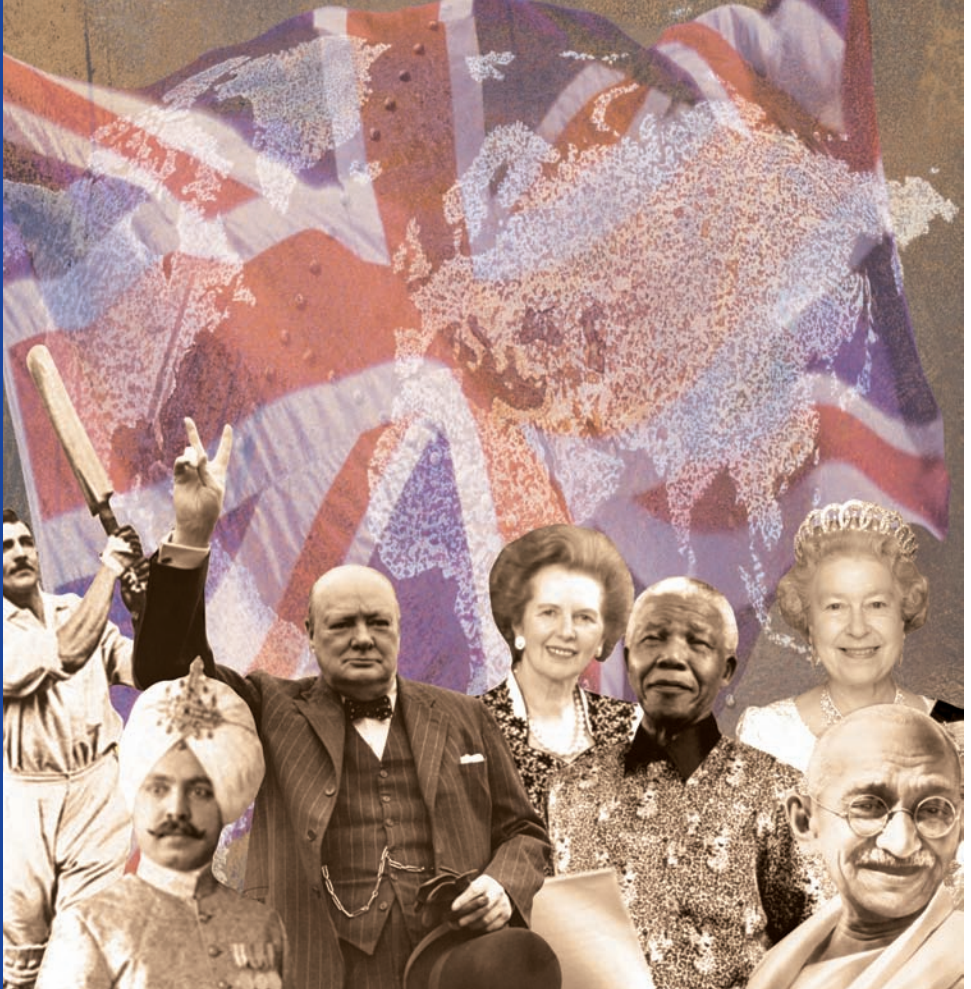


THE MODERN SCHOLAR

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THE WORLD'S FIRST SUPERPOWER: FROM EMPIRE TO COMMONWEALTH, 1901 TO PRESENT

COURSE GUIDE



Professor Denis Judd
LONDON METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

The World's First Superpower: From Empire to Commonwealth, 1901–Present

Professor Denis Judd
London Metropolitan University



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The World's First Superpower:
From Empire to Commonwealth, 1901–Present
Professor Denis Judd



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Course Syllabus

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About Your Professor

Denis Judd

Denis Judd is Professor of British and Commonwealth History at London Metropolitan University. He was educated at Magdalen College, Oxford, going on to take his Ph.D. at the University of London. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and a policy adviser to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. He is a frequent broadcaster on radio and TV in the United Kingdom and abroad, and a regular contributor to the international press. His more than two dozen books cover a wide variety of topics—historical studies, biographies, children's stories, and two novels.

His history books include *The Lion and the Tiger: The Rise and Fall of the British Raj* (2004), *The Boer War* (with Keith Surridge [2002]), and *Empire: The British Imperial Experience from 1765 to the Present*, with Alison Uttley (2001). His earlier work (dates and latest editions given) includes *Balfour and the British Empire* (1968), *The Victorian Empire* (1970), *Edward VII* (1975), *The Crimean War* (1975), *Palmerston* (1975), *Lord Reading* (1982), *Prince Philip* (1991), *Radical Joe: A Life of Joseph Chamberlain* (1993), *Jawaharlal Nehru* (1993), *The Life and Times of King George V* (1993), and *Someone Has Blundered* (1999).

Suggested Reading for This Course

You will get the most out of this course by reading Professor Judd's book, *Empire: The British Imperial Experience from 1765 to the Present*, published by Basic Books, 1998.



Introduction

This course will examine the development of the British Empire from the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, via its greatest territorial extent in 1919 to its eventual decline and end in the years after World War Two, and its final transformation into the Commonwealth of independent nations.

The course opens with the death of Queen Victoria, Empress of India and symbol of Britain's imperial splendor, and goes on to look at the ways in which, during the first part of the twentieth century, the Empire both expanded and thrived, but also had to face the attrition of nationalist opposition and the indifference of many British people to its value and significance.

In the process, we shall examine the material advantages that the Empire brought to Britain, but also scrutinize the burdens and anxieties that it imposed. During these years the Empire survived its total involvement, from start to finish, in both World Wars, but also moved toward the principle of devolving power when possible and appropriate to indigenous people.

It is important to realize what an extraordinary, complex, and huge organization the British Empire was. One quarter of the human race lived within its borders and it covered about the same amount of the globe. When the poet Rudyard Kipling wrote of "dominion over palm and pine" he could also have added arctic pack ice, prairie, rainforest, Arcadian pastures, towering mountain ranges, deserts, densely populated cities, and much else besides. In addition, almost every variety of human being lived under British rule, from Chinese to African, from indigenous American to European, from Indian to Maori, from Arab to Australian aboriginal.

We shall proceed chronologically, but also look closely at particular themes and interactions. Not every single unit in this huge global organization will be assessed, but we will seek to uncover the basic historical truths overall about what happened and why.

Lecture 1: The Edwardian Empire, 1901–1914

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd's *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 187–200.

Introduction

In this lecture, we will explain how the Empire adjusted to the death of Queen Victoria and to the role of her successor, Edward VII. We will examine the scale and nature of the Empire in 1901 until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. We will examine the increasing involvement of the monarchy in the promotion of the imperial ideal and in the furtherance of imperial unity. We will also look at the struggle to make Empire central to the British identity, and in particular at several of the great issues—the unification of South Africa under British control, the growing conflict with Indian nationalism, and the need to boost Britain's trading links with the Empire. In the process, we shall look at the differences between Conservative and Liberal approaches to Empire, and at main variations within the imperial system.

Issues . . .

1. How central was Empire to Britain's identity and prosperity?
2. How different were the approaches to Empire of the two main parties (the Conservatives and Unionists and the Liberals)?
3. Why was the issue of tariff reform, or economic protectionism, so bitterly contested?
4. What do the policies of unifying South Africa and making concessions to Indian nationalism tell us about the Empire?
5. What success did plans to unify the Empire have?

The Significance of the Empire and the Role of the Monarchy

1. Queen Victoria's death seemed the end of an era. How could the Empire, which comprised one quarter of humanity, cope with its loss?
2. Edward VII, however, did much more to bind the Empire more closely to Britain. Victoria never visited her great Empire. King Edward and his sons went on many royal tours of the Empire, and after his death in 1910, his eldest son George V was crowned King-Emperor in a great Durbar in India.
3. Monarchy therefore became one of the best links for holding the Empire together.
4. For many British people, however, the Empire seemed far away and less important than bread-and-butter survival issues.

5. Many, though, took enormous pride in Britain's greatness, a pride bolstered by the patriotic journalism of much of the new popular press, such as the *Daily Mail*, by Elgar's great anthem *Land of Hope and Glory*, and by the flood of stirring novels for young people extolling Empire.

Conservatives and Liberals

1. The Conservatives and Unionists were in power from their election victory of 1900 until the end of 1905.
2. They were far more committed to imperialism than the Liberal party. They saw the Empire as a source of profit and trade, and a guarantee of Britain's greatness.
3. Under them, much attention was paid to imperial defense and to military spending, and they also generally supported plans to unify the Empire as much as possible, though not much progress was made in this direction.
4. However, in 1903, they quarreled among themselves over the issue of whether tariff reform, or imperial trade protection, should replace free trade, and they fatally split into two factions.
5. The Liberals won a landslide election victory in 1906 on the basis of keeping free trade and the promise of social reform.
6. Although the Liberals had their imperialist wing (Asquith/Grey and others), they included many critics of Empire, such as Lloyd George. Their approach was therefore one of discriminating support for Empire and a full support for free trade.

Tariff Reform

1. As Britain faced more intense foreign commercial competition, despite still leading the world in trade, shipping, and the financial services of the City of London, a movement arose demanding the ending of the free market, known as free trade, and the introduction of fiscal protection, or tariff reform (the taxing of foreign goods entering the British marketplace).
2. Tariff reform promised the protection of British industry and extra revenue through tariffs, or taxes.
3. Its supporters (the most forceful of whom was the Unionist Joseph Chamberlain, Colonial Secretary, 1895–1903) also claimed that tariff reform would create an imperial common market and thus consolidate the Empire round the issue of trade.
4. Its critics argued that free trade was still the best system and that the taxing of foreign food would raise food prices in Britain—on bread, for example.

Land of Hope and Glory

*Dear Land of Hope, thy hope is crowned.
God make thee mightier yet!
On Sov'reign brows, beloved, renowned,
Once more thy crown is set.
Thine equal laws, by Freedom gained,
Have ruled thee well and long;
By Freedom gained, by Truth maintained,
Thine Empire shall be strong.*

~Sir Edward Elgar, 1902
(first stanza)

5. The cabinet of the Conservative and Unionist premier Balfour split over the issue in 1903, with Chamberlain only one of several ministers to resign.
6. The issue was only settled for the time being by the crushing Liberal election victory of 1906; for the moment, free trade had won.

Indian Nationalism

1. India was Britain's biggest imperial possession, and also a very valuable one.
2. Under the Viceroyalty of the Conservative Lord Curzon (1898–1905), policy was based on demonstrating the fairness and excellence of British rule to convince Indians they did not need their own government.
3. Indian nationalism, however, could not be bought off, especially after Curzon arbitrarily partitioned the ancient province of Bengal into its roughly Hindu and Muslim halves, thus enraging local opinion.
4. The advent of the Liberal government in late 1905 led to a more sympathetic British approach.
5. Bengal was reunited and in 1909 the first significant measures of devolution (the Morley-Minto reforms) increased the Indian electorate and Indian representation on the viceroy's central council, as well as on all the local councils.
6. These councils were both legislative and executive, and as a result, Indians had got their foot in the door of power. There could be no going back.
7. The British Raj, though, still remained firmly in control, and British notions of superiority were firmly fixed.

South Africa

1. If the reforms in India showed the progressive side of the Liberal government between 1905 and 1914, things looked different in relation to South Africa.
2. After the Boer War of 1899–1902, the British priority was to develop the South African gold-based economy and to bind up the divisions between the two white groups—the English speakers and the Afrikaners (or Boers).
3. The peace ending the war had been generous toward the defeated Boers and had contained reassurances that the majority black population would be kept out of the political process.
4. The Balfour government had also introduced about 50,000 indentured Chinese workers into the gold mines to try to bring that industry back to full postwar production. This gave Liberals in Britain a stick with which to beat the government, claiming that a system of “Chinese slavery” had been introduced.
5. With the Liberals back in power from the end of 1905, many expected a change in policy toward South Africa.
6. Certainly, the indentured worker system was scrapped, but in other ways, the government moved to enshrine white supremacy in the creation of a new Dominion, the Union of South Africa.

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7. Beginning in 1910, the Union brought together the two former Boer republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State with the British colonies of the Cape and Natal.
 8. Blacks were overwhelmingly excluded from the political process and remained at best second-class citizens.
 9. The leadership of the new Dominion passed to moderate Afrikaners (former Boer War generals like Louis Botha and Jan Smuts) with mainly English-speaking backing. Afrikaner nationalists were largely bought off by the consolidation of white supremacy.
 10. To a large extent, government and the police were run by Afrikaners, and the economy was run by English speakers.
 11. This was the “new South Africa,” which so many whites had hoped for; it prospered, but the position of the nonwhite population grew more, not less, difficult.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What differences are there between the Conservative and Liberal views of Empire?
2. What were the criticisms of tariff reform?

Suggested Reading

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Other Books of Interest

Hattersley, Roy. *The Edwardians*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005.
Wilson, A.N. *After the Victorians: The Decline of Britain in the World*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005.

Websites to Visit

1. PBS website "Edwardian Life" describing various aspects of everyday life in Edwardian England — www.pbs.org/manorhouse/edwardianlife/index.html
2. Modern History Sourcebook at Fordham University with the text of a speech by Joseph Chamberlain entitled "The Radical Programme, 1885" — www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1885chamberlain.html
3. Indian History Sourcebook at Fordham University article entitled "Mohandas K. Gandhi: Indian Home Rule (1909)," which is an excerpt from Washington State University professor Paul Brians's *Reading About the World*, Vol. 2 — www.wsu.edu:8080/~wldciv/world_civ_reader_2/gandhi.html

Lecture 2: Making the Most of Empire, 1901–1914

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd's *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 201–225.

Introduction

In this lecture, we will look at the different ways in which the British tried to make the most of their Empire—mainly in response to a number of perceived external and internal threats. There is the drive to achieve a greater level of formal unity, through schemes for political federation, closer defense cooperation, and through the creation of an imperial common market and the development of the Empire's resources. We will also examine a variety of movements that were set up to protect Britain's standing and to guarantee the future, from the scouting movement to the tariff reform league. We will also look at the attempt to promote greater awareness of the Empire through education, children's books, and comics, and through adult literature and culture.

Issues . . .

1. How real were the perceived challenges to Britain's position overseas and to the Empire?
2. How real were the perceived threats to Britain's domestic system and to the British way of life?
3. What success did the various responses to these challenges achieve?

Facing Up to the Threat

1. At the start of the twentieth century, Britain seemed threatened, as never before, both from within and from outside.
2. There was growing economic competition from Germany, the United States, and a few other technically advanced and ambitious countries.
3. There was a growing naval challenge from Germany and Japan.
4. There was the start of serious protest from nationalist organizations, chiefly in the Indian Empire, demanding a share in power. Irish nationalists were also demanding Home Rule.
5. At home, worries were expressed about the growth of trade union militancy and socialism, at the apparent flood of asylum seekers and immigrants arriving in Britain, at the demands of the women's movement for the vote, and at the arrival of foreign terrorist groups, such as the anarchists.
6. Overall, there was an anxiety that Britain's position as a world superpower was slipping, and that the nation, the "race," was degenerating.
7. Something had to be done!

Imperial Reorganization

1. Throughout the Edwardian period, both the Conservative and Unionist government and their Liberal successors tried to promote feasible schemes of greater cooperation, especially between Britain and the self-governing Dominions.
2. The idea of imperial federation was seriously discussed, including the creation of an imperial parliament in Britain, but was finally laid to rest through Dominion reluctance and the lack of enthusiasm of the post-1905 Liberal government.
3. A better organization of the Empire's defenses, especially in the aftermath of the 1899–1902 Boer War, was also attempted.
4. Some progress was made: most of the Dominions agreed to give an annual subsidy to the upkeep of the Royal Navy; the consultative Committee of Imperial Defense was set up; various British military reforms were made.
5. Chamberlain's drive to shift Britain from free trade to an imperial common market system through the introduction of tariff reform aroused bitter controversy and was for the time being defeated by the coming to power of the free trade Liberals in 1905 and their comprehensive election victory early in 1906.
6. Among the positive developments was the agreement for a regular structure for the calling of Imperial Conferences every few years.
7. The monarchy also emerged as the most effective and useful visible and formal bond to bind together a huge and widely scattered Empire.

Greater Efficiency

1. The early twentieth century saw British attempts to promote greater "national efficiency" as a way of preserving Britain's superpower status and heading off challenges from rivals like Germany and France.
2. Before he resigned as Colonial Secretary in 1903, the dynamic imperialist Joseph Chamberlain had tried his utmost to bring about a more efficient use of the Empire's enormous resources and potential.
3. Formerly a highly successful Birmingham businessman and manufacturer, Chamberlain passionately believed that the Empire was like a "great underdeveloped estate of the realm." He therefore tried to get British business and financial institutions to invest capital in imperial economic development; ironically, he himself lost a small fortune in a business venture in the British West Indies.
4. As Colonial Secretary (1895–1903), he forced through an unprecedented and significant expansion of government aid and investment in regions like the economically declining British West Indies, as well as in other areas. Once this principle had been established, there was no going back to the old *laissez-faire* system.
5. Significantly, Chamberlain had also backed Britain's aggressive role in the Boer War of 1899–1902, as a way of bringing the whole of the rapidly expanding, gold-based South African economy under comprehensive British control.

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6. Chamberlain's deeply committed support of tariff reform (or the creation of an Empire-based Common Market) was part of this strategy too. In the process, Britain would both protect its own domestic industries against increasingly fierce foreign competition and bind the Empire more closely together.
 7. However, the Liberal landslide election victory in 1906, and their reelection in 1910, meant that free trade prevailed over the new policy of tariff reform.
 8. Once in power, however, the Liberals also addressed the issue of national efficiency, through educational and social reform, and through rationalizing Britain's defense capability—a process begun by the Unionist-Conservative governments from 1895 to 1905.

Educational Reforms

1. Before its fall from power in 1905, the Unionist government had passed the 1904 Education Act aimed at rationalizing Britain's confused school system; in particular, the act introduced a layer of technical secondary schools to promote the study of technology and science.
2. During the late nineteenth century, there had also been the growth of technical institutes to encourage the full and part-time study of science; the pioneering novelist and socialist H.G. Wells was the product of one of the best-known institutes in South Kensington.
3. After 1905, the Liberal government put large amounts of state money into education. The Liberals encouraged schools to carry out annual medical inspections and to provide school dinners (lunches), some of which were free for poorer children.
4. From 1904, Empire Day was celebrated annually in British schools, though some left-wing Local Education Authorities criticized this glorification of imperialism.

Social Reforms

1. In 1908, Old Age pensions were introduced.
2. In 1911, the National Insurance Act made provision for unemployment benefit and was the rudimentary basis of the future welfare state.
3. Labour Exchanges were also set up.

The Wider Response to Fears of National Decline

1. If the reforms outlined above were the state's response to fears over national decline, there was also another equally powerful, more free-market-based and spontaneous set of responses.
2. In 1908, Colonel Robert Baden-Powell, a hero of the Boer war, launched the Scouting movement for boys. Scouting, which soon included the Girl Guide movement as well, aimed at promoting patriotism, discipline, practical skills (the Boy Scout motto was "Be Prepared"), and obedience to authority, especially that of the monarch, the government, the employer, the church, and so on. Baden-Powell also demanded sexual abstinence and self-control from the Boy Scouts and disapproved of the wasteful and enervating "vice" of masturbation.

3. Other youth movements proliferated, such as the Boys' Brigade, the Knights of King Arthur, and the Sea Scouts.
4. There was also a flood of national organizations for adults, such as the Imperial Federation League, the English Speaking Union (aimed at closer ties with the United States), and the National Service League.
5. Rousing patriotic writing extolled the virtues of the British "race" and often painted extremely negative and patronizing images of black, brown, and Chinese people. These stereotypes were commonplace in school textbooks as well as in the rapidly expanding numbers of comics and annuals for children, such as *Boy's Own* or *Girl's Own*.
6. Such self-serving world views were also being presented in much of the new, popular press (in newspapers like the *Daily Mail*) and in a flood of novels glorifying the British way of life and the British Empire—books written by men who often had experience of Empire, authors like Rudyard Kipling, John Buchan, Rider Haggard, and many more.
7. Interestingly, and as an indication of increasing national insecurity, this period saw the first spy novel, *The Riddle of the Sands*, which anticipated a formidable naval challenge from Germany.

Seeking Protection through a Revolution in Foreign and Diplomatic Policy

1. Between 1901 and 1914, Britain abandoned the superpower policy of "Splendid Isolation" and sought out allies.
2. In 1902, the Anglo-Japanese alliance was signed, to be extended in 1905.
3. The 1904 understanding with France, the *Entente*, aligned Britain with one of its most traditional and serious rivals, and, significantly, meant the end of any such alliance with Imperial Germany.
4. This was followed in 1908 by a similar understanding with Tsarist Russia, France's formal ally.
5. Britain also achieved a much closer relationship with the rapidly emerging United States, a great power in the making—chiefly by appeasing American policy and ambitions in the Western hemisphere.
6. As a result, Britain was able to rationalize its defense capabilities and spending, in effect relying on its new friends and allies to look after imperial interests in various parts of the globe, such as in the Caribbean, the China Sea, and elsewhere.

What Did All of This Mean?

1. Britain was grappling with an unusual degree of national insecurity and unease between 1901 and 1914.
2. From 1904, Britain was involved in a European system of alliances that would lead to its entering the war against Germany and its allies in the summer of 1914.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What were the perceived threats against Britain at the beginning of the twentieth century?
2. What was the intent behind “national efficiency”?

Suggested Reading

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Other Books of Interest

Jeal, Tim. *Baden-Powell*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001.

Searle, Geoffrey. *The Quest for National Efficiency: A Study in British Politics and Political Thought, 1899–1914*. Dublin: Ashfield Press, 1990.

Websites to Visit

1. Anglo Boer War Museum website of Bloemfontein, South Africa, contains content that thoroughly discusses the war — www.anglo-boer.co.za/
2. Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands, website with the text (in English) of *A Short History of Education* by G. Benson Clough, published in London in 1904 — www.socsci.kun.nl/ped/whp/histeduc/clough/gben001.html
3. Infed (Informal Education) website encyclopedia article entitled “Robert Baden-Powell as an Educational Innovator” — www.infed.org/thinkers/et-bp.htm

Lecture 3: The Empire and the First World War, 1914–1919

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd's *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 242–257.

Introduction

In this lecture, we will examine the impact of World War I upon Britain and the Empire, and in particular examine the ways in which the conflict demonstrated both the strengths and the weaknesses of the imperial system.

Issues . . .

1. Why did Britain enter the war in 1914?
2. How did the Empire react to being automatically involved in the hostilities?
3. What contribution did the Empire make to the war effort?
4. What opposition to the war manifested itself from within the Empire?
5. What do the peace treaties and the postwar settlement tell us about Britain and the Empire by 1919?

Britain's Entry into the War

1. Technically, Britain was not bound by any treaty to enter the war on the side of France or Russia—the two *ententes* were understandings, not treaties.
2. But by 1914, Germany was perceived as a serious threat to Britain—especially in the area of naval supremacy.
3. By 1904, the Foreign Office had made the momentous decision to reject an alliance with Germany in favor of an understanding with France.
4. The German invasion of Belgium in July 1914 threatened the channel ports and British naval control of the English Channel.
5. It was almost a relief to end the long period of prewar international tension and finally to put to the test the seemingly unavoidable struggle for supremacy with Imperial Germany. Sir Edward Grey, Britain's Foreign Secretary, soberly remarked, "The lights are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime."

The Empire's Response to the Declaration of War

1. Australia and New Zealand, the most loyal and the most dependent of the self-governing Dominions, committed themselves fully to the war.
2. Canada entered only after the parliament at Ottawa had agreed upon full support.

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3. In South Africa, a dissident Afrikaner minority rose in a rebellion that was quickly snuffed out by the government led by loyalist Afrikaners such as Premier Louis Botha and Jan Smuts. The war was supported overwhelmingly by English-speaking whites.
 4. In Britain, many Irish nationalists felt frustrated and increasingly bitter that the outbreak of war had set back the long-desired achievement of Home Rule.
 5. In India, some nationalists felt that the country's support for Britain ought to be rewarded by more British constitutional concessions.
 6. In the rest of the dependent Empire, there was virtually complete support for the war.

The Empire's Contribution to the War Effort

1. There was a colossal contribution in terms of manpower. For example, Canada recruited over 628,000 men, of whom two-thirds served in combat overseas; New Zealand recruited over 128,000 men, of whom 112,000 served overseas; the Indian army was expanded by nearly two million men, many of whom fought on the Western front and in the Middle East; the colonies of British West Africa raised over 25,000 men, the British West Indies over 8,000; 1,000 came from Mauritius and even 100 from Fiji.
2. Especially in the trench warfare on the Western front, Empire troops suffered horrific losses. By the end of hostilities, nearly one million British and Empire troops had died, and many more had been wounded or gassed.
3. The bungled Gallipoli campaign in 1915 inflicted disproportionate losses upon Australian and New Zealand forces—the ANZACS. We now know that too often Indian troops were put into the most difficult of situations, especially on the Western front.
4. In addition, the Empire provided huge quantities of food and raw materials for the war.
5. Britain also borrowed large sums of money to pay for the war from the Dominions and India (as well as from the United States).

Negative Reactions to the War

1. As noted above, a minority of Afrikaners sided with Germany, not Britain.
2. French Canadians failed to volunteer for the fighting in equal proportion to English-speaking Canadians, and when the government attempted to introduce conscription in 1917, there were serious civil disturbances in the province of Quebec.
3. Even Australia twice voted against conscription in two referendums—an indication perhaps of the power of both the Irish-Australian community and of the local Labour movement.
4. In 1916, some Irish nationalists launched the Easter rebellion in Dublin, which, though fiercely crushed by Britain, began a campaign of resistance that rendered much of Southern Ireland ungovernable by the end of the war.

5. As the war progressed, Indian nationalists pressed for reforms and were rewarded in 1917 by the visit to the subcontinent of Edwin Montagu, Secretary of State for India, who promised, in effect, Dominion status as the goal of British policy toward India.
6. Overall, the endless and seemingly senseless slaughter tended to undermine British authority and to encourage the growth of a wide range of Empire nationalism—making the Dominions more anxious to assert their independence from Britain when the fighting ended.

Organizing the Imperial War Effort

1. On becoming Prime Minister in 1916, David Lloyd George made a clear effort to associate the Empire as closely as possible with the planning and running of the war.
2. In 1917, an Imperial War Conference in London brought together the British government, Dominion premiers, and Indian leaders in a series of meetings to address the issues of the war.
3. The Imperial War Conference met again in 1918 and in 1919.
4. At the same time, Lloyd George also created the smaller Imperial War Cabinet to work closely with his government.

The Empire at the Peace

1. At the peace conferences with the three defeated Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey), Britain included representatives of the Dominions and India in the main British Empire delegation and also insisted that the Dominions and India be represented in their own right (like minor powers, e.g., Belgium), much to French suspicions that “perfidious Albion” was simply packing the conferences in its favor.
2. As it happened, Britain and the Dominions sometimes disagreed. For example, Australia wanted maximum war reparations against Germany, while South Africa wanted less harsh terms.
3. Britain greatly increased its Empire through acquiring ex-enemy territories under the mandate of the newly formed League of Nations.
4. A large new empire in the Middle East was gained, including Palestine (modern Israel and the Palestinian Territories), Jordan, and Iraq—already important for its oil. Since Britain already ruled Egypt with the vital link of the Suez Canal, and many Persian Gulf states, and dominated oil-rich southern Iran, a huge new imperial area of strategic and economic significance was consolidated.
5. Britain also gained territory in Africa (like Tanganyika and parts of German Cameroon and Togoland) and the South Pacific.
6. Interestingly, not merely did the Dominions and India join the League of Nations in their own right, but the former also acquired mandated territory. Thus South Africa ruled former German South West Africa (now Namibia), and Australia received Papua, New Guinea, from Germany. In a way, therefore, some of the Dominions became minor imperial powers in their own right.

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7. As a result of the peace treaties, therefore, by 1919, the British Empire reached its greatest territorial extent and gave the impression of overwhelming global power.

The Downside

1. In the interwar period, however, the Empire was to face its gravest threats since the American Revolution.
2. Indian nationalism was to assert itself vigorously under the revolutionary leadership of Mohandas K. Gandhi.
3. The Dominions demanded increasing independence from Britain and from the constraints of British foreign policy.
4. Ireland was rent by civil war and was finally partitioned in 1921.
5. Britain's economy had been damaged by the cost of the war and faced ferocious competition.
6. In the United Kingdom, the Labour party, which was in theory opposed to Empire, was to form two minority governments.
7. Among the British population, most of them wearied by wartime sacrifices, the new postwar consumerism and rising anxieties over unemployment and social disadvantage were distractions from the lofty ideals of Empire.
8. Was Empire in the end simply camouflaging a slow and inevitable process of British decline?
9. If that was indeed the case, perhaps the apparent might of the Empire was a delusion and a snare.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What was the Empire's response to the declaration of war?
2. How did World War I peace treaties affect the span of Empire?

Suggested Reading

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Other Books of Interest

James, Lawrence. *Warrior Race: A History of the British at War*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004.

Omissi, David, ed. *Indian Voices of the Great War: Soldiers' Letters 1914–18*. London: MacMillan Publishing, Ltd., 1999.

Websites to Visit

1. BBC website: Wars and Conflict: World War One — www.bbc.co.uk/history/war/wwone/index.shtml
2. Modern History Sourcebook at Fordham University with several poems by British authors under the title "World War I Poetry" — www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1914warpoets.html
3. First World War.com website contains extensive materials on the war — www.firstworldwar.com
4. British Ministry of Defense website with a short article, and many images, about soldiers and civilian support from around the Empire during World War I — www.mod.uk/wewerethere/firstww.html
5. Britannia.com website "Europe In Retrospect" with an excerpt from *A Brief History of the Past Two Hundred Years* by Raymond F. Betts, Chapter Fourteen, "The Retreat from Empire" — www.britannia.com/history/euro/4/2_2.html

Lecture 4: The 1924 Wembley Empire Exhibition; Empire, Trade, Unity, and Disunity

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd's *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 273–286.

Introduction

In this lecture, we will look at the post-World War I attempt to promote the idea of Empire as a beneficial and forward-looking institution—to sell the idea to the British and the Empire-wide public. In particular, we will examine the need to expand Empire trade and to consolidate and unify the Empire as much as possible through the monarchy, the new media, the radio, communications, and travel.

Issues . . .

1. Why was the 1924 Wembley Empire Exhibition mounted and how successful was it?
2. How important and successful was Empire-wide trade?
3. What role did the British monarchy play in promoting the idea of Empire?
4. How effective in encouraging imperial unity was the new mass media—film and radio—or travel and communications?

The Wembley Empire Exhibition of 1924

1. The Empire Exhibition of 1924 dwarfed the Greta Exhibition of 1851 both in scale and in the number of visitors it attracted—over twenty-seven million by the end, though many of them went several times.
2. New roads and rail links were built, as well as a great new stadium that was eventually to become the show-case for English soccer matches, like the F.A. Cup Final, and the 1948 Olympic Games.
3. The new technology of reinforced concrete was used to build most of the exhibition halls and stadiums.
4. Visitors could marvel at statues of the Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VIII) made out of Canadian butter or at the mountains of Australian fruit.
5. For many visitors, the exhibition provided a rare opportunity to see black and brown subjects of the Empire in the flesh.
6. There were also rodeos, scout jamborees, military tattoos, and historical pageants—as well as a fun fair.
7. Popular as it proved, and despite government financial support, the whole show actually lost money in its first year and had to be put on again in 1925.

8. For the British people, it became the most significant exhibition between the 1851 Great Exhibition and the Festival of Britain in 1951.

Why Was the Exhibition Staged?

1. The idea had first been proposed in 1902 by the British Empire League.
2. The postwar period, however, provided the urgent need to promote and reinterpret the imperial ideal amid the fresh and daunting challenges of the interwar world.
3. When he opened the exhibition, on April 23, St. George's Day, the King-Emperor George V said: "We believe that the Exhibition will bring the peoples of the Empire to a better understanding of how to meet their reciprocal wants and aspirations."
4. It would have been more accurate to say that the idea of Empire needed an urgent makeover, and that in particular there was a pressing need to expand interimperial trade.
5. In short, the exhibition was all about selling the Empire as persuasively and dramatically as possible.
6. The imperial ideal needed a fresh coat of paint and some spicing up.

What Problems Did the Empire Face?

1. It was feared that the public were becoming more disinterested in the Empire; a fear compounded by the rise of the theoretically anti-imperial Labour party.
2. The old class-based order had taken a battering as a result of the horrors and privations of the First World War.
3. Indian nationalism was in full flood, and several Dominions wanted to distance themselves more from Britain.
4. Lloyd George's attempt to bring the high level of imperial cooperation into the postwar era had not succeeded by his fall from power in 1922.
5. It was now doubtful if anything like a joint and consistent foreign policy for the Empire could be achieved.
6. As the idea of the "Empire-Commonwealth" took root, some of the old deriding-do aspect of triumphalist, militaristic imperialism was inevitably diluted. Commonwealth seemed less glamorous and compelling than Empire.
7. So there was a need to find as many ways as possible to bind an enlarged and, as some saw it, fragmenting Empire more closely together.
8. The 1924 Exhibition was designed to concentrate the popular imagination upon that need.

Imperial Trade: A Way Forward?

1. Empire trade was at the heart of the Wembley Exhibition, and one of the few areas of real imperial success at this time.
2. The trend was growing fast and favourably, and the exhibition and the introduction of the Empire Marketing Board in 1926 seem to have aided the process.

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3. The handsome surpluses on Britain's trade with the Empire-Commonwealth were hit by the great depression after the 1929 Wall Street Crash.
 4. But even here the Empire rallied, and in 1932 introduced a wide-ranging system of preferential imperial trade as a result of the Ottawa Economic Conference of that year. This was a system very similar to earlier calls for tariff reform, as we have seen.
 5. The rapid development of the Sterling Area during the interwar years was also a boost to the British economy and to the financial success of the City of London's banking and insurance business.

Other Official Interwar Attempts to Promote Empire Unity

1. The formation of a Commonwealth Office in Whitehall to partner the existing Colonial and India Offices.
2. The setting up of government-backed development bodies like the 1927 Colonial Medical Council and the Agricultural Advisory Council.
3. Measures of aid and development like the 1929 Colonial Welfare and Development Act.

Making and Strengthening More Links

1. There were also a good many other ways in which interimperial links were made and strengthened.
2. One was through the use of the royal tours to different parts of the Empire by George V and Queen Mary, and by their children—most notably the dashing, though erratic, Edward Prince of Wales.
3. Despite the trauma of the 1936 Abdication of Edward VIII, business as usual was soon restored by the accession of the shy, ordinary George VI with his pretty, lively wife and his two attractive daughters, the Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret Rose.
4. Regular BBC radio broadcasts also reached out to a global and scattered Empire as never before, causing George V to remark: "Such a miracle can do nothing but cement the bonds of Empire."
5. From 1932, the monarch began the annual Christmas day broadcasts to the Empire. These were particularly effective because the King spoke plainly and without a posh accent, reminding many listeners of a bluff, no-nonsense family doctor.
6. Air travel, including the formation of companies like Imperial Airways, also promised to bring the Empire more closely together. Air travel also speeded up the distribution of letters and documents Empire-wide, strengthening links in various ways.
7. So did popular films of Empire heroics, and good, benign government, like *Sanders of the River* and *Lives of the Bengal Lancers*.
8. Moreover, much of the national press, from the staid, establishment *Times* to the mass circulation *Daily Mail*—and even the left leaning *Daily Mirror*—were eager to advertise and confirm the benefits that Empire so widely bestowed.

9. The continuing flood of novels and comics for juveniles still often promoted the imperial ideal.

The Empire Holds Its Own?

1. Despite the stresses and tribulations of Britain and the Empire in the inter-war world, the Empire, bigger than ever, more than held its own.
2. Far from Britain sinking into second class global status as war approached during the late 1930s, Britain was still plainly the great imperial power, if also a little more uncertain and introspective, that it had for so long been.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What was the purpose behind the Empire Exhibition of 1924?
2. What was considered one of the few areas of imperial success at the time of the Empire Exhibition?

Suggested Reading

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Other Books of Interest

Mackenzie, John, ed. *Imperialism and Popular Culture*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989.

Morris, Jan (James). *Farewell the Trumpets: An Imperial Retreat*. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1980.

Websites to Visit

1. *The Guardian* newspaper website historical section with an article about opening day ceremonies of the 1924 Exhibition — www.century.guardian.co.uk/1920-1929/Story/0,6051,126628,00.html
2. A short article about the British Empire Exhibition of 1924 that includes an audio file of King George V opening the Exhibition — www.members.lycos.co.uk/bee1924/index2.html
3. Article entitled “Art and Soul: Exhibiting the Empire” (about the 1924 Exhibition) by B.N. Goswamy from the September 5, 2004, edition of “Spectrum” in *The Times* newspaper from Chandigarh, India — www.tribuneindia.com/2004/20040905/spectrum/art.htm

Lecture 5: Indian Nationalism and the British Raj, 1914–1939

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd's *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 226–241 and 258–272.

Introduction

In this lecture, we will look at the continuing rule of the British in India from the start of the First World War until the end of the interwar period. We will also examine India's value to Britain, as well as describing the dramatic development of Indian nationalism and its demand for self-government under the leadership of Gandhi.

Issues . . .

1. What was the nature and scale of British rule in India?
2. What was India's real value to Britain?
3. How powerful and united were India's nationalists?
4. What was Gandhi's special contribution to the nationalist freedom struggle?
5. How genuine were Britain's constitutional reforms?

The British Raj

1. At the start of the twentieth century, Britain controlled two-thirds of India through the direct rule of its administration headed by the Viceroy and carried out by the British-controlled Indian Civil Service.
2. One-third of India was ruled via its princes, all of whom, however, were subject to British supervision and, in the last resort, control.
3. In effect, a few thousand highly educated and well-trained British administrators, backed by the Indian armed forces and the power of the British state, ran the whole show.
4. The Raj was, however, heavily dependent upon collaboration of large numbers of Indian lower administrators, troops, and various elites.
5. Through the exploitation of India's many differences of religion, caste, and language, the Raj was able to carry out a policy of "divide and rule."
6. India was also largely subject to the British rule of law.

India's Value to Britain

1. India was by far the biggest and most complex imperial possession anywhere in the world. It comprised today's states of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar. Roughly 70 percent of the population were Hindu, about 20 percent Muslim, and the remainder Sikh, Christian, Jain, Buddhist, and others.

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2. Over 80 percent of the Empire's subjects lived in India—making it truly the “jewel in the imperial crown.”
 3. In the early twentieth century, more than 20 percent of British trade was with India, and the same amount of British overseas investments were made there.
 4. India's large standing army enabled Britain to avoid military conscription (unlike other European powers such as Germany, France, and Russia), at least until 1916, and then only in wartime.
 5. Indian armed forces were paid out of Indian taxes.
 6. Above all, India was a convincing symbol of Britain's superpower status. Indeed, as the twentieth century unfolded, many commentators and politicians argued that if British rule in India ended, Britain would at once drop to the level of a second-rate power.
 7. The loss of India would also, many like Winston Churchill feared, cause Britain to lose its will and its moral authority to rule a huge, complicated global empire.

Indian Nationalism

1. Reasonable opposition had been tolerated by the Raj since the late-nineteenth century. Indeed, the Congress Party (India's largest political party) had been set up with British support in the 1880s to enable India's elite to safely let off some steam.
2. In 1906, the Muslim League had been founded to represent India's largest religious minority.
3. In 1909, the Morley-Minto reforms had made important constitutional concessions and set up the principle of separate representation in a range of councils for the Muslim electorate.
4. As the result of India's firm support during the First World War, the Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montagu, had visited the subcontinent in 1917 and had committed the British government to the introduction of “responsible government” there. This meant the Westminster model, as applied to the Dominions such as Canada and Australia.
5. Arguably, of course, these liberal concessions could be seen as a way of spinning out the rule of Britain in India, using the slow progress of democratic reforms as a means of protracting the life span of the Raj.
6. In 1919, however, the situation was dramatically to change with the impact of the charismatic and revolutionary nationalist leader Mohandas K. Gandhi.
7. Employing the philosophy of *satyagraha*, or the “strength of truth,” to Indian politics, Gandhi seized the moral high ground through his willingness to non-violently accept the aggression of the British authorities.
8. Thus civil disobedience and passive resistance were used as potent weapons against the overwhelming firepower of the Raj.
9. Moreover, millions of ordinary Indian men and women could now take part in the political process simply by peacefully demonstrating or refusing to pay British taxes.

The Events of 1919: A Turning Point?

1. In the spring of 1919, Gandhi led an all-India *satyagraha* against the continuation of repressive wartime legislation (that had been aimed at limiting Indian political activity) into the postwar period.
2. There were a series of crippling national and regional strikes linked to days of interfaith prayer.
3. At Amritsar, the holy city of the Sikhs in the Punjab, however, violence against a few Europeans did occur, leading the local military commander Brigadier General Dyer and his Muslim and Ghurkha troops to massacre in cold blood some four hundred peaceful demonstrators.
4. Although disciplined for this atrocity, Dyer remained a hero to many on the British right.
5. The Amritsar massacre, however, drove many Indian moderates into the nationalist camp. It also seemed to show the double standards of the Raj: reform on the one hand, ruthless force on the other.
6. Ironically, 1919 also saw the most significant constitutional concessions to date when the Government of India Act effectively installed Indian majorities on the central and provincial Legislative Councils; greatly extended Indian numbers on the central and provincial Executive Councils, and set up the system of diarchy (or “rule by two”), whereby Indian and British ministers shared a wide range of executive responsibility.
7. However, even under diarchy, British ministers held the key portfolios like those for justice and police. Moreover, the Viceroy retained the right to suspend any provincial or central government body and to rule directly.
8. Nonetheless, 1919 seemed to be the great breakthrough. After this, Britain chiefly sought to maintain law and order and to supervise a smooth and slow transition of power.
9. The key question was, would the pace of reform satisfy Indian nationalism?

The Issue of India, 1919 to 1939

1. India remained a hotly disputed issue during the 1920s and 1930s.
2. Fears that the two minority Labour governments that gained power would speed up the process of devolution were, however, exaggerated.
3. In 1931, the then-Viceroy Lord Irwin made a firm declaration that the government’s aim for India was Dominion status.
4. From the early 1930s, even the Conservatives led by the

Dear Friend,

Whilst, therefore, I hold the British rule to be a curse, I do not intend harm to a single Englishman or to any legitimate interest he may have in India. My ambition is nothing less than to bring round the English people through non-violence to recognize the injustice they have done to India. I do not intend to be offensive to your people. Indeed, I would like to serve your people as I would my own.

*~Mohandas Gandhi
from a letter to the
Lord Lieutenant,
March 1930*

pragmatic Stanley Baldwin were committed to Indian devolution.

5. A minority of right wingers, nonetheless, continued to oppose the trend; their leader Winston Churchill was so adamant that Baldwin called him “quite mad” over the issue of Indian independence.
6. To most observers, including British recruits into the elite Indian Civil Service, the Raj seemed on the way out.

Preparing the Way for Dominion Status?

1. The Round Table Conferences of the early 1930s, though partially boycotted by the Congress party, laid the groundwork for Indian Home Rule.
2. In 1935, the Government of India Act introduced a system of home rule with a majority of Indians serving on the various Legislative and Executive councils.
3. However, the Viceroy still held supreme authority and could suspend Provincial governments in an emergency.
4. Despite a program of “Indianization” of the ICS and the armed forces, British officials and officers still held key roles.
5. When exactly India would attain independence within the Empire-Commonwealth remained unclear.

Problems Ahead

1. The Congress Party won sweeping electoral victories in the first post-1935 general elections held in 1937, now absolutely controlling six of the eleven provinces and forming the biggest party in three more.
2. This success in itself, however, was enough to alarm many Muslims with the prospect of a “Hindu Raj” in place of the British Raj. The Muslim League now began to campaign more seriously for a Muslim homeland, to be named Pakistan.
3. What would happen to the many Princely states (some of whom had banned the Congress Party as a dangerously democratic party) when India finally became independent?

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What was the policy of “divide and rule”?
2. What impact did Mohandas Gandhi have on policies in India?

Suggested Reading

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

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Judd, Denis. *The Lion and the Tiger: The Rise and Fall of the British Raj, 1600-1947*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Wolpert, Stanley. *A New History of India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Websites to Visit

1. Mahatma Gandhi Foundation eArchive and reference library — www.web.mahatma.org.in/index.jsp
2. Amritsar Portal, a Sikh website with a historical report of the events surrounding the Amritsar massacre — www.amritsar.com/Jallian%20Wala%20Bagh.shtml
3. Harappa.com website containing images, movies, and audio files from India and South Asia prior to 1947 — www.harappa.com/welcome.html
4. Islamic Republic of Pakistan official website with a large section, “Pakistan's Historical Background,” devoted to Pakistan's founding — www.infopak.gov.pk/public/govt/history.html

Lecture 6: Sexuality and the British Empire

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd's *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 171–186.

Introduction

In this lecture, we will examine how the British—especially British and colonial men—expressed their sexuality as part of their control and rule over the British Empire. We will look at sexual attitudes within Britain itself, and at how these were often transformed or fulfilled in contact with the extraordinary variety of peoples and opportunities within the Empire. Both heterosexuality and gay sexuality will be discussed, as well as the changing attitudes toward personal morality.

Issues . . .

1. What was the significance of the suicide in 1903 of Sir Hector MacDonald and the opportunities and perils of gay sexuality within the Empire?
2. What were the prevailing sexual attitudes and taboos within Britain?
3. What is meant by the strange case of “asexuality” in some of the Empire’s founders and rulers?
4. What were the worries about decadence and the decline of the British “race”?
5. What were the effects of venereal disease and the “purity” campaigns?
6. What were official attitudes toward sexual contact with indigenous people?

The Suicide of Sir Hector MacDonald in 1903

1. In 1903, the Commander-in-Chief of British forces in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) shot himself dead in a Paris hotel room rather than return to his post to face “serious charges.”
2. The scandal centered on MacDonald’s now publicly revealed and notorious taste for sexual contact with Singhalese and European boys while in Ceylon.
3. This tragic end to a brilliant military career is a clear example of the many opportunities provided in the Empire for unconventional sexual behavior, and also of the ferocious backlash that the unmasking of such activities could provoke.
4. In particular, the suicide illustrates how disabling the discovery of gay sexuality could be and what high moral standards were routinely expected of Britain’s imperial rulers, officers, and administrators.

Sexual Opportunities and the Empire

1. The conquering, settling, and ruling of the Empire was a huge undertaking. It brought British men into contact with uncounted millions of subjects, of whom they could quite easily take sexual advantage.
2. If rape is far too often the prerogative of the conqueror, then so are less violent forms of sexual exploitation.
3. The authority automatically bestowed by British rule and prevailing assumptions of European superiority over the “native” meant that overseas British men could often behave in ways unthinkable at home in the United Kingdom.
4. Although a number of these relationships were long term and mutually enriching, some even formalized by marriage, the vast majority were the expression of the power of one dominant national and ethnic group over another “inferior” one.
5. Although organizations such as the British East India Company had initially tolerated and even encouraged marriages between Indian women and British administrators and soldiers, this attitude had gone out of fashion by the end of the eighteenth century.
6. In its place was a harsh, perhaps “Victorian,” view that interethnic marriage was diluting racial purity and somehow “letting the side down.”
7. Moreover, as imperial posts multiplied in number and travel became cheaper and safer during the nineteenth century, many British women accompanied their husbands to their overseas postings and brought up their families in the Empire. This tended to put an end to the practice of taking native mistresses.
8. Settlers, of course, had long before taken their women with them; there the temptation, from the Caribbean to Africa, was to use indigenous women as additional, universally available sexual objects, perks of the system of control.
9. One interesting counterpoint to the arrival of white women in much of the Empire was that fears of indigenous men attacking and raping British women became greatly heightened, even to the point of paranoia. If such attacks were thought to have occurred, the summary vengeance visited upon the accused was usually swift and bloody.

Asexuality and Empire: A Riddle?

1. One interesting aspect of this was the case of certain British men overseas who claimed that they were chaste, uninterested in “native” women—without sexuality, in effect.
2. During the early part of the twentieth century, some of the greatest imperial icons claimed such status, including Cecil Rhodes, General Kitchener, and Colonel Baden-Powell.
3. We now know that in the case of the three men above, and with countless more, the truth was that they were too afraid of censure and failure to admit to their sexual preference for males.

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4. Nonetheless, imperial power, and the greater tolerance of many native societies, usually allowed such closet homosexuals to explore their sexuality free of the legal prohibitions current in Britain.

Fears of Decadence and Decline

1. As the world's superpower at the start of the twentieth century, Britain had to be seen as morally superior as well.
2. The prosecution of Oscar Wilde for gay sexual activities in 1895 had shocked the nation and exposed an unseen, and for the majority, sleazy sexual underworld of rent boys and upper-class dissipation.
3. Vigorous efforts were made to purge the imperial administration of unseemly elements.
4. Purity campaigners had earlier successfully demanded that licensed regimental brothels in India should be closed down, despite the risk of venereal disease from "free market" prostitution.
5. In 1909, the Colonial Office issued a circular strongly disapproving of what it called "concubinage"—the taking of indigenous women as mistresses.
6. Despite the 1909 circular, it is evident that sexual contact between white colonial officials and black and brown women continued discreetly.
7. Increasingly, racial purity was elevated to an absolute requirement of imperial rule and order; "going native" was fiercely condemned, and in India, where there was a considerable Anglo-Indian, or mixed race, population, British *memsahibs* kept an eagle eye lest any seemingly white suit- or for their daughters have what was witheringly described as "a touch of the tar brush."
8. In all these ways, British rule remained committed to ideas of racial purity.

Purifying the "Native"

1. Imperial personnel, missionaries, and various reformers often disapproved of what they perceived as wanton and immoral behavior among those that they ruled.
2. Polygamy, child marriage, nudity, "lascivious dancing," group sexual activity, and much else was criticized, and attempts were made to impose what were seen as superior Western standards.
3. Sometimes imperial action on these issues led to serious local conflicts, such as attempts to prevent "female circumcision," or the cutting off of the clitoris during initiation ceremonies for girls in Kenya.
4. The keeping of harems, sometimes including boys, was also frowned upon.
5. The evidence, however, is that local habits and customs were extremely difficult to change, much less to stamp out.
6. As a result of the fundamental difficulties in changing "native" sexual practices, British rule failed overall to address an issue that was deeply entwined with it—that is, the continuing subordination of local women to a male-dominated hierarchy.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. Why could British men behave overseas in ways that they could not at home?
2. What local conflicts arose over the attempt to impose Western standards throughout the Empire?

Suggested Reading

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Other Books of Interest

Gill, Anton. *Ruling Passions: Race, Sex, and Empire*. London: BBC Books, 1995.

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Websites to Visit

1. University of California, Santa Cruz, Center for Cultural Studies journal, *Inscriptions*, Vol. 3–4, 1988 article entitled “Images of Indian Women in Rudyard Kipling: A Case of Doubling Discourse,” by John McBratney, edited by Deborah Gordon — www.humwww.ucsc.edu/CultStudies/PUBS/Inscriptions/vol_3-4/johnmcbratney.html
2. British Ministry of Defence website “Roll of Honour” article on the Boer War career of Sir Hector MacDonald — www.roll-of-honour.com/Boer/BoerWarHectorMacdonald.html
3. Anglo-India Association website with a short history of Anglo-Indian relationships — www.aiadanapur.org/docs/about.asp

Lecture 7: The Recognition of the First Commonwealth: Dominion Status, the Self-Governing Colonies, and Their Relations with Britain

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd's *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 287–296.

Introduction

In this lecture, by examining the process by which the self-governing Dominions were accorded independence within the Empire, we will see how the first Commonwealth came to be formally recognized. We will look at crucial events like the 1926 Imperial Conference and the making of the Statute of Westminster in 1931. We will also see how far this new Commonwealth cooperated with Britain, especially in the areas of foreign, defense, and commercial policy.

Issues . . .

1. Which were the Dominions, and how independent of Britain were they at the end of the First World War?
2. How did the demand for a definition of “Dominion status” arise?
3. Why was the Imperial Conference of 1926 so important?
4. What did the 1931 Statute of Westminster mean for the development of the Empire-Commonwealth?
5. How much did Britain and the Dominions cooperate after these reforms?

What Were the Dominions?

1. By 1921, these were nearly all federated and internally self-governing states within the Empire.
2. The name “Dominion” had been agreed on as a description of such imperial units at the Imperial Conference of 1907 and had been taken from the term used commonly to describe federated Canada after 1868.
3. Especially after 1921, with the creation of the Irish Free State as a Dominion, there was a growing movement to define Dominion status to fit an increasing sense of independence from British control and oversight.

Individual Identities of the Dominions by 1921

1. Canada was generally viewed as the senior Dominion, but one in which French-speakers sometimes proved unenthusiastic in their support of imperial causes and policy.
2. Australia had been federated in 1901 and took the title of the Commonwealth of Australia, with its capital at Canberra.
3. New Zealand was seen by Britain as one of the most “British” and loyal of the Dominions.

4. The Union of South Africa had been created in 1910 and represented an uneasy collaboration between English and Afrikaans-speaking whites in order to maintain supremacy over the large black majority.
5. Newfoundland was the oldest Dominion, but was underpopulated and destined in 1949 to be incorporated into federated Canada.
6. The Irish Free State (equivalent to today's Republic of Ireland) was the result of civil war and partition and only reluctantly and temporarily a Dominion.

What Did the Dominions Have in Common?

1. The British monarch was the head of state, and the Governor General was the monarch's representative in each Dominion and the official channel of communications with the British government in the United Kingdom.
2. Each Dominion practiced "Westminster-style" democracy, though in both South Africa and Australia, nonwhites were effectively excluded from the democratic process.
3. English common law was generally the basis of the legal process, with final appeals to London in special and rare circumstances.
4. Although Dominion parliaments could pass their own laws, it was theoretically possible (but increasingly rare) for such legislation to be vetoed from Britain.
5. Though fundamentally in control of their internal government, the Dominions were generally dependent upon British military and naval protection and thus tended automatically to support British foreign policy.
6. Some of the Dominions were beginning to build up their own armed forces, including naval forces, and were starting to argue that they were not automatically bound by the shape of British foreign policy.

The Crises of the Period, 1921–1926

1. Despite Premier Lloyd George's attempt to carry the high level of wartime cooperation between Britain and the Dominions into the postwar era, such aspirations were mostly in ruins by the time of the crucial 1926 Imperial Conference.
2. The problem was that several of the Dominions wanted formally to assert their growing sense of separate nationhood. After all, they were now members of the League of Nations in their own right, and several had opened up separate diplomatic embassies with foreign states as well as establishing the equivalent, known as High Commissions, with Britain and other Dominions.
3. The Chanak incident of 1922 had shown that Britain could no longer count upon automatic Dominion support for its foreign policy when it sought to uphold the provisions of the 1919 peace treaty with Turkey at Chanak in the eastern Mediterranean.
4. In 1923, Britain had allowed Canada to negotiate a commercial treaty with the United States without any British representation at the talks.

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5. Moreover, by 1926, several Dominions were led by Prime Ministers who wanted strongly to assert their government's separateness from the United Kingdom. These premiers included J.B. Hertzog, the Afrikaner Nationalist Prime Minister of South Africa; the government of the troubled Irish Free State; and, surprisingly, after a bitter dispute with the Governor General over the dissolution of Parliament, Mackenzie King of Canada.

The Imperial Conference of 1926

1. The 1926 conference tackled these accumulated problems with efficiency and good sense.
2. Perhaps the most important work was carried out by the Inter-Imperial Relations Committee chaired by the elder statesman and supporter of the ideal of Commonwealth, Lord Balfour (British premier from 1902 to 1905).
3. This committee produced what became known as the "Balfour definition of Dominion Status"—not to be confused with the 1917 "Balfour Declaration" promising a homeland in Palestine for Jewish people.
4. The Balfour Definition was a brilliant compromise, allowing for the principle of the free and loyal association of the Dominions within the Empire, but also for their right to disassociate if they so chose—even to leave the Empire.
5. At the same time, an Imperial External Relations Committee came to the conclusion that the Dominions should only be bound to follow British foreign policy if they wished to do so. This meant that they had no need automatically to be involved in any war that Britain entered.
6. These formulas inevitably came to mean all things to all men, but at least they disarmed the dissidents and reassured the loyalists.

The 1931 Statute of Westminster

1. The reforming provisions of the 1926 conference were put into binding statutory form in the Statute of Westminster.
2. Hailed by many as the "Magna Carta" of the evolving Commonwealth, it gave the Dominions a whole range of freedoms from British control and supervision.
3. Although interpreted rather differently according to political requirements from one Dominion to another, these negotiations formalized the evolution of the Empire into the "Empire-Commonwealth"—a binary structure of free, self-governing states and dependent ones.
4. The compromise had the merit of both keeping the Empire together and also holding out to several dependent territories (led by India) the enticing prospect of one day becoming a Dominion and joining the Commonwealth Club.
5. In recognition of these developments, the British government created, in addition to the Colonial Office and the India Office, a third department of state to represent the Dominions—the Dominion Office with its head sitting in the cabinet.

The 1930s

1. The adjustments described above did a great deal to promote Empire good will in the run up to the Second World War.
2. In general, the Dominions supported British foreign policy, including the appeasement of Nazi Germany.
3. In 1932, Empire links were further strengthened by the Ottawa Agreements, which at last introduced the principle of imperial economic preferential trade—thirty years after the failed tariff reform movement.
4. As a result, interimperial trade steadily increased as the world depression of the early 1930s faded.
5. In 1939, therefore, the Empire-Commonwealth seemed to have survived the turbulent decades of the post-First World War period with surprising skill and success.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What was the origin of the name “Dominion”?
2. What groups comprised the collaboration that made up the Union of South Africa?

Suggested Reading

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Other Books of Interest

Holland, R.F. *Britain and the Commonwealth Alliance, 1918–39*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1985.

Porter, Andrew, William Roger Louis, and Alaine Low, eds. *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Nineteenth Century*. Vol. 3. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Websites to Visit

1. The Project of the Friesian School website by Kelley L. Ross, Ph.D., with a detailed study of the British Dominions — www.friesian.com/british.htm
2. Flags of the World website with a list of British Empire dominions, colonies, protectorates, protected and associated states, and mandated and trust territories is provided with a short history of each — www.flagspot.net/flags/gb-colon.html
3. Australian Republic Unplugged website with extracts of the Imperial Conferences of 1926 and 1930 — www.statusquo.org/impcnf.html
4. Article entitled “The Statute of Westminster (1931)” by Professor Claude Bélanger, Department of History, Marianopolis College, Quebec, providing a Canadian view of the Statute — www2.marianopolis.edu/quebechistory/federal/1931.htm

Lecture 8: Sport and the British Empire

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd's *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 297–309.

Introduction

In this lecture, we will look at the role that sport played within the British Empire, both as relaxation for the rulers and as a way of asserting their difference and status, but also as a way of controlling and “improving” those that they ruled.

Issues . . .

1. Why was sport so important in Britain during these years?
2. How significant was the (elite and private) public school system in bringing sport to the Empire?
3. How important was hunting as an imperial sport?
4. What did sport bring to the rulers and settlers?
5. How much were sports such as cricket used as a form of imperial control and a part of the “civilizing mission”?
6. Could sport be used by the ruled as a way of asserting their own identity, even their opposition to British rule?

Sport and Imperial Rule

1. Sport was strongly associated with the ethical standards that the British claimed were one of the benefits of their rule.
2. These standards were part of the public (in United Kingdom terms, “private”) school ethos that had developed during the nineteenth century, inspired by Dr. Thomas Arnold of Rugby School.
3. As a result, the cult of what was termed “muscular Christianity” became a part of British rule.
4. Equestrian sports were naturally popular because, at least up to the early twentieth century, so many of the imperial ruling class spent much of their working lives in the saddle.
5. The hunting of game was also popular and was often designed to demonstrate the white ruler's capacity to dominate the fiercest of wild animals—for example, each Viceroy of India was obliged to shoot dead at least one tiger as proof of the potency of the Raj.
6. In a variety of ways, sport was part and parcel of the British “civilizing mission,” showing the ruled how things “ought to be done.”
7. Sport was also supposed to teach “manly behavior” to the colonial subjects.

Sport as a Benefit for the Rulers

1. Not merely did equestrian sports like horse racing, polo, and pig sticking hone the riding skills of the rulers, they reinforced a sense of camaraderie.
2. At the race meeting or the cricket match, the imperial administrative and commercial classes could gather and gossip and keep in touch.
3. Such events also brought a touch of home to distant lands.
4. British settlers too brought the sporting habits of the “old country” with them, thus bolstering their sense of identity and superiority.
5. It was also hoped that if the ruled took up their rulers’ sports, it would not merely wean them from various “uncivilized” habits, but would positively build bridges between the two sides.

The Symbolism of Cricket

1. Cricket was the archetypically imperial game.
2. Its power derived from the high ethical standards associated with the game.
3. For example, it was not at all acceptable to cheat at cricket. For instance, when a batsman believed himself to be out, he walked back to the pavilion without waiting for the umpire to confirm his dismissal.
4. Players were supposed to lose gracefully and to applaud the endeavors of their opponents.
5. Powerful cricketing metaphors entered the English language. “To play a straight bat,” for example, meant to be fair and impartial.
6. From Australia to India, and from South Africa to the British West Indies, cricket became a game by which acceptable attitudes and good character were defined.
7. When on a 1932 cricket tour, the English Test cricket team bowled at the bodies of their Australian opponents to intimidate them. An uproar of international proportions ensued. Significantly, Australians accused England of “not playing cricket.”

Other Sports

1. The British also exported many other sports to the Empire, as well as to the world at large.
2. Among the most successful were golf, rugby, tennis, soccer, and boxing.
3. The British passion for sport was thus part of their overseas identity.
4. Also, when the British codified their sports, they were in effect introducing further sets of rules and regulations that went hand in hand with the structure of imperial control.

Sporting Competitions

1. From the Victorian era, international sporting events became part of the imperial calendar.
2. In 1861, the first English cricket team to tour Australia set sail. The Australian cricket team first played in England in 1880, and the Indian team arrived in 1911.

3. By the beginning of the twentieth century, national cricket and rugby teams were playing regularly throughout the Empire.
4. "Empire" titles became part of international boxing.
5. In 1930, the first Empire Games (based on the Olympic Games) were held in Canada. These are still regularly held as the Commonwealth Games.

The Empire Strikes Back?

1. Often, Empire countries used sport to show Britain that they were by no means inferior.
2. Just as Scotland wished above all to beat England at soccer, so Australia and the West Indies equally wished to beat the Mother Country at cricket, and New Zealand and South Africa hoped to do the same at rugby.
3. During the nineteenth century, industrialized south Wales used rugby as a unifying national factor among its rapidly expanding immigrant population.
4. In Ireland, the promotion of the Gaelic games during the nineteenth century was an important part of the assertion of Irish nationalism.
5. In the West Indies, the fact that a largely black cricket team could frequently beat England gave comfort to many local citizens who too often felt the social inferiority of their position.
6. Nonetheless, it was not until the 1960s that the imperial tradition of a white man captaining the West Indies cricket team was finally overturned.
7. Indian nationalists also celebrated their players' successes in cricket matches over the rulers of the subcontinent, at the same time celebrating the game as one of the "good things" that the Raj had brought them.
8. Afrikaners enjoyed the frequent drubbings handed out to English rugby teams by South Africa.
9. As colonies asserted their independence from Britain, sport often became a metaphor for difference and separateness.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What is meant by “muscular Christianity”?
2. Why was cricket in particular such a symbolically important sport?

Suggested Reading

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Other Books of Interest

Guha, Ramachandra. *A Corner of a Foreign Field: The Indian History of a British Sport*. London: Pan Macmillan, 2002.

Holt, Richard. *Sport and the British: A Modern History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

James, C.L.R. *Beyond a Boundary*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993.

Websites to Visit

1. Rugby School website article entitled “Rugby and the Myth of Dr. Arnold extracted from a talk by Dr. J.C. Smith” — www.rugbyschool.net/history/dr_arnold.htm
2. The Manipur Home Page website details the history of polo in India in an article entitled “Polo at Its Birthplace: How Polo Is Played in Manipur?” — www.themanipurpage.tripod.com/history/polo.html
3. Commonwealth Games Federation website has a short history of the games, including a description of each major event held since 1930 — www.thecgf.com/games/story.asp

Lecture 9: The Empire-Commonwealth and the Second World War

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd's *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 310–322.

Introduction

In this lecture, we will examine the impact of the Second World War upon the Empire and Commonwealth. The reaction of the Empire to the outbreak of the war will be analyzed, as will the imperial contribution to the war effort. What does the war tell us about the strengths and weaknesses of the Empire?

Issues . . .

1. How did the Empire respond to Britain's declaration of war?
2. Did Britain really "stand alone" between 1940 and 1941?
3. How did Churchill's premiership (1940–1945) affect the Empire?
4. Why was there so much trouble in the Indian Empire during the conflict?
5. How significant were Japanese successes in the Far East?
6. What was the impact upon the British Empire of the fall of Singapore in 1942?
7. How did Britain's alliance with the United States and the Soviet Union affect imperial policy?
8. How strong were Britain and the Empire-Commonwealth at the end of the war?

The Empire's Contribution to the War

1. The Empire was larger and richer than ever by 1939, comprising a quarter of the world.
2. The imperial contribution in terms of the armed services, materials, and loans was more substantial even than in World War I.
3. Although Britain mobilized nearly six million servicemen and women, the Dominions raised over two million, India over two-and-a-half million, and the rest of the Empire half a million.
4. Of these, more than 400,000 died in service or were reported missing.
5. The vast quantities of food, raw materials, and manufactures provided by such a huge global organization were vital in enabling Britain to survive the period of "standing alone" from the fall of France in 1940 to the entry of the Soviet Union and the United States into the war by the end of 1941.

Potential Dangers from Within

1. Despite this enormous and positive contribution, there were several potential threats to imperial cooperation from some Empire countries.

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2. India was on the brink of Dominion status, and some nationalist leaders were determined not to follow British policy blindly.
 3. Egypt, though technically independent, was still effectively occupied by Britain in order to safeguard the vital Suez Canal.
 4. The Palestine mandate was slipping into chronic conflict as Jewish settlers struggled with native Palestinians.
 5. In the oil-rich mandate of Iraq, there were powerful anti-British groups.
 6. In a number of other colonies, from Cyprus to West Africa, nationalist movements were stirring.
 7. Even in the Dominions, there were potential problems arising from the animosity of extreme Afrikaner nationalism and French-Canadian separatism toward the Empire.
 8. Nor did the protection of Poland's frontiers (the final justification for fighting German aggression) seem especially relevant throughout the sprawling territories of the Empire.

The Outbreak of War

1. In any event, all of the Dominions, save the Irish Free State, entered the war despite their right to remain neutral under the provisions of the 1931 Statute of Westminster.
2. Although the Irish Free State remained neutral, it gave discreet help to Britain, and tens of thousands of Southern Irish joined the British armed forces.
3. Many Indian nationalists were offended by the abrupt British declaration of war on India's behalf and showed their displeasure in a number of ways.
4. In 1942, indeed, Congress passed the Gandhi-inspired "Quit India" resolution, resulting in the arrest of its leadership and serious civil unrest.

Keeping the Empire On-side

1. When Winston Churchill became Prime Minister in 1940, he brought with him the reputation of an unapologetic imperialist.
2. However, Churchill also saw the urgent need to keep the Empire supportive.
3. He achieved this partly through publicly praising the Empire's contribution, behaving tactfully over certain imperial issues (even over the matter of Indian nationalism), and appointing a War Cabinet that included Labour and Liberal ministers.
4. In 1940, the Colonial and Development and Welfare Act set aside large regular sums for Empire development.
5. Constitutional reforms in areas like West Africa and the Caribbean were encouraged.
6. The image of a united Empire determined to destroy Nazism and fascism was vigorously promoted.
7. However, in other areas, like Iraq and Egypt, Britain forcefully asserted its wartime interests.

8. As the result of these policies, the British Empire more than held its own during the crisis years of 1940 and 1941.

Catastrophe in the Eastern Empire

1. The Japanese assault on Britain's Empire in the Far East in early 1942 seemed to threaten the Empire's long-term integrity.
2. The fall of the island fortress of Singapore in February 1942 was particularly humiliating.
3. Soon Burma had been overrun, and Japanese bombers raided India's eastern cities.
4. Only slowly, and especially in alliance with the United States, did Britain oust the Japanese from many colonial territories.
5. The Japanese military successes meant that not only was anti-British nationalist feeling initially encouraged in occupied colonies, but that after the war countries like Australia and New Zealand preferred to rely upon the protection of the United States rather than Britain.

Working with Allies

1. Both the United States and the Soviet Union were traditionally critical of British imperialism.
2. In 1941, before America's entry into the war, President Roosevelt and Churchill had signed the Atlantic Charter, which appeared to commit Britain to a substantial process of imperial devolution at the end of the hostilities.
3. The United States certainly put pressure on the Churchill government to encourage more constitutional concessions in India.
4. In 1942, Churchill therefore sent the mission headed by the Labour War Cabinet Minister, Sir Stafford Cripps, to India to try to negotiate a permanent constitutional settlement.
5. The mission failed to satisfy both Congress and the Muslim League, and the August 1942 "Quit India" resolution led to widespread civil disorder and the direct rule of the British over much of the subcontinent.
6. We now know that Churchill was delighted with this failure and went some way to ensure that it would happen.
7. By the end of the war, however, the growing power of the Soviet Union, and the prospect of a profound postwar conflict between the capitalist and communist systems, led the United States to be less antagonistic toward the British Empire.

The Cost of Victory

1. Britain achieved final victory and the restoration of all her imperial territories, but at a terrible cost.
2. The country was bankrupt and deeply in debt, not merely to the United States and the Dominions, but also to India for much of its contribution to the war effort.

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3. Enemy bombing had damaged much of the British infrastructure.
 4. About 10 percent of Britain's prewar national wealth had been destroyed.
 5. The merchant marine had lost one-third of its shipping, especially in the naval war in the Atlantic.
 6. Of the "Big Three," Britain was now less powerful than the United States and Russia.
 7. Nonetheless, the standing of the Empire in the eyes of the British public had never been higher, and there were great hopes of continuing cooperation in the postwar years.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. How did the Empire help Britain to “stand alone” before the entry of the Soviet Union and the United States into the war in 1941?
2. How did Japanese military successes affect the Empire?

Suggested Reading

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Other Books of Interest

Best, Geoffrey. *Churchill and War*. London: Hambledon and London, 2005.
James, Lawrence. *Warrior Race: A History of the British at War*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004.

Websites to Visit

1. BBC website article entitled “Colonies, Colonials and World War Two” by Marika Sherwood — www.bbc.co.uk/history/war/wwtwo/colonies_colonials_01.shtml
2. Bharat Rakshak, The Consortium of Indian Military Websites section entitled “The Indian Army in World War II: 1939–1945” — www.bharat-rakshak.com/LAND-FORCES/Army/Images-1939a.html
3. Australians at War website contains a large quantity of information about Australian forces during World War II — www.australiansatwar.gov.au/stories/list_stories.asp?war=W2
4. Veterans Affairs Canada website about Canada's role in World War II — www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=history/secondwar/Canada2
5. The Churchill Centre website contains a wealth of information about Winston Churchill — www.winstonchurchill.org

Lecture 10: The Labour Government of 1945–1951 and the Empire-Commonwealth

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd's *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 323–345.

Introduction

In this lecture, we will look at the coming to power of Britain's first majority Labour government between the defeat of Germany and victory over Japan. We shall see what was different about Labour's approach to the Empire and discuss the first great process of devolution, including the independence of India and Pakistan.

Issues . . .

1. What was Labour's traditional attitude toward the Empire?
2. Was the government essentially more committed to the introduction of the welfare state than to the Empire?
3. How well did Labour handle the transfer of power in India?
4. What developments arose in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Palestine, and the Irish Free State?
5. How keen was Labour on the economic development of the Empire?
6. How united was the Commonwealth during these years?
7. In what condition was the Empire-Commonwealth when Labour lost power in 1951?

Labour Comes to Power

1. The electoral landslide of the summer of 1945 produced the first-ever Labour government with an overall majority in Parliament.
2. Many imperialists feared that a party committed to a basically Marxist program would immediately dismantle the Empire.
3. Labour, however, was determined to be seen to be behaving responsibly toward the Empire.
4. Three leading members of the government (Clement Attlee, the Prime Minister; Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary; and Herbert Morrison, Home Secretary) were on the right wing of the party and in no mood to overthrow the imperial system.
5. Moreover, several Labour ministers had served in Churchill's wartime coalition cabinet, where a broadly bi-partisan approach to Empire policy had been followed.

6. Labour had been elected, moreover, to introduce the welfare state, revive the economy, and guarantee full employment, not to get overinvolved in Empire affairs.
7. Nonetheless, the Labour party was more strongly committed to the process of colonial devolution than the Conservatives, and individual Labour ministers were often on friendly terms with the leaders of colonial nationalist movements.

The First Great Wave of Devolution

1. Between 1947 and 1950, the largest process of imperial devolution in British imperial history occurred.
2. In 1947, India, Pakistan, and Burma achieved their independence, India and Pakistan remaining within the Commonwealth, but Burma leaving the organization.
3. At a stroke, 80 percent of the subjects of the Empire became free of British control.
4. The price of Indian independence was, however, horrifyingly high. Partition meant that, as millions of Muslims and Hindus moved to their newly created religious homelands, communal massacres in divided provinces like the Punjab and Bengal occurred.
5. In 1948, Ceylon (Sri Lanka) became fully independent.
6. In the same year, yielding to American diplomatic pressure, Britain abandoned its troublesome mandate of Palestine, leaving Jews and Arabs to fight it out. The result was the creation of the state of Israel and the start of a long and bitter confrontation.
7. In 1949, the Irish Free State dropped its status as a Dominion and became the Republic of Ireland, though still enjoying a close relationship with the United Kingdom in terms of residence, freedom of movement of its citizens to Britain (and vice versa), and voting rights.
8. Also in 1949, the standing of the Commonwealth was altered by India's desire to become a republic while remaining within the organization. As a result, the British monarch was henceforth described as head of the Commonwealth. As other colonies achieved independence, they mostly opted for republican status.

The Value of the Empire-Commonwealth to Britain

1. Britain's trade with the Empire boomed as never before in the immediate postwar period. Between 1946 and 1949, for example, 57.5 percent of British exports went to the Empire, and 48 percent of Britain's imports came from the organization—unprecedented figures.
2. The Empire was also central to the continuing power and good health of the Sterling Area, which helped to amass a substantial dollar pool to repay the American wartime loan.
3. British investment in the Empire was also significant, and unquestionably benefited the British economy and British industry.
4. Above all, leadership of such a large organization as the Empire-

Commonwealth enabled Britain to still take its place in the “Big Three” club of superpowers that included the United States and the Soviet Union.

5. Generally, the Empire supported Britain’s foreign policy, despite India’s growing taste for “nonalignment.” For instance, when the Korean War broke out in 1950, a Commonwealth Division was formed to take part in the fighting.
6. British emigrants could also still go with hope and confidence to countries like Australia and Southern Rhodesia (modern Zimbabwe).
7. Finally, the maintenance of the Empire, despite its steady transformation into the more independent “British Commonwealth of Nations,” was a reassurance to Britain in the often harsh circumstances of the postwar world.

Ongoing Problems

1. An inevitable problem was the continuing pressure from colonial freedom movements in places like the Gold Coast (modern Ghana), Nigeria, Cyprus, and some West Indian colonies.
2. Local nationalists also increasingly disputed the British presence in the Suez Canal Zone of Egypt.
3. There was also a Communist-led insurgency in the valuable colony of Malaya, which needed a heavy British military intervention to suppress.
4. There was also the question as to whether the cost of maintaining so substantial a British military presence “East of Suez” was worthwhile—despite the large number of “national servicemen” available to the government.
5. Should not a Labour government concentrate more on domestic matters and the funding of the welfare state than upon the upkeep of an Empire that was becoming increasingly troublesome to control?
6. Despite these concerns, when Labour lost the 1951 election to the Conservatives, the Empire-Commonwealth was undoubtedly more liberal, freer, better administered, and more heavily invested in than at any previous time.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What did the imperialists fear following the election of the first-ever Labour government in 1945?
2. What enabled Britain to keep its place among the “Big Three” on the global stage?

Suggested Reading

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Other Books of Interest

Hyam, Ronald. *The Labour Government and the End of Empire, 1945–51*. London: HMSO Books, 1992.

Howe, Steven. *Anticolonialism in Politics: The Left and the End of Empire, 1918–51*. London: Clarendon Press, 1993.

Judd, Denis. *The Lion and the Tiger: The Rise and Fall of the British Raj, 1600–1947*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Morgan, Kenneth O. *Labour in Power, 1945–51*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Websites to Visit

1. Emory University website “The Partition of India” with a timeline showing important dates in Indian history and discussion of Indian nationalism — www.english.emory.edu/Bahri/Part.html
2. The Labour Party website with a short history of its participation in British politics — www.labour.org.uk/labourhistory
3. Political Science Resources website by Richard Kimber with the text of the Labour Party Election Manifesto of 1951 — www.psr.keele.ac.uk/area/uk/man/lab51.htm
4. South Asian History Project article entitled “Key Landmarks in the Indian Freedom Struggle” — www.members.tripod.com/~INDIA_RESOURCE/freedom.html

Lecture 11: “Winston’s Back!”: Churchill, the Conservatives, and Empire, 1951–1955

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd’s *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 346–358.

Introduction

In this lecture, we will examine the impact of the return to power in 1951 of the Conservatives, led by the aging Winston Churchill. We will assess Churchill’s role in policymaking and discuss the most important colonial policy initiatives, as well as assess the reasons for a number of bitter armed struggles in some of the remaining colonies.

Issues . . .

1. What did Churchill’s return to power mean for the Empire-Commonwealth?
2. What choices faced the new government regarding imperial and colonial policy?
3. How important was the idea of Commonwealth to the new administration?
4. How far did the Conservative government go along with devolution in certain colonies, like the Gold Coast and the Sudan?
5. Why did they withdraw from Egypt?
6. Why did armed struggles against British rule develop in Kenya and Cyprus?
7. What was the purpose of setting up the three great federations in the British West Indies, Malaysia, and Central Africa?

Churchill Back as Prime Minister

1. The Empire had changed greatly in character since Churchill lost the 1945 election to Labour.
2. Despite his imperialist instincts, Churchill behaved with pragmatism once back at 10 Downing Street.
3. Just as his government accepted the welfare state and the mixed economy, it also had no chance of putting back the clock in terms of Empire devolution and development.
4. Despite putting on a brave public face and making much of the “New Elizabethan era” with the accession of the young Queen Elizabeth II in 1952, Churchill sensibly acquiesced in much progressive imperial policy.
5. On some issues, however, he stood firm.

Going with the Flow

1. The new government made the most of the ongoing transformation of the Empire into the Commonwealth. They sensibly took the credit, describing

the process as part of a long process of preparing colonies for the maturity of self-government within the Commonwealth.

2. Churchill's cabinet therefore acquiesced in the progressive devolution of power in several African colonies, notably Gold Coast (Ghana), Nigeria, and the Anglo-Egyptian condominium of the Sudan.
3. The government also negotiated the peaceful withdrawal of British troops from Egypt in 1954—prompted, it must be said, by the overthrow of the pro-Western King Farouk in 1952 and his replacement by a government of revolutionary army officers, soon to be led by Colonel Gamal Abdul Nasser.

Deciding Not to Budge

1. In several cases, however, especially where vital British interests seemed at risk, Churchill stood firm.
2. The withdrawal from Egypt, especially from the Suez Canal Zone, meant that another premier military base in the region had to be sought.
3. This, in turn, made the government unwilling to devolve power in either Cyprus or Kenya.
4. In both cases, Britain became deeply involved in armed struggles aimed at defeating local nationalism.
5. Cyprus, which contained important military bases, saw a bitter and protracted conflict.
6. In Kenya, the government spent years crushing the Mau Mau rebellion, an uprising organized by the powerful Kikuyu tribe. The fact that there was a vociferous white settler minority in Kenya also played a part in the policy of repression.
7. In the cases of Cyprus and Kenya, the Labour opposition in Britain often strongly criticized the government for what it saw as arbitrary and unjustifiable acts of violent repression—such as the murder of a number of Mau Mau detainees at the notorious Hola detention center.
8. A further act of imperial bullying took place in British Guiana, where Britain overturned the democratically elected government of the Marxist leader Cheddi Jagan.

The Federal Solution?

1. As an alternative to either devolution or repression, the government worked toward the creation of three federal systems, in which colonies became part of a federation that would involve a considerable transfer of power to locals.
2. It was also argued that the proposed federations would greatly enhance the economic potential of the regions involved.
3. The three areas chosen were Malaysia, Central Africa, and the British Caribbean. Although they did not come into official being until 1957, they were all the brainchildren of the Churchill government.

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4. Malaysia, comprising Malaya, Singapore, North Borneo, and Sarawak, had a strong economic and commercial identity and was the only federation to prosper.
 5. Central Africa was made up of Northern and Southern Rhodesia (Zambia and Zimbabwe) and Nyasaland (modern Malawi). Critics soon pointed out that the Central African Federation simply enshrined the supremacy of its white settlers over the black majority. It came under steady pressure from the outset.
 6. The West Indian Federation was soon to come apart at the seams, destroyed by the growing reluctance of larger and richer components, like Jamaica and Trinidad, to subsidize a host of poor, scattered islands.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. Why did Churchill allow the devolution of power in several African colonies?
2. What factors accounted for the destruction of the West Indian Federation?

Suggested Reading

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Other Books of Interest

Jenkins, Roy. *Churchill: A Biography*. New York: Penguin/Plume Books, 2002.
Schama, Simon. *A History of Britain: The Fate of Empire*. Vol. 3. New York: Miramax Books, 2002.

Websites to Visit

1. The Library of Congress has an excellent Internet exhibit on Winston Churchill's life and second term as prime minister — www.loc.gov/exhibits/churchill/wc-coldwar.html
2. Cypnet: Cypress Internet Communications website article discussing British-Cypriot historical relationship — www.cypnet.co.uk/ncyprus/history/british/
3. Britain's Small Wars website with content on numerous conflicts involving British forces from World War II to the present — www.britains-smallwars.com/
4. Country Studies website at the Library of Congress article entitled "The West Indies Federation, 1957–1962" — www.countrystudies.us/caribbean-islands/15.htm

Lecture 12:
The Suez Crisis of 1956–1957
and the “Wind of Change,” 1957–1963

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd’s *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 359–371.

Introduction

In this lecture, we will examine one of the most dramatic and traumatic episodes in modern British history, the Suez Crisis. The causes of the crisis, its unfolding, the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt, and the devastating impact of the failure of the invasion upon Britain’s imperial and global standing will be discussed. We shall go on to examine the impact of the reforming and decolonizing government of the Conservative Premier Harold Macmillan.

Issues . . .

1. Why was Britain’s role in Egypt seen as so vital to its interests?
2. What overall imperial situation faced the new Prime Minister, Anthony Eden, when he succeeded Churchill in 1955?
3. Why did the Nasser government decide to nationalize the Suez Canal?
4. Did Britain and France enter into a secret pact with Israel to justify their military action in Egypt?
5. Why did the invasion fail, and what were the consequences of this failure for imperial British policy?
6. In 1957, why did new Prime Minister Macmillan decide to abandon the Empire and bring Britain into the European Economic Community?
7. How important was Macmillan’s “Wind of Change” policy to the process of rapid decolonization?

Anthony Eden and the Suez Crisis, 1956–1957

1. Eden took over as premier from the elderly Churchill during 1955.
2. He was not only an expert on foreign policy, but was anxious to appear as strong and decisive as his illustrious predecessor.
3. When the Egyptian government, led by the charismatic nationalist Nasser, decided to nationalize the Suez Canal in 1956, Eden decided that strong action was needed.
4. This was both to compensate Britain and France as the major shareholders in the Suez Canal Company and to protect Britain’s increasingly uncertain position in the oil-rich and strategically sensitive Middle East.
5. France was equally keen for action, mainly because it wished to overthrow the Nasser regime that it saw as fomenting insurrection in French North Africa, especially in Algeria.

6. Rather than simply assault Egypt, which could expect support from the Soviet Union, Britain and France entered into a secret pact with Israel to lessen world criticism.

The Plot and the Invasion of Egypt

1. The plan was simple in theory: Israel would attack Egypt and advance through Sinai toward the Suez Canal; Britain would then claim that the international integrity of the Suez Canal was at risk and that it was justified under the terms of the earlier Anglo-Egyptian treaty of withdrawal from Egypt to reoccupy the Suez zone.
2. At first, the plan worked smoothly, and Anglo-French forces began to reoccupy the Suez Canal zone.
3. World reaction, however, was overwhelmingly hostile to the invasion.
4. The Labour opposition supported by mass demonstrations in Britain opposed the adventure.
5. Not merely did most independent Commonwealth countries disapprove, but the United States was determined to end the invasion.
6. A catastrophic run on the pound sterling forced Britain to appeal to America for financial support, but President Eisenhower refused to help unless the Suez invasion was ended.
7. With no feasible option open to it, the British government pulled out of Egypt, much to the annoyance of France.

Aftermath of the Suez Crisis

1. British military power was exposed as inadequate without the backing of the United States.
2. No longer could Britain, or France, “go it alone.”
3. An exhausted and humiliated Eden was forced to resign as Prime Minister.
4. Colonel Nasser was triumphantly confirmed as leader of Egypt, and Arab nationalism was strengthened throughout the region.
5. The pro-British regime in Iraq was violently overthrown, and serious pressure was applied to still-friendly Arab states like Jordan.
6. Nationalist movements throughout the Empire were encouraged.

Macmillan as Prime Minister, 1957–1963

1. With the active support of his liberal Colonial Secretary, Iain Macleod, Macmillan began a rapid process of decolonization.
2. The aim was to end British rule on good terms to safeguard post-independence British commercial and strategic links with former colonies.
3. Between 1960 and 1963, fifteen colonies achieved independence, including Cyprus, Kenya, and Nigeria.
4. One problem, however, was that not all of these rapidly freed colonies had adequate infrastructure and personnel to make the best of their independence.

5. The Commonwealth, by 1964, had ceased to be a club dominated by the white Dominions, and was a truly multi-ethnic global organization.
6. In 1960, Macmillan made world-wide headlines by touring Africa and telling the white supremacist Parliament in South Africa that “the wind of change is blowing through this continent.”
7. National service was abandoned and huge cuts made in British military spending east of Suez.

“The wind of change is blowing through this continent, and whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact. We must all accept it as a fact, and our national policies must take account of it.”

~Harold Macmillan

*in a speech to the South
African Parliament,
February 3, 1960*

The Decision to Enter Europe

1. Central to this decision to decolonize rapidly was the policy shift that aimed to take Britain as soon as possible into the European Economic Community.
2. Britain's trade with Europe already stood at more than 30 percent of the whole in 1960 and was destined to expand rapidly after EEC membership was eventually achieved in the mid-1960s.
3. As a result, the sterling area went into permanent and fatal decline, and the amount of colonial development aid from Britain dwindled.
4. More symbolically, Britain was then likely to become more involved in Europe than it had been for 500 years.
5. Nonetheless, Britain wished to maintain the Commonwealth as a viable and prestigious international institution.
6. It also wished to build on its “special relationship” with the United States.
7. How all of this was to be achieved was not clear by the time the Conservatives lost the 1964 general election to the Labour party led by Harold Wilson.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. Why did Britain and France enter into a secret pact with Israel before the attack on Egypt?
2. What effect did the Suez Crisis have on Arab nationalism?

Suggested Reading

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www.number-10.gov.uk/output/Page132.asp
3. About.com website article “Harold Macmillan’s ‘Wind of Change’ Speech” —
www.africanhistory.about.com/od/eraindependence/p/wind_of_change2.htm

Lecture 13: Labour Back in Power: The Wilson Government, 1964–1970

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd's *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 372–386.

Introduction

In this lecture, we shall see how the Labour government of 1964 to 1970 dealt with a number of urgent problems in the Empire and Commonwealth. We will also examine attempts to use the rapidly expanding Commonwealth both as a diplomatic tool in global politics and a means of maintaining democratic standards in those independent states that began to become more authoritarian and corrupt. The impact of Britain's full membership in the European Union will be examined.

Issues . . .

1. What problems arose from Rhodesia's illegal Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965?
2. What resulted from the British government's decision to restrict immigration from the Commonwealth in response to racial tensions in the UK?
3. What resulted from the decision to continue to withdraw military facilities east of Suez?
4. What resulted from the ending of imperial trading preferences as the result of EEC membership?
5. What resulted from the attempts to make the now-regular meetings of the Commonwealth leaders into a forum for a common approach to problems?
6. Internal crises arose in Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Ceylon, and other states; rivalry grew between India and Pakistan. Had the Westminster model of democracy failed?

The Rhodesian Crisis

1. In 1965, the white minority regime in Rhodesia (modern Zimbabwe), failing to find a means of achieving full independence from Britain to its satisfaction, made a unilateral declaration of independence.
2. The aim of the illegal government, led by Ian Smith, was to hang on to white rule, backed by the apartheid regime in neighboring South Africa, and dare Britain to intervene.
3. Despite the new Labour government's commitment to black majority rule in Rhodesia, in practice, Wilson's cabinet ruled out military intervention and relied on international sanctions instead.
4. The failure of Wilson's cabinet to reassert control over the illegal regime led to fierce criticism from other Commonwealth countries.

5. It was also asserted that Britain was going soft over Rhodesia partly for fear of jeopardizing its profitable trading links with South Africa.
6. In any event, there was to be no settlement of the Rhodesian question until the early 1980s.

Labour's Ambivalence over Colonial and Commonwealth Policy

1. Despite its officially progressive policies, the Labour government frequently compromised in the implementation of policy.
2. It failed to respond adequately to the bitter and bloody civil war in Nigeria, which had arisen through the secession of the oil-producing region of Biafra.
3. Many Commonwealth countries deplored Britain's support of America's deep involvement in the Vietnam War.
4. Government-funded aid to Commonwealth states was also considered inadequate in many quarters.
5. There were also accusations that Britain was increasingly restricting the numbers of immigrants from the "new" black and brown Commonwealth into the United Kingdom to placate the vociferous anti-immigration lobby.
6. Nonetheless, the government remained firmly committed to the process of decolonization.
7. It also introduced antiracist legislation into the British Parliament.

Balancing the Books

1. Anxious to maintain the essential framework of the increasingly expensive welfare state, despite the poor performance of the British economy, the government sought various ways of cutting its expenditure.
2. One obvious economy was to cut defense spending overseas. In 1968, any remaining "east of Suez" military pretensions were effectively abandoned.
3. The base of Aden was abandoned and plans were laid to withdraw British forces from Singapore by the mid-1970s.
4. Elsewhere, these states achieved their independence between 1966 and 1971: British Guyana, Southern Yemen, Mauritius, Fiji, Tonga, and the Federation of Arab Emirates.

Joining the European Common Market

1. Labour renewed Britain's application to join the EEC.
2. If successful, this bid would inevitably wreck the system of imperial preferential tariffs that had been established in 1932.
3. This signalled the end of the old dream of the Commonwealth as an Imperial Common Market.

Keeping the Commonwealth Together

1. As the Commonwealth grew rapidly in membership, the problems of maintaining some sort of unity of purpose became more complicated.

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2. This was particularly difficult when, for example, member states fought against each other—as India and Pakistan did in 1965.
 3. Also, the hostility of much of the Commonwealth to the apartheid regime in South Africa caused conflict when other member states like Britain and Australia appeared to be less hostile.
 4. The failure of Britain to resolve the Rhodesian crisis was a further problem.
 5. Then there were a series of internal difficulties in member states, like the army coup in Ghana in 1966, the Biafran war, tribal conflict in Kenya, and the introduction of one-party politics in Zambia.
 6. In 1965, the Federation of Malaysia suffered the secession of the prosperous island state of Singapore.
 7. However, some concrete steps were taken to promote commonwealth cooperation, as, for example, with the formation of the Commonwealth Secretariat in 1965.
 8. Commonwealth liaison committees multiplied, like the Commonwealth Foundation, the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureau, and the Economic Consultative Committee.
 9. Meetings of the Commonwealth heads of government became much more frequent, taking place eight times between 1960 and 1969.

The Empire and Commonwealth in 1970

1. When Labour lost power in 1970, there was very little of the British Empire left—small, isolated colonies like Saint Helena, the Seychelles, Saint Vincent, and the Falkland Islands.
2. An exception, though, was the bustling, prosperous colony of Hong Kong.
3. It seemed to many observers that, with Britain committed to EEC membership, the eventual handing back of Hong Kong to China would signal the real end of the British Empire.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. How did most Commonwealth countries feel about Britain's support of America in the Vietnam War?
2. Why did the handing over of Hong Kong to China seem to signal the end of the British Empire?

Suggested Reading

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Other Books of Interest

Darwin, John. *The End of the British Empire: The Historical Debate*. London: Blackwell Publishers, 1991.

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3. BBC News article on Prime Minister Harold Wilson and demonstrators in 1970 — www.news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/june/1/
4. British Politics Pages website biography of Harold Wilson — www.ukpolitics.org.uk/cgi/viewnews.cgi?id=1050760781
5. Global Security.org website article on the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965 — www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/indo-pak_1965.htm
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Lecture 14: Embracing the Commonwealth and Winding Down the Empire, 1970–Present

The **Suggested Reading** for this lecture is Denis Judd's *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*, pp. 387–432.

Introduction

In this lecture, we shall see the ways in which the Commonwealth and the remaining parts of the Empire developed from 1970 through the handing over of Hong Kong to China in 1997. The turmoil in some Commonwealth countries will be assessed, as will the various attempts to resolve such conflicts. The establishment of majority rule in Rhodesia and the significance of the Falklands War will be explained.

Issues . . .

1. What did the premiership of the strongly pro-European Edward Heath mean for the Commonwealth?
2. How embarrassing was the dictatorship of Idi Amin in Uganda?
3. Why did “one-party” rule establish itself in some states, especially in Africa?
4. Why did Indira Gandhi declare a “state of emergency” in India from 1975 to 1977?
5. Why did democracy come under threat in Pakistan and Bangladesh?
6. What was the significance of the Falklands War?
7. What resulted from the decision to hand over Hong Kong to China?
8. What resulted from majority rule in Rhodesia, renamed Zimbabwe?
9. Why did the republican movement flourish in Australia?
10. What was the nature of the late-twentieth-century Commonwealth?
11. What became of the last remnants of Empire?
12. What sort of country was Britain once the vast bulk of its Empire had achieved independence?

Edward Heath's Conservative Government, 1970–1974

1. Unexpectedly defeating Labour in the 1970 election, Heath was the most pro-European of post-1945 Prime Ministers.
2. At the same time, during his premiership, the Commonwealth seemed full of problems, including the continuing Rhodesian rebellion, the controversy over selling British arms to South Africa, the brutal dictatorship of Idi Amin in Uganda, communal riots in Malaysia, military government in Bangladesh, the Turkish invasion and occupation of Northern Cyprus, and the establishment of one-party rule in Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, and Sierra Leone.

3. There was an attempt to address some of these issues at the 1971 Heads of Commonwealth Government's meeting at Singapore, where eventually a Declaration of Commonwealth Principles asserted the rights of all citizens to "participate by means of free and democratic polity processes in framing the society in which they live."
4. But how could these principles be guaranteed?

From Harold Wilson to Margaret Thatcher, 1974–1990

1. The erratic behavior and development of many Commonwealth states were barely affected by the succession of the Conservatives to power under the dynamic and reform-minded Margaret Thatcher in 1979.
2. Indeed, in some ways, it was a relief to have a government that was openly more sympathetic to the white regime in South Africa and less committed to some of the loftier, but unpracticed, of Commonwealth principles.
3. Ironically, it was the Thatcher government that, lent some discreet behind-the-scenes help from the Queen, was the administration that at last negotiated the peaceful transfer of power in Rhodesia, which became the independent state of Zimbabwe in 1980.
4. Elsewhere, regime change occurred with bewildering rapidity, not only in African states like Ghana and Nigeria, but also more atypically in the old Indian Empire territories.
5. In 1975, the Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi (daughter of India's first premier Nehru), declared a state of emergency and governed with quasi-dictatorial powers until her eventual electoral defeat in 1977.
6. In Pakistan in 1977, Premier Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, accused of election rigging, was overthrown after an army coup and eventually executed in 1979.
7. In 1979, a military regime took over in Bangladesh (now separate from Pakistan).
8. In Sri Lanka, formerly Ceylon, the Tamil community rose in rebellion and began a protracted armed struggle in the late 1970s.
9. As if all of this was not difficult enough, French separatism in Quebec and republicanism in Australia became facts of Commonwealth life.
10. In response, Britain made an attempt to emphasize the monarchy as a powerful bond binding the Commonwealth together. Many royal tours took place. The Queen's Silver Jubilee was celebrated in 1977, but in contrast to Queen Victoria's lavish Diamond Jubilee in 1897, the only Commonwealth military unit to attend the event was the Canadian "Mounties."
11. At the same time, Britain's full membership of the European Economic Community in 1973, and the inevitable ending of imperial preferential trading arrangements, was taking the United Kingdom further from the old idea of Commonwealth and toward a new, if uncertain, destiny.

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12. Despite this, the Commonwealth Secretariat and a host of Commonwealth-wide committees and agencies attempted to give substance to the Commonwealth ideal.
 13. More dramatically, the Thatcher government indicated its determination to hang on to certain imperial territories when it fought a brisk war against Argentina to recapture the Falkland Islands in 1982.
 14. In 1997, seven years after the fall of Margaret Thatcher, and in the same year that saw New Labour under Tony Blair win an election landslide victory, Hong Kong was returned to China.
 15. There was now only a scattering of isolated and generally impoverished colonies left, territories like St. Helena, the Maldives Islands, Bermuda, Tristan da Cunha, that could never be fully independent.
 16. The imperial story was almost over, though the Commonwealth was now at its largest extent.

Post-imperial Britain

1. What sort of country was Britain at the beginning of the new millennium in 2000 and beyond?
2. It was still a tolerant and peaceful country, increasingly seeing its multi-cultural identity (especially in the great cities) as an enrichment rather than a threat.
3. Substantial local power had been devolved to the Scottish Parliament and to the Welsh Assembly.
4. Politically, it stood balanced between its membership of the European Community and its wish to preserve its "special relationship" with the United States.
5. It still wished to make the best of the Commonwealth as a multinational organization.
6. It was still the fourth largest economy in the world, though China was rapidly catching up.
7. But it was also troubled by the problems of illegal immigration and bogus asylum seeking.
8. The terrorist attacks of July 2005 were also uncomfortable reminders that the nation now contained new and violent dissident groups.
9. Above all, Britain was a nation that, literally, had done more than any other to make and shape the modern world, both through its pioneering roles in the creation of parliamentary democracy and in the Industrial Revolution, and through its lengthy possession of the largest Empire in history.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING



Questions

1. What problems beset the Commonwealth during Heath's premiership?
2. What strife arose in Sri Lanka during the late 1970s?

Suggested Reading

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

Other Books of Interest

Ritchie, Harry. *The Last Pink Bits: Travels through the Remnants of the British Empire*. London: Sceptre Books, 1998.

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Websites to Visit

1. Time magazine "First Person" website article featuring Edward Heath's version of events regarding France's veto of Britain's entry into the European Common Market in 1963 — www.time.com/time/europe50/hea.html
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3. Britain's Small Wars website feature on the 1982 Falklands War— www.britains-smallwars.com/Falklands/
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5. The Official Website of the British Monarchy contains a detailed section entitled "The Queen's Golden Jubilee" — www.royal.gov.uk/output/Page920.asp
6. BBC News feature on the continuing investigations into the 2005 terror attacks on London — news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_depth/uk/2005/london_explosions/default.stm

You'll get the most out of this course if you have the following book:

Judd, Denis. *Empire: The British Imperial Experience, from 1765 to the Present*. Reprint edition. New York: Basic Books, 1998.

This book is available online through www.modernscholar.com or by calling Recorded Books at 1-800-636-3399.

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