

May 2002

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY  
Department of History

Senior Comprehensive Exams

**MODERN IMPERIALISM AND COLONIALISM**

Please answer each question separately. Your answer to each question must not exceed five double-spaced typewritten pages. **On the cover of each answer be certain to indicate your name, the appropriate comprehensive field (i.e., The United States, The United Kingdom), as well as the number of the question you have answered.** Your answer should be written in your own words and include the correct citations for any sources you use, as in any paper or final exercise. Be sure to include at the end of your essay the statement "This represents my own work in accordance with University regulations" and sign your name.

All answers must be turned in at the History Department office by 3:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY, MAY 15th. There will be no extensions. For further explanation of the Grading of Departmental Comprehensive Exams, see page 5 of "Information for Majors."

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**Answer ONE question from PART I and ONE question from PART II**

**PART I**

1. "As important as religion was in the European conquest and domination of the New World, equally crucial was the role played by commodities - sugar and silver." Assess this statement by describing the place of religion and the importance of sugar and slaves in the organization of New World societies between the sixteenth and early nineteenth centuries.
2. In striking contrast to the colonial conquest of the New World, European domination in Asia was forged over a protracted period and had to deal with already existing powerful trading systems and empires. Describe the major trading and political regimes that existed in Asia between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, and how the European trading companies gradually established their dominance.
3. Discuss the concept of "Orientalism." Do you think that it illuminates the nature of relationship between European knowledge and European colonial power in Asia and North Africa? Answer this question by analyzing Europe's relationship with the "Orient" since Napoleon's invasion of Egypt.

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## PART II

4. "Empire affected the lives of not only the colonized but also penetrated the culture and society of the colonizers." Discuss this statement in relation to the history of "New Imperialism" in Africa and Europe.
5. Some have argued that the nationalist agendas for postcolonial Asia and Africa have largely been unsuccessful because of the nationalist elites' distance from the needs and aspirations of the common people. Do you agree? What were the main features of the nationalist programs? Did they fail only because of their alleged distance from the aspirations of the common people or also because of neocolonialism?
6. Describe the Vietnamese liberation movement and the radical nation-liberation movements in Latin America during the 1960s in the context of the world order that took shape in the aftermath of the end of World War II and decolonization.