1. **Colonization and Domination**

Within its overall structure of domination, colonialism can be analysed according to the distinction elaborated above between its two main forms of colonization and domination, **motivated by the desire for living space or the extraction of riches**. All colonial powers tended to have in practice two distinct kinds of colonies within their empires, the **settled** and the **exploited**, the **white** and the **black**, which would be treated very differently. Whereas settlement led ultimately to self‐governing dominions, trading ports and posts in what were regarded as established societies tended to develop into the exploitative situation of domination colonies. Settlement also led to the creation of a category of colonial which gets blurred by the English word ‘colonizer’, which can be applied to settler and administrator indiscriminately: here the French term for the colonial settler or farmer, *colon*, now anglicized, preserves a useful distinction. The *colons* quickly found themselves in‐betweens: neither the centre, the metropolitan government, which could both protect them and oppress them, nor the colonized, the indigenous natives whom the *colons* would for the most part slaughter, expel from their own lands, or exploit as a labour force, and from whose perspective the *colons* and the metropolitan government would be equated.

This results in the **ambivalent** position today of those who descend from European settlers in former settler colonies: are the non‐indigenous people in the former colonies of North America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand *colonizers* or *colonized* (Mukherjee 1990)? Today all former settler colonies are doubly positioned: on the one hand, they are colonies who have freed themselves from the colonial rule of the mother country, as with the United States, **or** (though constitutionally still not absolutely) Canada and Australia. So today Americans or Australasians of European extraction now speak of themselves as having been formerly colonized. It is the marker of ‘postcoloniality’ that whereas in the past such people tended to identify themselves as colonizers, increasingly today they claim to constitute the colonized. On the other hand, at the same time, the settlers who went to those regions – often it must be emphasized as a result of persecution, forced migration or simple poverty – themselves became the oppressors of the indigenous peoples who already occupied the land: **persecuted** **minorities** emigrating and then themselves persecuting minorities has been a common story of colonialism. Those indigenous peoples, such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders of Australia or the Maoris of New Zealand, remain colonized peoples (Jacobs 1997; Rigney 1998). **The postcolonial operates simultaneously as the colonial**. Many of the countries of South America such as Chile or Peru, simply replaced Spanish colonial rule by a form of internal colonialism, the **autocratic** **rule** of a European settler minority.

Colonization, as Europeans originally used the term, signified not the rule over indigenous peoples, or the extraction of their wealth, but primarily the transfer of communities who sought to maintain their allegiance to their own original culture, while seeking a better life in economic, religious or political terms – very similar to the situation of migrants today. Colonization in this sense comprised people whose primary aim was to settle elsewhere rather than to rule others. Though in most cases it also involved the latter, this was a by‐product of the former, the result of the land being already populated, though usually not ‘settled’ in the European sense. In Locke’s influential formulation, those who did not cultivate the land had no rights to it; **in 1849 Roebuck still confidently defined a colony as a land without indigenous people whose inhabitants looked to England as the mother country (Roebuck 1849).** Later colonizers sought to retain a distinction between the **colonizers** and **natives**, rather than integrate with the local population as generally occurred with earlier migrations or with the early colonization of Portuguese and some Spanish America, in which colonization developed into a mixed, creole society.

In other cases, Spanish and Anglo–Saxon colonizers of America and Australasia by contrast preferred to try to **exterminate** the indigenous people rather than rule them, and this attitude was continued after independence. Natives, if not exterminated, were moved out of the land which they had previously occupied, a process that also occurred in settlement colonies in Africa such as: Algeria, Kenya, Rhodesia and South Africa.

The **appropriation** of land and space meant that colonialism was, as Said has emphasized, fundamentally an act of geographical violence, a geographical violence employed against indigenous peoples and their land rights (Said 1993: 1–15). At the same time, where plantations required labour and the indigenous natives were found unsuitable, others were brought in as slaves or indentured labourers who were allowed almost no rights, whose forms of social and political organization were removed, and who were therefore comparatively easy to control and to keep separate.

The first motives for the European expansion westwards are generally described as originating from the attempt to discover a shorter sea‐route to the great civilizations of India, China and Japan. For some time, Columbus failed to get any backing from European rulers for his plans for a voyage westwards. Given that the Moors were at the time still occupying parts of the Italian mainland, it was a far‐fetched scheme. The fact remains, however, that the discovery of America was the result of what was intended to be the last crusade against Islam. It was funded by the wealth acquired from the expulsion of the Jews and Moors from Granada two months after Ferdinand and Isabella had secured the city. European colonial expansion began simultaneously with the institution of the Catholic Inquisition that replaced centuries of Islamic multiculturalism. It was a symptomatic beginning.

Alongside this **crusading** **religious** **motive** (the Spanish expeditions were authorized by the pope for the purpose of Christian conversion), the **technological** **facility** for modern colonization in terms of the development of ocean‐going ships went hand in hand with the economic drive associated with the development of European capitalism, which broadly began with the commercial revolution of the sixteenth century. The primacy of economic motive given to colonization today by historians on the left would not have been widely disputed at the time. The need for gold was a primary motive of the remarkable maritime expansion eastwards and westwards in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, which saw Columbus and Vespucci exploring and establishing colonies in America, and Vasco da Gama providing the culmination to the search for a sea‐route to the Indies by reaching India in 1497–8 (Williamson 1992: 7).

For the British, the possibility of appropriating some of the booty was one reason for establishing an effective navy, a motivation accompanied by consideration of maintaining its own strategic interests *vis‐a‐vis* the Spanish dominions. Once a single colony had been established, then it could always be argued that strategic interests required more. This was a logic that was to be taken to an extreme with respect to the security of British India. Similarly, trade with such colonies was always held to be of advantage because it also had the effect of maintaining a large navy and training a large corps of seamen. When discharged from the navy, the availability of these seamen facilitated further commercial expansion overseas.

Unlike the Spanish, the British and Dutch did not initially justify colonization in terms of a Christian mission, though Protestant–Catholic rivalries between European powers provided a significant factor in the establishment or seizure of colonies. Colonization is often associated with notions of **civilizing** or **missionary** work, but this cultural imperialism was really the later product of imperialism in its nineteenth century form.

More important for the British was the question of population, and the need to export people on the grounds of economic and political stability. The role of population theory in colonization has been consistently underestimated, perhaps because population control, now of the ‘third world’, is still a major issue for the west today. The idea of the colony as an outlet for surplus population was motivated by economics and politics. For France, given its permanent shortage of population, colonization was more problematic: settlement in Algeria only really got going when the French lost Alsace‐Lorraine to the Germans in 1871 and the local French population was forcibly removed to Algeria.

Settler colonies were in part the product of forced emigration of various kinds, a policy that became institutionalized in Britain after Malthus had characterized the potential evils of population excess. Surplus population as a motive for colonization reached its apex in the famine‐stricken 1840s, and was carried over later in the century into a central justification for imperialism. **In this view, colonization was regarded as a means of exporting social conflict, thus neatly intertwining the economic with the political:** Lenin cites Rhodes’ comments to his friend Stead in 1895:

“I was in the East End of London” (working‐class quarter) “yesterday and attended a meeting of the unemployed. I listened to the wild speeches, which were just a cry for ‘bread,’ ‘bread!’ and on my way home I pondered over the scene and I became more than ever convinced of the importance of imperialism.… My cherished idea is a solution for the social problem, i.e., in order to save the 40,000,000 inhabitants of the United Kingdom from a bloody civil war, we colonial statesmen must acquire new lands to settle the surplus population, to provide new markets for the goods produced in the factories and mines. The Empire, as I have always said, is a bread and butter issue. If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists.” (Lenin 1965: 93–4)

The practice of the transportation of *criminals*, not stopped in Britain until 1867, was only one aspect of a wider policy of using colonization as a way of removing *undesirables* in the broadest sense of the term (Shaw 1966: 358). This accounts for much of the class snobbery that developed in Britain and France towards white ‘colonials’.

Alongside settlement lay the simple economic motive of the desire for riches and commercial profit, together with an anxiety about the balance of trade. The European drive towards the establishment of a global trading network tended, in historical terms, to produce as a consequence **exploitation** **colonies**, the colonies of domination. Many such colonies were the not‐always‐intended product of the early trading companies, private enterprises that were given a monopoly to trade by the monarch from the fifteenth‐century onwards.

Colonization in the early period up to the nineteenth century was rarely the deliberate policy of metropolitan governments. It tended rather to be the haphazard product of commercial interests and group settlements, a process which led Seeley in *The Expansion of England* (1883) to make his famous comment that ‘we seem … to have conquered and peopled half the world in a fit of absence of mind’ (Seeley 1971: 8).

However, by the eighteenth century, competition between European powers meant that many of the wars of the century were fought in the **colonial** **arena** with the purpose of acquiring the riches of each other’s colonies, a strategy in which Britain was particularly successful – sometimes to its own cost. It was the elimination of the French in Canada that removed any immediate threat to the thirteen British colonies and encouraged them to seek independence from Britain.

Despite the heterogeneous forms of acquisition, however, as Bell and Morrell remark, ‘the old colonial system … provided one of the few examples in English history of a coherent administrative system directed over many years towards a definite end’ (Bell and Morrell 1928: xl). As a result, the early colonial economy of the importation of food crops and strategic military supplies developed into a systematic trading bloc based on importing raw materials and exporting British manufactured products to colonial monopoly markets.

Despite the **heterogeneity** of history, geography and administrative models, from the point of view of the colonized society, **colonization of all forms brought about similar disruptive consequences**.

The effect of colonization is often described by historians in terms of the transformation of the indigenous economy – or in Deleuze and Guattari’s terms (1977), decoding and recoding, particularly through the introduction of the economic and ideological effects of capitalism into non‐capitalist societies by breaking down and transforming non‐capitalist modes of production. Such procedure usually required territorial occupation. Colonization in the form of agricultural settlement for the most part took place where the indigenous society was **nomadic** or relatively **sparse**. From a European perspective, the land appeared empty because it was uncultivated and not settled; the introduction of farming then made the nomadic life of the indigenous people impossible. Where the non‐European societies already possessed forms of industrialization, on the other hand, there was little settlement colonization; instead, the local economy was transformed and impoverished by economic restructuring, often involving de‐industrialization, according to the system that has just been described.