

exporting economy. Many, but not all, of the colonies established in Africa between 1890 and 1920 focused on growing, mining, or making products to send back to London and Paris. Rubber plantations, silver mines, and livestock development programs all were instituted to this end. In East and Southeast Asia, the major world powers (Britain, Portugal, and, in time, Germany and the United States) created development programs centered on the silk trade; the growing and selling of tea, opium, and other spices; and, in the case of French-run Vietnam, rubber plantations. Such development projects generally worked to serve the interests of the master, but rarely the servant.

It was not until after World War II and the American Marshall Plan for Europe—often argued to be the first major development program in contemporary history—that the modern idea of economic development began to be implemented. The basic premises of the Marshall Plan, large-scale development and reconstruction schemes, had a lasting impact on the economic development community. However, when this system is applied to smaller,

## JOSÉ CARLOS MARIÁTEGUI

José Carlos Mariátegui (1894–1930) was a Peruvian Marxist activist who was renowned for his defense of indigenous rights. In his essay “The Problem of the Indian” (1928), he made the materialist claim that socio-economic changes would be necessary to end indigenous poverty and marginalization. Rather than looking to administrative or cultural changes, Mariátegui argued for a fundamental restructuring of the country’s land tenure system.

In a subsequent essay on the problem of race that was presented to a meeting of South American communist parties in 1929, Mariátegui directly rejected a proposal from the Communist International organization to create an independent indigenous republic for the Quechua and Aymara people in the Andes. A separate nation, he argued, would ensure their impoverishment and do nothing to address the fundamental class contradictions in society.

Born on June 14, 1894, in Moquegua, Peru, Mariátegui experienced health and economic problems throughout his entire life. His father abandoned the family when Mariátegui was a boy, and he badly injured his leg in 1902. At the age of fifteen, he began working at a newspaper. He subsequently used his journalism skills to earn a living and as a vehicle for expressing his political views.

In 1919, Peruvian dictator Augusto B. Leguía exiled Mariátegui to Europe. There, Mariátegui developed and matured as a Marxist thinker, and when he returned to

localized native groups, it is too big, too broad, and too unresponsive to do much good.

Also established during this early postwar era were the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank—financial entities that, by and large, dictate the pace and style of large-scale economic development to the present day. While this may seem far afield from economic development among native peoples, these institutions created, maintained, and continue to shape how development theory and economics are conceptualized at the macro level.

In the aftermath of World War II and the Marshall Plan and at the beginning of the Cold War, the United States became one of the driving forces of economic development in what has been called the third world, or the developing world. The other driving force, of course, was the Soviet Union. These nations’ competing systems of economic thought—communism and capitalism—would carve up the world and, by and large, dictate how regions would encounter, interpret, engage, and respond to development as the last vestiges of the colonial order fell by the wayside.

Peru in 1923, he was a “convinced and declared Marxist.” Drawing on the experiences and insights that he had gained in Europe, he gave a series of lectures on the “History of the World Crisis” at the newly formed González Prada Popular University in Lima.

In 1924, Mariátegui lost his right leg; he spent the rest of his life confined to a wheelchair. In spite of his failing health, he increased the intensity of his efforts to organize a social revolution in Peru. In 1926, he founded *Amauta* (meaning “wise teacher” in Quechua), a journal that was intended to be a vanguard voice for an intellectual and spiritual movement to create a new Peru. In 1928, Mariátegui launched a less doctrinaire and more informative biweekly newspaper called *Labor* that was targeted at the working class. In addition to writing articles for various Peruvian periodicals, he also published two books during his lifetime, *The Contemporary Scene* in 1925 and *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality* in 1928.

Mariátegui’s revolutionary activities were not only theoretical but also practical. He founded the Peruvian Socialist Party in 1928, served as its first secretary general, and brought it into alliance with Communist International. In 1929, the party launched the General Confederation of Peruvian Workers, a Marxist-oriented federation of trade unions. Although his political party and labor confederation flourished, Mariátegui’s health failed. He died on April 16, 1930.

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