

the Slavophil and Westernizer movements, the populists, and the manner that each group influenced and defined Russian-ness without losing a fluid and clear writing style. Her attention to the larger theme in the work is notable, yet never turgid or mundane. The Soviet period is capably examined, particularly regarding the competing forms of identity that shaped Russian images and concepts of themselves. The author's conclusion is thoughtful and somewhat thought-provoking: Russian state building has consistently and systemically obstructed Russian nation building.

This work is a fine contribution to the growing literature that examines national identity formation in Europe. It has a useful, but limited, bibliography that might not be new to the specialist but certainly provides a thorough guide for students. As a history of Russia, the book's focus on national identity and its evolution in Russia has limited appeal and utility. It does, however, supplement and inform the wider view of Russian history that is often absent from standard works. It is suitable for advanced undergraduate and graduate courses, but anyone lacking a foundation in Russian history will find it difficult. Nevertheless, the author's central thesis that, as the Russian empire expanded, the state intervened evermore deeply into the lives of its citizens in ways that hindered the development of an equally recognizable identity is a valuable contribution. Throughout the centuries Russians have attempted to provide the definition, with limited success and, the author argues, that process will continue in a post-Soviet Russia that will have consequences for Russia's future.

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Robert Johnson. *British Imperialism. Histories and Controversies Series.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. Pp. XV, 284. Paper, \$22.50; ISBN 0-333-94726-6.

This handy book, as the series title indicates, "aims to explain some of the histories and controversies about British Imperialism. It offers an introduction, critical analysis, and overview of the debates that surround the British Empire from its origins to the return of Hong Kong to Chinese rule in 1997." The author is also aware of the debate between those who claim to be "Imperial Historians" and those who see themselves as post-colonial theorists and subaltern scholars. Frequent references are made to the recently published, monumental *Oxford History of the British Empire* but not to the Companion Series.

Chapters 1-4 deal with definitions of imperialism, the nature of British imperialist rule from its Angevin Origins to the early nineteenth century, imperialist thinking, and the idea of "New Imperialism." Here the Robinson and Gallagher and Cain and Hopkins theses received considerable explication. The second section, Chapters 5-9 examines a number of themes in the high noon of British imperialism (c.

1870–1914), such as the commercial and financial foundations of imperialism, the effects of migration, the limits of imperialism, the collaboration of “sub-imperialists,” and resistance. Also contained within this section is a discussion of four areas that have attracted interest in recent years: namely the role of cultural imperialism, the strengths and weaknesses of post-colonial theory as a tool of analysis, the gendering of imperialism, and racism.

As regards gender studies, Johnson seems ambivalent. On the one hand, he notes that the “shifting relationships” between race, class, and gender that Anne McClintock discovered might throw some light on policies and institutions, but it is such an “opaque view, which leaves out so many of the real forces behind the British Empire, as to leave its significance in doubt. Indeed, this is a criticism that could be leveled at all gender studies of the Empire.” But later he writes, “British women did have a role in the Empire and it is one worthy of further study. So far, there has been an imbalance in portraying women in terms of ‘culture’ rather than examining the practical roles they played too. Studies will need to move, as Margaret Strobel’s have done, beyond the endless search for victimization and the relationships and language of power to examine the impact they had in supporting the Empire.” But this is really old news.

The final section, Chapters 10–14, looks at the continuities of imperialism after 1914, the British responses to nationalism and decolonization, the Empire in the world wars, popular culture, questions of development, and the impact of imperialism on Britain itself. The First World War, a watershed in so many areas, can also be seen in a similar way for the British Empire. Max Beloff argued that the Dominions had asserted their own, independent policy lines during the conflict. W. David McIntyre argued along similar lines, stating that the war had been an important factor in the growth of national feeling. Ronald Hyam believed that the war had destroyed the old imperial policies and that a new, more efficient and humane approach was taken, despite the excesses of repression in the immediate aftermath of the war. But what was perhaps a watershed in aspirations after the First World War became a reality after the Second World War. Victory yes, but at a great cost, loss of prestige, and the acceleration of the process of decolonization. The book also contains a chronology and an excellent bibliography.

There is a lot to like in this slim volume. The text focuses on controversies, debates, and imperial myths, rather than narrative history. This makes it an ideal choice for historiographical or bibliographical exercises for undergraduate history students. Johnson tries to let the various sides of an argument speak for themselves, only occasionally, and quite naturally, revealing some prejudice. At heart, this reviewer believes he is suspicious of post-colonial studies, but willing to give them some credit. He quotes Dane Kennedy of George Washington University, who by the way is a he, and not a she, as identified in the text, as believing that post-colonial theory has had a positive effect on imperial history as “it raises provocative and fundamental questions about the epistemological structures of power and the cultural foundations of

resistance." Moreover, it can help the historian understand the impact of imperialism, how imperial rule was maintained, how race and tribe became more important in the identification of groups, the interconnections of the periphery and the metropolis, and the way that language and ideas shaped British colonial policies. But Kennedy acknowledges that "there is a great deal wrong with post-colonial theory." The author really has two goals in writing this study, which should quickly find its way onto undergraduate reading lists in courses on colonialism, British and British Empire history, and as stated earlier it is perfect for courses on historiography or research methods. Firstly, he wants to show how the British Empire depended for its survival on flexibility and its ability to adapt, concede, and develop. Secondly, he wants to extract from the term British imperialism something that is not just pejorative, but rather reveal the Empire as a complex enterprise and process, where definitions have shifted over the years, and one single definition remains unattainable even today. In this judicious, useful, concise, and critical guide to British imperialism, these two goals have been realized.

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Christine F. Collette and Keith Laybourn, eds. *Modern Britain Since 1979: A Reader*. London: I.B. Tauris & Co., Ltd., 2003. Pp. ix, 324. Paper, \$27.50; ISBN 1-86064-597-6.

Modern Britain since 1979 has many qualities that are desirable in a text, but it also has some limitations and problems. Students will find the text clear and the language accessible. The editors have done an excellent job of tying the information in the various chapters together, so students will come away from reading with an integrated picture of the political history of Britain in the last 25 years. There are chapters concerning feminism and race, but these topics are developed as issues that influenced political change, not as social or cultural phenomena. The excellent account of Margaret Thatcher's rise and impact on conservatism includes economic issues, of necessity, but again the focus is political. The question is how did the economics of individualism provide a foundation for Conservative political success, and not how the individual Briton was affected. The collapse of Labour and its eventual rebirth culminating in the spectacular success of Tony Blair is handled in the same fashion. The party's abandonment of its traditional leftist/socialist ideals and its new approach (the Third Way) to the welfare state is presented as political policy. The human issues involved are either ignored or considered in terms of political success or failure. A full chapter devoted to the decline and ultimate demise of the Communist Party of Great Britain, while necessary to a full picture of politics, seems overkill. The CPGB had