

British Imperialism In India Chapter 11

Continuing Oxford's five-volume comprehensive history of the British Empire, Volume II examines the history of British expansion from the Glorious Revolution of 1689 to the end of the Napoleonic Wars, a crucial phase in the creation of the modern British Empire. 13 maps.

En-Gendering India offers an innovative interpretation of the role that gender played in defining the Indian state during both the colonial and postcolonial eras. Focusing on both British and Indian literary texts—primarily novels—produced between 1857 and 1947, Sangeeta Ray examines representations of "native" Indian women and shows how these representations were deployed to advance notions of Indian self-rule as well as to defend British imperialism. Through her readings of works by writers including Bankimchandra Chatterjee, Rabindranath Tagore, Harriet Martineau, Flora Annie Steel, Anita Desai, and Bapsi Sidhaa, Ray demonstrates that Indian women were presented as upper class and Hindu, an idealization that paradoxically served the needs of both colonial and nationalist discourses. The Indian nation's goal of self-rule was expected to enable women's full participation in private and public life. On the other hand, British colonial officials rendered themselves the protectors of passive Indian women against their "savage" male countrymen. Ray shows how the native woman thus became a symbol for both an incipient Indian nation and a fading British Empire. In addition, she reveals how the figure of the upper-class Hindu woman created divisions with the nationalist movement itself by underscoring caste, communal, and religious differences within the newly emerging state. As such, Ray's study has important implications for discussions about nationalism, particularly those that address the concepts of identity and nationalism. Building on recent scholarship in feminism and postcolonial studies, En-Gendering India will be of interest to scholars in those fields as well as to specialists in nationalism and nation-building and in Victorian, colonial, and postcolonial literature and culture.

South Asian History has enjoyed a remarkable renaissance over the past thirty years. Its historians are not only producing new ways of thinking about the imperial impact and legacy on South Asia, but also helping to reshape the study of imperial history in general. The essays in this collection address a number of these important developments, delineating not only the complicated interplay between imperial rulers and their subjects in India, but also illuminating the economic, political, environmental, social, cultural, ideological, and intellectual contexts which informed, and were in turn informed by, these interactions. Particular attention is paid to a cluster of binary oppositions that have hitherto framed South Asian history, namely colonizer/colonized, imperialism/nationalism, and modernity/tradition, and how new analytical frameworks are emerging which enable us to think beyond the constraints imposed by these binaries. Closer attention to regional dynamics as well as to wider global forces has enriched our understanding of the history of South Asia within a wider imperial matrix. Previous impressions of all-powerful imperialism, with the capacity to reshape all before it, for good or ill, are rejected in favour of a much more nuanced image of imperialism in India that acknowledges the impact as well as the intentions of colonialism, but within a much more complicated historical landscape where other processes are at work.

Sunrise to Sunset

'Benefits Bestowed'?

India and the British Empire

British Imperialism Revisited

The Classics and Colonial India

Devoted to the Indian Independence Movement

What the British Did to India

The British Empire influenced many aspects of the world we live in today. The international system remains heavily marked by British imperialism, and the borders, nations, and federations it created. This Very Short Introduction introduces and defines the British Empire, reviewing how it evolved into such a force, and the legacy it left behind.

The Oxford History of the British Empire is a major new assessment of the Empire in the light of recent scholarship and the progressive opening of historical records. From the founding of colonies in North America and the West Indies in the seventeenth century to the reversion of Hong Kong to China at the end of the twentieth, British imperialism was a catalyst for far-reaching change. The Oxford History of the British Empire as a comprehensive study helps us to understand the end of Empire in relation to its beginning, the meaning of British imperialism for the ruled as well as for the rulers, and the significance of the British Empire as a theme in world history. Volume III of The Oxford History of the British Empire covers the long nineteenth century, from the achievement of American independence in the 1780s to the eve of world war in 1914. This was the period of Britain's greatest expansion as both empire-builder and dominant world power. The volume is divided into two parts. The first contains thematic chapters, some focusing on Britain, others on areas at the imperial periphery, exploring those fundamental dynamics of British expansion which made imperial influence and rule possible. They also examine the economic, cultural, and institutional frameworks which gave shape to Britain's overseas empire. Part 2 is devoted to the principal areas of imperial activity overseas, including both white settler and tropical colonies. Chapters examine how British interests and imperial rule shaped individual regions' nineteenth-century political and socio-economic history. Themes dealt with include the economics of empire, imperial institutions, defence, technology, imperial and colonial cultures, science and exploration. Attention is given not only to the formal empire, from Australasia and the West Indies to India and the African colonies, but also to China and Latin America, often regarded as central components of a British 'informal empire'.

Organizing Empire critically examines how concepts of individualism functioned to support and resist British imperialism in India. Through readings of British colonial and Indian nationalist narratives that emerged in parliamentary debates, popular colonial histories, newsletters, memoirs, biographies, and novels, Purnima Bose investigates the ramifications of reducing collective activism to individual intentions. Paying particular attention to the construction of gender, she shows that ideas of individualism rhetorically and theoretically bind colonials, feminists, nationalists, and neocolonials to one another. She demonstrates how reliance on ideas of the individual—as scapegoat or hero—enabled colonial and neocolonial powers to deny the violence that they perpetrated. At the same time, she shows how analyses of the role of the individual provide a window into the dynamics and limitations of state formations and feminist and nationalist resistance movements. From a historically grounded, feminist perspective, Bose offers four case studies, each of which illuminates a distinct individualizing rhetorical strategy. She looks at the parliamentary debates on the Amritsar Massacre of 1919, in which several hundred unarmed Indian protesters were killed; Margaret Cousins's firsthand account of feminist organizing in Ireland and India; Kalpana Dutt's memoir of the Bengali terrorist movement of the 1930s, which was modeled in part on Irish anticolonial activity; and the popular histories generated by ex-colonial officials and their wives. Bringing to the fore the constraints that colonial domination placed upon agency and activism, Organizing Empire highlights the complexity of the multiple narratives that constitute British colonial history.

The Company-State

The Eighteenth Century

Ungoverned Imaginings

Aspects of British Imperialism

A Distant Sovereignty

The Meaning of White

Race, Class, and the 'Domiciled Community' in British India 1858-1930

A timely and provocative comparison of the British and American empires: are they alike, or are they very different beasts? The present American "empire" is often compared with the British one of yore—not surprising in view of the fact that Afghanistan and Iraq were once British imperial stamping grounds, too. But how alike are the two empires really? What are the connections between them? And what can we learn from the comparison? In this compellingly written book, a leading historian of the British empire explores these questions in depth for the first time. Bernard Porter finds that Britain and America had uncannily similar imperial histories before the present day, but that now considerable differences exist. He argues that post-2001 American imperialism is an imperialism of a different sort—a "super-imperialism" that no longer repeats British imperialism but now transcends it. Porter's comparison illuminates British imperialism, including Tony Blair's; the American version of imperialism administered under George W. Bush; and the relation of imperialism to such phenomena as capitalism, globalization, free trade, and international security. His insights are often surprising and always original and thought-provoking.

Drawing on contemporary critical work on colonialism and the cross-cultural encounter, this is a study of the emergence of Utilitarianism as a new political language in Britain in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, and focuses on the relationship between this language and the complexities of British Imperial experience in India at the time. Examining the work of Mill and Sir William Jones, and also that of the poets Robert Southey and Thomas Moore, Javed Majeed highlights the role played by aesthetic and linguistic attitudes in the formulation of British views on India, and reveals how closely these attitudes were linked to the definition of cultural identities. To this end, Mill's utilitarian study of India is shown to function both as an attack on the conservative orientalism of the period, and as part of a larger critique of British society itself. In so doing, Majeed demonstrates how complex British attitudes to India were in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and how this might be explained in the light of domestic and imperial contexts.

'Empire by Treaty: Negotiating European Expansion, 1600-1900' includes indigenous voices in the debate over European appropriation of overseas territories. It is concerned with European efforts to negotiate with indigenous peoples the cession of their sovereignty through treaties.

New Chapter in Divide and Rule ...

British Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century

Nehru Flings a Challenge

The Paradox of the Raj

Inglorious Empire

James Mill's The History of British India and Orientalism

This extraordinary book provides a detailed account of the relationship between classical antiquity and the British colonial presence in India. It examines some of the great figures of the colonial period such as Gandhi, Nehru, Macaulay, Jowett, and William Jones, and covers a range of different disciplines as it sweeps from the eighteenth century to the end of the British Raj in the twentieth. Using a variety of materials, including archival documents and familiar texts, Vasunia shows how classical culture pervaded the thoughts and minds of the British colonizers. His book highlights the many Indian receptions of Greco-Roman antiquity and analyses how Indians turned to ancient Greece and Rome during the colonial period for a variety of purposes, including anti-colonialism, nationalism, and collaboration. Offering a unique cross-cultural study, this volume will be of interest to literary scholars and historians of the classical world, the British Empire, and South Asia.

The book explores the evolution of Gandhi's ideas, his attitudes toward religion, the racial problem, the caste system, his conflict with the British, his approach to Muslim separatism and the division of India, his attitude toward social and economic change, his doctrine of nonviolence, and other key issues.

Violent, powerful, vast: the British Empire is typically viewed as distant and tropical. By contrast, this book examines the effects of the empire on men, women and children across the globe: both those under imperial rule and those who implemented it. Looking beyond politics and diplomacy, Philippa Levine combines a traditional approach to colonial history with an investigation of the experience of living within the empire. Spanning the period from Cromwell's rule to decolonization in the late twentieth century, and including an extensive chronology for ease of reference, Levine considers the impact of British rule for people in Africa, India and Australia, as well as for the English rulers, and for the Welsh, Scots and Irish who were subject to 'internal colonialism' under the English yoke. Imperialism often led to serious unrest; Levine examines the cruel side of imperialism's purportedly 'civilizing' mission unflinchingly.

Changing India

Organizing Empire

The British Empire

Empire and Superempire

The Independence Struggle in British and Indian Fiction and History

How British Rule Changed India's Economy

Woman and Nation in Colonial and Postcolonial Narratives

First published in 1952, imperialism is a regularly recurring historical phenomenon, calling for neither approval nor condemnation in the abstract. A more profitable exercise is to consider particular imperialisms and assess their spirit and their achievements. From this premise Sir Percival Griffiths proceeds to examine the political, administrative and economic effects on India of British rule. Formerly a member of the Indian Civil Service, later the leader of the British representatives in the Indian Legislative Assembly and now closely connected with commerce and industry in India and Pakistan, he has the advantage of a three-sided approach. He was, moreover, playing an active part in Indian public affairs throughout the years leading to the transfer of power. In 1942 he declared that he would fight any government which resiled from the promise of independence for India and when the Cabinet Mission visited India in 1947, it fell on him to assert - on behalf of the British community in India - their conviction that independence must be granted without further delay. It is because he has thus been a close eye-witness of the events of the last three decades in India that he has written this book. Although Western civilization is often regarded by Indians as materialistic, it is the spiritual rather than in the material sphere that British influence has been greatest. It has built up Indian nationalism; it has engendered in Indian minds a new concept of equality and of human rights; it has rekindled the scientific spirit; and is has profoundly modified the Indian intellectual approach to the problems in life. In all this there have been losses as well as gain - not least among the losses being the partial destruction of village corporate life and the spread of speticism among the intelligentsia - but there can be little doubt which way the balance lies. A further fifty years may have to elapse, Sir Percival suggests, before a final assessment of the impact of the British is possible. In the meantime the present book may be confidently recommended as the most authoritative and objective examination of the history and influence of British administration in Indian, which has yet appeared; a book, furthermore, that may be expected to achieve the status of a standard work.

The British Empire was an astonishingly complex and varied phenomenon, not to be reduced to any of the simple generalisations or theories that are often taken to characterise it. One way of illustrating this, and so conveying some of the subtle flavour of the thing itself, is to descend from the over-arching to the particular, and describe and discuss aspects of it in detail. This book, by the well-known imperial historian Bernard Porter, ranges among a wide range of the events and personalities that shaped or were shaped by British imperialism, or by its decline in the post-war years. These include chapters on science, drugs, battles, proconsuls, an odd assortment of imperialists including Kipling, Lady Hester Stanhope and TE Lawrence, architecture, music, the role of MI6 and the reputation of the Empire since its demise. Together the chapters inform, explain, provoke, and occasionally amuse; but above all they demonstrate the kaleidoscopic variety and ambivalence of Britain's imperial history."

This Palgrave Pivot revisits the topic of how British colonialism moulded work and life in India and what kind of legacy it left behind. Did British rule lead to India 's impoverishment, economic disruption and famine? Under British rule, evidence suggests there were beneficial improvements, with an eventual rise in life expectancy and an increase in wealth for some sectors of the population and economy, notably for much business and industry. Yet many poor people suffered badly, with agricultural stagnation and an underfunded government who were too small to effect general improvements. In this book Roy explains the paradoxical combination of wealth and poverty, looking at both sides of nineteenth century capitalism. Between 1850 and 1930, India was engaged in a globalization process not unlike the one it has seen since the 1990s. The difference between these two times is that much of the region was under British colonial rule during the first episode, while it was an independent nation state during the second. Roy's narrative has a contemporary relevance for emerging economies, where again globalization has unleashed extraordinary levels of capitalistic energy while leaving many livelihoods poor, stagnant, and discontented.

The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction

The Indian Princes and their States

An Era of Darkness

Negotiating European Expansion, 1600-1900

Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India

Bourgeois Revolution on the Subcontinent

Empire Ways

How did Western imperialism shape the developing world? Atul Kohli tackles that question by analyzing British and American influence on Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America from the age of the British East India Company to the most recent U.S. war in Iraq. How did Western imperialism shape the developing world? In Imperialism and the Developing World, Atul Kohli tackles this question by analyzing British and American influence on Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America from the age of the British East India Company to the most recent U.S. war in Iraq. He argues that both Britain and the U.S. expanded to enhance their national economic prosperity, and shows how Anglo-American expansionism hurt economic development in poor parts of the world. To clarify the causes and consequences of modern imperialism, Kohli first explains that there are two kinds of empires and analyzes the dynamics of both. Imperialism can refer to a formal, colonial empire such as Britain in the 19th century or an informal empire, wielding significant influence but not territorial control, such as the U.S. in the 20th century. Kohli contends that both have repeatedly undermined the prospects of steady economic progress in the global periphery, though to different degrees. Time and again, the pursuit of their own national economic prosperity led Britain and the U.S. to expand into peripheral areas of the world. Limiting the sovereignty of other states-and poor and weak states on the periphery in particular-was the main method of imperialism. For the British and American empires, this tactic ensured that peripheral economies would stay open and accessible to Anglo-American economic interests. Loss of sovereignty, however, greatly hurt the life chances of people living in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. As Kohli lays bare, sovereignty is an economic asset; it is a precondition for the emergence of states that can foster prosperous and inclusive industrial societies.

The Company-State offers a political and intellectual history of the English East India Company in the century before its acquisition of territorial power. It argues the Company was no mere merchant, but a form of early modern, colonial state and sovereign that laid the foundations for the British Empire in India.

Ideologies of the Raj examines how the British sought to justify their rule over India. The author argues that two divergent strategies were devised to legitimize their authority: the one defined characteristics which the Indians shared with the British themselves, while the other emphasised qualities of enduring 'difference'. In the end, however, the differences predominated in the colonial view of India. Since the British constructed few explicit ideologies of empire, the author explores the workings of the Raj through the study of its underlying assumptions as revealed in policies and writings. Students of modern India and the British Empire will find Thomas Metcalf's book relevant and accessible.

Empire by Treaty

A New Chapter in Divide and Rule

Gandhi and His Critics

Britain, America and the World

British Imperialism in Malaya

*On to Delhi**Trade, Growth, and Institutional Change*

At the height of the imperial age, European powers ruled over most parts of the Islamic world. The British, French, Russian, and Dutch empires each governed more Muslims than any independent Muslim state. European officials believed Islam to be of great political significance, and were quite cautious when it came to matters of the religious life of their Muslim subjects. In the colonies, they regularly employed Islamic religious leaders and institutions to bolster imperial rule. At the same time, the European presence in Muslim lands was confronted by religious resistance movements and Islamic insurgency. Across the globe, from the West African savanna to the shores of Southeast Asia, Muslim rebels called for holy war against non-Muslim intruders. Islam and the European Empires presents the first comparative account of the engagement of all major European empires with Islam. Bringing together fifteen of the world's leading scholars in the field, the volume explores a wide array of themes, ranging from the accommodation of Islam under imperial rule to Islamic anti-colonial resistance. A truly global history of empire, the volume makes a major contribution not only to our knowledge of the intersection of Islam and imperialism, but also more generally to our understanding of religion and power in the modern world. In this broad study of British rule in India during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Sudipta Sen takes up this dual agenda, sketching out the interrelationships between nationalism, imperialism, and identity formation as they played out in both England and South Asia.

First published in 1973. Part of the studies in Commonwealth Politics and History series, this volume is a collection of essays with the topics of Empire and authority, social engineering, traditional rulership, Christianity, the sequence in the demission of power, and the political aftermath of the British Empire.

Trade, Tariffs, and Empire

National Imperialism and the Origins of British India

The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume III: The Nineteenth Century

British, the Magnificent Exploiters of India

The Making and Unmaking of Empires

Islam and the European Empires

The British Empire In India

A study of how the 'whiteness' of Europeans was constructed in the colonial situation, using British India of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as a case study.

Although the princes of India have been caricatured as oriental despots and British stooges, Barbara Ramusack's study argues that the British did not create the princes. On the contrary, many were consummate politicians who exercised considerable degrees of autonomy until the disintegration of the princely states after independence. Ramusack's synthesis has a broad temporal span, tracing the evolution of the Indian kings from their pre-colonial origins to their roles as clients in the British colonial system. The book breaks ground in its integration of political and economic developments in the major princely states with the shifting relationships between the princes and the British. It represents a major contribution, both to British imperial history in its analysis of the theory and practice of indirect rule, and to modern South Asian history, as a portrait of the princes as politicians and patrons of the arts.

The period between the end of the First World War and the outbreak of the Second was one of major disturbances in the international economy. These resulted in important changes in Britain and India, and in their relationship. This book analyses the extent and quality of changes within the economic aspects of British imperialism in India, and explores the calculations and compulsions that went into the making of economic policy in London and Delhi between 1919 and 1939. The main focus is on the Lancashire textile industry, the decline of whose India trade during this period was of both absolute and symbolic significance in the history of Indo-British relations. The affairs of Lancashire are studied within the broader context of the decline and eventual collapse of the pre-1914 international economic order; the influence of British industrial and financial interests; and the imperatives arising out of massive unemployment in Britain. At the same time, policy-making in India is examined in the context of nationalism; the threats posed to the Raj by growing political activity; the economic interests and political attitudes of businessmen; and the priorities of the Government of India. Situated within this comprehensive context, the story of Lancashire provides a useful medium of analysis for the larger themes of economic and political change, and their relative importance in the reshaping of Britain's imperial system. Drawing on a wealth of private and official sources, this book provides fresh insights into the purposes and strategies of the Raj in its penultimate phase. It criticizes and complements current historiography on British imperialism in India, as well as on the process of decolonization.

Whose India?

Lancashire and British Policy in India, 1919-1939

Education and British Imperialism

Individualism, Collective Agency, and India

Ideologies of the Raj

Imperialism and the Developing World

The British Impact on India

In the eighteenth century, India's share of the world economy was as large as Europe's. By 1947, it had decreased six-fold. In *Inglorious Empire*, Shashi Tharoor tells the real story of the British in India, from the arrival of the East India Company in 1757 to the end of the Raj, and reveals how Britain's rise was built upon its depredations in India. India was Britain's biggest cash cow, and Indians literally paid for their own oppression. Britain's Industrial Revolution was founded on India's deindustrialisation, and the destruction of its textile industry. Under the British, millions died from starvation—including 4 million in 1943 alone, after national hero Churchill diverted Bengal's food stocks to the war effort. Beyond conquest and deception, the Empire blew rebels from cannons, massacred unarmed protesters and entrenched institutionalised racism. British imperialism justified itself as enlightened despotism for the benefit of the governed. Tharoor takes on and demolishes the arguments for the Empire, demonstrating how every supposed imperial 'gift', from the railways to the rule of law, was designed in Britain's interests alone. This incisive reassessment of colonialism exposes to devastating effect the inglorious reality of Britain's stained Indian legacy.

A New Chapter in Divide and RuleRajani Palme Dutt Exposes Cabinet Mission's PlanAn Era of DarknessThe British Empire In IndiaRupa Publications

The revised edition of Robert Stern's book brings India's story up to date. Since its original publication in 1993, much has altered and yet central to the author's argument remains his belief in the remarkable continuity and vitality of India's social systems and its resilience in the face of change. This is a colourful, readable and comprehensive introduction to modern India. In a journey through its family households and villages, the author explains its long-lived and little understood caste and class systems, its venerable faiths and extraordinary ethnic diversity, its history as 'the jewel in the crown' of British imperialism and its post-Independence career as a major agricultural and industrial nation. While paradoxes abound in an India which is constantly transforming, Stern demonstrates how and why it remains the largest and most enduring democracy in the developing world.

Essays in the Study of British Imperialism

The Character of the British Empire

The Return of the Mughal: Historical Fiction and Despotism in Colonial India, 1863-1908

En-Gendering India

Rajani Palme Dutt Exposes Cabinet Mission's Plan

How Britain and the United States Shaped the Global Periphery

Britain, India, and America C.1750-1783

In *The Making and Unmaking of Empires* P. J. Marshall, distinguished author of numerous books on the British Empire and former Rhodes Professor of Imperial History, provides a unified interpretation of British imperial history in the later eighteenth century.

He brings together into a common focus Britain's loss of empire in North America and the winning of territorial dominion in parts of India and argues that these developments were part of a single phase of Britain's imperial history, rather than marking the closing of a 'first' Atlantic empire and the rise of a 'second' eastern one. In both India and North America Britain pursued similar objectives in this period. Fearful of the apparent enmity of France, Britain sought to secure the interests overseas which were thought to contribute so much to her wealth and power. This involved imposing a greater degree of control over colonies in America and over the East India Company and its new possessions in India. Aspirations to greater control also reflected an increasing confidence in Britain's capacity to regulate the affairs of subject peoples, especially through parliament. If British objectives throughout the world were generally similar, whether they could be achieved depended on the support or at least acquiescence of those they tried to rule. Much of this book is concerned with bringing together the findings of the rich historical writing on both post-Mughal India and late colonial America to assess the strengths and weaknesses of empire in different parts of the world. In North America potential allies who were closely linked to Britain in beliefs, culture and economic interest were ultimately alienated by Britain's political pretensions. Empire was extremely fragile in two out of the three main Indian settlements. In Bengal, however, the British achieved a *modus vivendi* with important groups which enabled them to build a secure base for the future subjugation of the subcontinent. With the authority of one who has made the study of empire his life's work, Marshall provides a valuable resource for scholar and student alike.

This *Pivot* explores the uses of the Mughal past in the historical fiction of colonial India. Through detailed reconsiderations of canonical works by Rudyard Kipling, Flora Annie Steel and Romesh Chunder Dutt, the author argues for a more complex and integral understanding of the part played by the Mughal imaginary in colonial and early Indian nationalist projections of sovereignty. Evoking the rich historical and transnational contexts of these literary narratives, the study demonstrates the ways in which, at successive moments of crisis and contestation in the later Raj, the British Indian state continued to be troubled by its early and profound investments in models of despotism first located by colonial administrators in the figure of the Mughal emperor. At the heart of these political fictions lay the issue of territoriality and the founding problem of a British claim to sole proprietorship of Indian land — a form of Orientalist exceptionalism that at once underpinned and could never fully be integrated with the colonial rule of law. Alongside its recovery of a wealth of popular and often overlooked colonial historiography, *The Return of the Mughal* emphasises the relevance of theories of political theology — from Carl Schmitt and Ernst Kantorowicz to Talal Asad and Giorgio Agamben — to our understanding of the fictional and jurisprudential histories of colonialism. This study aims to show just how closely the pageantry and romance of empire in India connects to its early politics of terror and even today continues to inform the figure of the Mughal in the sectarian politics of Hindu Nationalism.

In 1930, the American historian and philosopher Will Durant wrote that Britain's 'conscious and deliberate bleeding of India... [was the] greatest crime in all history'. He was not the only one to denounce the rapacity and cruelty of British rule, and his assessment was not exaggerated. Almost thirty-five million Indians died because of acts of commission and omission by the British-in famines, epidemics, communal riots and wholesale slaughter like the reprisal killings after the 1857 War of Independence and the Amritsar massacre of 1919. Besides the deaths of Indians, British rule impoverished India in a manner that beggars belief. When the East India Company took control of the country, in the chaos that ensued after the collapse of the Mughal empire, India's share of world GDP was 23 per cent. When the British left it was just above 3 per cent. The British empire in India began with the East India Company, incorporated in 1600, by royal charter of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth I, to trade in silk, spices and other profitable Indian commodities. Within a century and a half, the Company had become a power to reckon with in India. In 1757, under the command of Robert Clive, Company forces defeated the ruling Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula of Bengal at Plassey, through a combination of superior artillery and even more superior chicanery. A few years later, the young and weakened Mughal emperor, Shah Alam II, was browbeaten into issuing an edict that replaced his own revenue officials with the Company's representatives. Over the next several decades, the East India Company, backed by the British government, extended its control over most of India, ruling with a combination of extortion, double-dealing, and outright corruption backed by violence and superior force. This state of affairs continued until 1857, when large numbers of the Company's Indian soldiers spearheaded the first major rebellion against colonial rule. After the rebels were defeated, the British Crown took over power and ruled the country ostensibly more benignly until 1947, when India won independence. In this explosive book, bestselling author Shashi Tharoor reveals with acuity, impeccable research, and trademark wit, just how disastrous British rule was for India. Besides examining the many ways in which the colonizers exploited India, ranging from the drain of national resources to Britain, the destruction of the Indian textile, steel-making and shipping industries, and the negative transformation of agriculture, he demolishes the arguments of Western and Indian apologists for Empire on the supposed benefits of British rule, including democracy and political freedom, the rule of law, and the railways. The few unarguable benefits—the English language, tea, and cricket—were never actually intended for the benefit of the colonized but introduced to serve the interests of the colonizers. Brilliantly narrated and passionately argued, *An Era of Darkness* will serve to correct many misconceptions about one of the most contested periods of Indian history.

Lion Rampant