitation. development is quantified for each country yearly, using the Human Development Index (HDI), a set of statistics intended to measure their citizens' access to services such as health, education, and a decent standard of living. The IMF and the World Bank play an essential role in distributing funds and aid to developing countries. They, however, place conditions on these funds that are being made available, making them only usable for predetermined projects approved by these organizations. As a result, monies earned by these smaller countries from tax collection and the sale of public land are most often used to pay debts and interest on loans instead of being redistributed in the economy to stimulate growth. Also, the projects sponsored by these funds are usually tied to conditions that require the purchase of products or dictate that the salaries of professionals of these core countries must be paid from the funds provided. This means that the aid was never beneficial to the receiving nation; it is, however, more beneficial to the donor country.

On the other hand, there are other constraints to development. These include geographical location and the size of a small island, poor educational systems, war, corrupt governments, and high mortality rates, just to name a few. These constraints tend to create a cycle that keeps a nation consistently poor and underdeveloped. In many instances, the natural and human resources are exploited by only a few wealthy individuals while the majority live in unacceptable conditions.

As with all forms of development, there are side effects. Social inequality focuses on the uneven distribution of goods and burdens in society. A good can be income, education, or employment, while burdens are substance abuse, criminality, or unemployment. (www.sv.uio.no, 2019). It focuses on whether there is an even distribution of income and opportunity between different groups in society. These groups include countries, regions, ethnic groups, gender, and class. I do believe that technology and globalization have increased inequality in the world. Over the past several decades, with the emergence of new technologies and increased globalization, the distribution of wealth has become more uneven. Distribution of wealth and income is how the wealth and income are divided among a population or how wealth and income of the world are divided between nations. (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2013). While some nations have reduced the number of indigent persons, the gap between the wealthiest one percent and the rest of society still exists. There is also an additional increase in economic gaps between developing and developed countries, with some countries finding themselves heavily in debt to keep up with advancements. Currently, the wealthiest one percent owns more than forty-three percent of the world's wealth, which is the value of accumulated store of possessions and financial claims.

While the top ten wealthiest billionaires have more wealth than entire countries such as Indonesia, Turkey, and Thailand, these countries combined had a population of four hundred and thirty-one million in 2021. (worldpopulationreview.com, n.d.). Quite interestingly, in 2009, the combined wealth of the world's richest 380 people equaled the wealth of the lower 50% of the population. Nine years later, in 2018, the top 26 billionaires had as much wealth as the lower 50%. (Inequality.org, 2019). In addition, this same period saw significant growth in technological advancements

such as robotics, artificial intelligence, and computer algorithms. These same algorithms have made Amazon into the retail behemoth it is today.

Technological advancements have impacted the Caribbean in many ways. St. Vincent & the Grenadines has access to 100% electricity and water available to the population. (World Bank, 2018). Vincentians now have an unprecedented opportunity to universal education, giving persons the prospect of tertiary and university education. (Unesco.Org, 2022) Moreover, it has increased access to goods from every corner of the globe. It has positively impacted our standard of living, from building to transportation technologies. They have created jobs in telemarketing and telecommunications, and computers have made the government more efficient and transparent. There are, however, some drawbacks, such as increased electronic waste and pollution from imported goods. Due to mechanization, the loss of traditional jobs in farming and industry has also increased. My country has seen increased economic reliance on sectors such as tourism which is vulnerable to external factors such as the current pandemic. The pandemic saw an almost total closure of the tourism sector with a reduction of about three hundred thousand tourists for 2020 compared to the previous year. (Statista, 2020). There is also the vulnerability to spread diseases due to the relative ease of travel. Many countries saw this happen when travel bans were lifted from many countries during the pandemic.

International Financial Institutions such as the World Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) serve to bridge the gap in development between first and third-world countries. They assist nations by advising development projects, funding, and implementation plan(s). It is essential to maintain equality throughout the world, but it also allows developed countries to have undue influence on developing ones. The institutions develop and implement the projects with fail-safe

measures to ensure transparency. The receiving countries must adhere to stringent rules to benefit from these loans/grants. Receiving countries are told how the funds should be spent, what contractors to hire, and the completion date for the work contracted. Funds are time-specific; if not used within a stipulated period, they will be withdrawn by the respective lending institution. Many see this as a means of controlling how the development process of recipient countries. This inevitably demonstrates the control donor countries exert over recipients, proving that the spirit of the empire still exists.

In conclusion, there are some stark similarities between modern politics and policies that were implemented during the time of colonialism; it shows that imperialism is still as prevalent today as it was one hundred years ago. International organizations which are used to control the development of third-world countries continue to drive the globalization process by means of uneven distribution of wealth, and the exploitation of resources. This is seen in the manner by which a country's development index is measured; not only on their Gross Domestic Product (GDP), economic and physical development but also on their political systems and level of democracy. Democracy being predominantly a western and core nation ideology skews a country's score based on their capitulation of this ideology. History has shown that the militarily powerful tend to impose their cultures and beliefs on the less powerful or developed nations to increase their sphere of influence and wealth.

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