

## Theodore Koditschek

### Supplementary Notes to Introduction

**Note to Reader:** These supplementary notes consist primarily of extended references and explanations that were cut from the original book manuscript for reasons of space. In a few instances, however, they constitute more extended subordinate narratives (with accompanying references), which are related to the book's themes, but were left out because they would have deflected from the central argument and analysis of the volume. These supplementary notes are coordinated to the footnote numbers for the Introduction to *Liberalism, Imperialism and the Historical Imagination: Nineteenth Century Visions of a Greater Britain*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2011).

1. "The discovery of America and that of a passage to the East Indies by way of the Cape of Good Hope," Smith argued, in another part of *The Wealth of Nations*, "are the greatest and most important events recorded in the history of mankind." By opening a new and inexhaustible market to all commodities of Europe, they gave occasion to new divisions of labor and improvements of art, which, in the narrow circle of ancient commerce, could never have taken place for want of a market to take off the greater part of their produce. And yet, unaccountably, this greatest of all extensions in the scope of market principles had simultaneously produced the most disastrous, evil and retrograde of effects. "To the natives both of the East and West Indies, all the commercial benefits which can have resulted from those events have been sunk and lost in the dreadful misfortunes" [i.e. genocide] which had followed upon European conquest. Unable or unwilling to pay the high wages that would have been required in colonial settings, European settlers had perpetrated the crime of slave labor in order to man the plantations that produced sugar and tobacco at affordable prices for metropolitan markets. Lured by the dream of quick riches, these greedy Europeans had embraced delusory monetary theories that had induced them to accumulate useless hoards of silver and gold. These monetarist fetishes, in their turn, had impelled subsequent generations to impose even more destructive mercantilist restrictions that impeded the volume of trade and stunted overall economic growth. Smith would like to believe that these contradictory consequences were "accidental" rather than "in the nature of these events themselves." His own analysis proves otherwise, however. The 'invisible hand' of the new global market had generated the very disparities that made it a blessing for a few, while -- for the majority -- it was a curse. Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Wealth of Nations*, (Modern Library, New York, [1776], 1936), 156-7, 366, 458-9, 590-4, 531-606, quote on 590. For an analysis of Smith's attitudes towards indigenous peoples, which focuses on his *Lectures on*

*Jurisprudence*, see Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn To Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France*, (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2005), 25-58. For further analysis of British mercantilism and anti-mercantilism see D.C. Coleman, ed., *Revisions in Mercantilism*, (Methuen, London, 1969); Walter E. Minchinton, ed., *Mercantilism: System or Expediency?*, (Heath, Lexington, 1969); Klaus Knorr, *British Colonial Theories: 1570-1850*, (University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1944); George Louis Beer, *The Origins of the British Colonial System, 1578-1660*, (Peter Smith, Gloucester, Massachusetts, 1959); *British Colonial Policy, 1754-65*, (Smith, Gloucester, 1958); and Jeremy Black, *A System of Ambition? British Foreign Policy, 1660-1793*, (Longmans, London, 1991).

Smith's belief that Britain's North American Empire might be saved if it were liberalized and decentralized was shared by several contemporary commentators. Indeed, in 1774 and 1775, the American crisis stimulated a wave of creative proposals for possible schemes of imperial federation. These discussions were already well under way when *The Wealth of Nations* was written. The flurry began with John Cartwright's *American Independence*, (Burt Franklin, New York, [1775], 1970), Cartwright wrote in response to a pamphlet by Josiah Tucker, which had argued that the colonies were not worth keeping, and should be allowed to leave; *The True Interest of Britain, set forth with Regard to the Colonies*, (Bell, Philadelphia, 1776). Cartwright thought it was worth persuading the colonists to remain in a Union with Britain, where they would provide a major impetus for reform. Since the (white) colonists were already free Britons under the ancient Constitution, Cartwright argued, all that was necessary was to devise an institutional scheme whereby their legislatures would be given powers that corresponded with those of the Westminster Parliament. A few months later a Dissenter, Richard Price, offered a similar 'Home Rule' program. *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty and the War with America*, (T. Cadell, London, 1777). For yet another proposal along similar lines see William Pulteney, 2nd Earl of Bath, *Plan of Re-union between Great Britain and her Colonies*, (J. Murray, London, 1778).

Given the vast challenges of distance and communication, these proposals to save the first Empire were non-starters in the 1770s. A century later, when they were dusted off and re-proposed by reformers of the second Empire, they were taken seriously enough that their inner contradictions (e.g. Anglo-Saxon liberty vs. native coercion) rose to the fore. See Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the future of World Order, 1860-1900*, (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2007), and chapter five, *infra*, for more details

2. The first U.S. tariff was the Hamilton Tariff of 1789, which was implemented primarily for revenue purposes. Only in 1828 did the United States begin to adopt overtly protectionist measures, and these were again reduced during the 1830s. Thus, until the crisis of 1860, and the break-up of the Union, the American Republic maintained a system of relatively open trade. Louis M. Hacker, *The Triumph of American Capitalism*, (Columbia University Press, New York, 1947), 190, 307-9.

4. To my knowledge, there was no accurate census of the entire British Empire during the nineteenth century, and even if there had been, disputes would remain about exactly which places really were in the 'Empire', as opposed to some less formal type of political dependency. The figure of 175 million that I have cited from Henry Morris's *History of Colonization*, (Macmillan, New York, 1908), and B.R. Mitchell's *Abstract of British Historical Statistics*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1962), for 1860 is probably on the low end. Most likely it encompasses only colonies in the strictest sense, as well as only those parts of India that were under direct British rule. Christopher Bayly offers the more expansive estimate of 200 million c. 1820, which would put the midcentury totals somewhere in the neighborhood of 250 million; *Imperial Meridian*, (Longman, London, 1989), 3. W.W. Rostow, *The World Economy: History and Prospect*, (University of Texas Press, Austin, 1978), 4, reports a population of 233 million for the Indian subcontinent in 1850, which suggests that the total population of all areas under British suzerainty (loosely conceived) may have been in the neighborhood of 300 million. The real meaning of such estimates is questionable, however.

Notoriously, this second British Empire was one of those elephantine phenomena which seem to attract blind men (and women) to talk past one another -- one calling it a rope when he touches the trunk, and another calling it a tree when she touches the leg. Over the years we have been offered Leninist, Hobsonian, Schumpeterian, Robinsonian and Gallagherian (and many other) theories to explain nineteenth century imperialism, all of which illuminated certain aspects of the beast. As this book will show, the second British Empire (indeed, modern imperialism in general) is too contradictory and composite a phenomenon to be explained by any single unifying theory. This does not mean, however, that we should not seek coherent heuristic frameworks for mapping its relation to such concurrent processes as the rise of industrial capitalism, the persistence of gentility, the stabilization of society, the transformation of the state, and the incorporation of subalterns, as well as the construction and constant reconstruction of national/imperial identities. While my book does not purport to offer a definitive treatment of these intersections, I believe that it begins to explore them in a novel and productive way.

Although capitalism and class are not explicitly theorized in my book, they are very much present as background forces. Earlier theories of the relationship between capitalism and imperialism floundered on the misconceived attempt to associate imperialism with only one particular stage of capitalist development -- thereby endowing it with a theoretical primacy that its protean character could never sustain. In fact, modern imperialism has figured centrally -- but not reductively -- at every stage in the development of capitalism. Particularly in the case of Britain, the two have been constantly interacting and modifying one another in every stage in the development of each.

In my formulation, it is indeed the shift from one form of capitalism (mercantile) to another (early industrial) that corresponds to the shift from the first to the second British Empire. Moreover, the rising and falling fortunes of the liberal imperialism that shaped the second Empire correspond to the vicissitudes of early industrial capitalism as it ramified unevenly between metropole and periphery. Nevertheless, I reject any simple

reduction of the history of imperialism to the history of capitalism. Indeed, at some critical moments, it was the character of imperialism that determined the fate of capitalism in Britain far more than the other way around. As my analysis will demonstrate, this character of imperialism was determined to a considerable extent by the thrust of its discourses of progress/retrogression and racial superiority/inferiority. Changing discourses did not follow deterministically from the sequences of capitalism or the structures of Empire. Rather, as my analysis will indicate, these discourses themselves determined how well (or ill) imperial Britain was able to adapt at various moments to the sequence of successive capitalist regimes. These questions of the relationship of economic to political and cultural factors (and *vice versa*) are, as I have said, not explicitly theorized in this book. My treatment however follows from considerable thinking about these matters, which I hope to take up in a different venue.

5. It is important to keep in mind that when we speak of the transition from the first to the second British Empire, we are considering a process that did not occur overnight, but which gradually unfolded between 1776 and 1849, when the last of the Navigation Acts were repealed. Built, as it was, from critiques of the coercive character of its predecessor, this new Empire encountered almost immediate problems of legitimation once it became clear that the freedoms that it promised were redolent with deep-seeded contradictions of their own. Inherently dynamic, unsettled, and internally unstable, the new Empire seemed to advance through a succession of paradoxical antinomies -- emancipation from slavery brought not only freedom, but new forms of work discipline that betokened even deeper, more intrusive forms of labor compulsion. The advent of free trade not only opened new opportunities for individuals, but also forced them into competitive markets whether they liked it or not. The end of private plunder in India opened the way not so much to efficient, transparent government, as to new regimes of public surplus extraction on a scale that had never before been known. The end of official ethnic and religious discrimination did not result in genuine equality, but underwrote new 'scientifically' formulated judgments of character and demarcations of race. The erosion of older patriarchal privileges did not lead to sexual liberation but to new, and even more narrowly-framed, masculine and feminine gender norms. The grant of self-government and Dominion status to 'Anglo-Saxon' settlers only drew stark attention to the more centralized authoritarian dominance that were imposed on the 'coloured' colonies. In short, the advance of civilization did not so much wipe out savagery as engraft a streak of brutality into the progress of civilization itself. Clearly, it would be no easy task to legitimize this new contradictory Empire, as what follows will make clear.

6. Historians are necessarily influenced by the world in which (and for which) they write. It may therefore be worth noting that this book was written while the American invasion and occupation of Iraq was underway. The imperial enterprises of nineteenth century Britain were, of course, in many respects quite different from this late modern

adventure. Nevertheless, I would make the case that the activities and ideologies that my book endeavors to elucidate constituted the first chapter in the saga of liberal imperialism whose final stages we are hopefully witnessing today. The ‘noble’, patronizing desire to reform the backward (neo-)colonial other always belies the coercive methods that are required to bring this transformation about. If the reader detects elements in my analysis and my story that still resonate with current conditions, I hope he or she will agree that the parallels are no invention of mine, but rather reflect enduring patterns in the broader phenomenon of capitalist imperialism that were first set down in the time and place of my book.

7. While the advent of the progress narrative intensified the centrality of history in imperial legitimation, historical precedents had been relevant tools for self-understanding even during the first British Empire. At first, it was the spiritual energies of Protestantism and providence, which drove the initial wave of settlement. As these were eventually depleted, however, a secular prototype was found for conquest and expansion in the annals of ancient Roman history. Casting Britain as the new Rome became something of a commonplace, fuelling the fires of both patriotism and propaganda, particularly during the ‘Augustan’ Age of the eighteenth century when the parallelism between the two seemed to reach its apogee. Yet, as the century wore on, the lessons of Rome were more often taken as warnings against imperial over-reach. Domination of distant peoples, it was increasingly feared, brought the decline of republican virtue as luxury, corruption and moral enervation sapped manliness, vigor and metropolitan liberty. Edward Gibbon’s monumental *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, gave the most thorough airing to such anxieties. Gibbon, of course, was too excellent a scholar ever to forget the difference between the Roman Empire, which was (mostly) military and tributary, and the British, which was (predominantly) seaborne and commercial. Still, he could not help noting, in 1776, the connection between the *Decline* that he was writing and the decline that he was witnessing first hand. David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000); Howard D. Weinbrot, *Augustus Caesar in ‘Augustan’ England*, (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1978); Frank M. Turner, *Contesting Cultural Authority*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993), 231-61; J.G.A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, vol. III, *The First Decline and Fall*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003), 8; vol. IV, *Barbarians, Savages and Empires*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005), 5.

Given the classical education of Britain’s elites, Greece and Rome always remained foils for contemporary discussion. However, with the rise of the progress narrative and the second British Empire, it became ever more difficult to sustain analogies with the empires of antiquity. Indeed, once free trade and ‘progress’ replaced mercantilism and ‘robbery’, the preeminent historical referent of British imperialism involved comparisons of the new Empire with its own former self. Almost by definition, the progress narrative required a rhetorical backdrop of un-enlightenment and retrogression, since the velocity of its ascent into the emancipatory future came to depend on its distance from the

benighted, exploitative past. Hence, the new Empire came to be defined as the opposite image of its predecessor. It gained legitimacy by redressing the crimes of slavery and the errors of coercion that two centuries of misguided mercantilism had wrought. Once these blots on the national conscience had been eradicated, a brilliant future would open up for the export of British goods, values, religion, institutions, and history: in the story of Britain's original liberal, industrial, capitalist ascent, it was argued, there was a lesson of liberty and improvement for all mankind. By accepting British tutelage, and acquiescing in British rule, retrograde peoples on every continent could join the van of progress, preparing for the day when they would be ready for British-style representative government of their own.

In each of these cases, history was invoked, not merely to justify imperialism, but *actively* to *reconstruct* it along novel lines. Roadmaps for the future could be derived from history's inherently reflexive character -- its incessant dialectic between a projective future and an interpretable past. This reflexivity afforded a vehicle for managing those contradictions that experience could not directly resolve. Since historical discourses were relatively open, and gave no definitive answers to imperial questions, they constituted arenas for discussion and debate of rival views. Because it was a genre with immense prestige and enormous popularity, history provided a forum in which popular historians, imperial policy makers, and the larger reading public could work through these imperial questions, groping towards a possible consensus. Since this discussion was conducted in a wide range of formats, from novels, to critical essays, to multi-volume national histories, it has never received the attention from imperial historians that it deserves.

Precisely because this new, progressive Empire was a dynamic formation, its civilization and citizenship had to be depicted as the outgrowths of a long and arduous developmental process. The rights and privileges of any group or individual would depend on how far they had progressed along a sequence of evolutionary stages. Acquiescence in Britishness was taken as the truest mark of advancement, while the depiction of colonial subalterns as backward and lacking indigenous history served as an instrument of exclusion, relegating such unfortunate others to the bottom rung of the westernizing British trajectory.

In sum, history enjoyed a privileged status because it provided a vehicle for managing the contradictions that I set out in the first two pages of this book. History was the favored instrument for explicating the meaning and limits of 'British' freedom, in the context of a British imperial world where coercion still obtained. Through history, it might be possible to square this circle. History could show why, and for how long, coercion might be necessary. It could suggest how, in future, the legacy of liberty might be reclaimed. In this manner, grand, romantic narratives of Britishness triumphant were constructed from several contrasting viewpoints. In different ways, each of the figures in my study was concerned to demonstrate how Greater Britain might realize her greatness, and how she might avoid the fate of Greater Athens and Greater Rome. What had begun as a small, marginal, seafaring nation might yet remain ascendant in a world of limitless industrial expansion and transcontinental superpowers. Now that this dream of a Greater

Britain is finished, the time seems ripe to interrogate it in a more critical, historical, and disinterested way.

9. My definition of the “second British Empire” departs from the conventional one, aptly summarized by Paul Langford (*A Polite and Commercial People: England, 1727-1783*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992, pg. 619) as “a new concept of Empire, commercial rather than territorial in character, and oriental rather than occidental in direction.” The problem with this approach is that the new commercial concept of Empire quickly became even more territorial in character than the old one. Similarly, alongside its new oriental direction, many of the old occidental holdings were retained. The most succinct way to formulate my alternative approach to the “second British Empire” is to envision it as the product of an effort to navigate between four partly contradictory and incompatible imperatives: 1) The determination, after 1776, to create a new Empire of trade that would, as far as possible, be economic and informal rather than political and territorial. 2) The necessity of responding to the disruptive effects of British trade and economic penetration into the collapsing traditional empires of Asia, and the more loosely coordinated societies of Africa. This, however, entailed the assumption of more and more direct British political responsibility and territorial control. 3) The aspiration to avoid any repetition of the American debacle, by gradually devolving local home rule to “civilized” Anglo-Saxon colonists, ultimately creating a more decentralized and federative imperial structure. 4) The necessity of deciding if (and when) the non-Anglo-Saxon Irish, Indian, Burmese, Malay, Arab, and African subjects of the new territorial Empire were becoming sufficiently civilized and anglicized as to share in these (originally racialized) federative imperial structures. For an exhaustive though somewhat narrow account of the creation of the second Empire, focusing on the later eighteenth century, and emphasizing ‘the swing to the East’, see Vincent Harlow, *The Founding of the Second British Empire*, two vols., (Longmans, London, 1962, 1964). For a more up-to-date and more expansive re-traversal of the same ground see Peter Marshall, *The Making and Unmaking of Empires: Britain, India and America c. 1750-1783*, (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005).

10. Another way to put this would be to say that a good deal of the second 'liberal' British Empire was fabricated in response to what would today be called 'blowback' from the violence of the first. The most obvious case here was that of slavery. Given slavery's centrality to the structure of society in the West Indies (as well as in the formerly Dutch South Africa, and the formerly British United States) the project of dismantling it and replacing it with satisfactory forms of free labor set the primary agenda for the renewal of imperialism in the nineteenth century. Redeeming the crimes and iniquities of sinful predecessors provided an ample program for several generations of evangelicals and utilitarians alike. In Ireland, the long dark night of conquest and religious oppression required a comparable sequence of reckoning, redemption, and imperial reform. Even in those parts of the Empire that were newly acquired (Australia and New Zealand) or

newly settled (western Canada and the South African interior), the ghost of the first British Empire haunted the program through which the second was built. In each case, it was through narratives of what had gone wrong with the original imperial ventures that the new policies for rectification were largely framed. The term 'blowback' was coined by the CIA to characterize the unintended consequences of American imperialism. It is critically examined in Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire*, (Henry Holt, New York, 2000). For analyses of liberal efforts to redeem the sin of slavery see, especially, Thomas Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938*, (Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1992); Robert Carl-Heinz Shell, *Children of Bondage; A Social History of the Slave Society at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652-1838*, (University Press of New England (Hanover, 1994); David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823*, (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York, 1975); Robin Blackburn, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848*, (Verso, London, 1988), 1-160; Eric Foner, *Nothing but Freedom: Emancipation and its Legacy*, (Louisiana University Press, Baton Rouge, 1983). See also Oliver MacDonagh, *Ireland*, (Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1968); Patrick O'Farrell, *Ireland's English Question*, (Schocken, New York, 1971), 1-160; Alan Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth Century South Africa and Britain*, (Routledge, London, 2001); and James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of New Zealanders*, (University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1996).

11. In addition to the references in this numbered footnote, see D.A. Low, *Lion Rampant: Essays in the Study of British Imperialism*, (Cass, London, 1973), and Bernard Semmel, *The Liberal Ideal and the Demons of Empire: Theories of Imperialism from Adam Smith to Lenin*, (Johns Hopkins, Baltimore, 1983). My own project in this book continues a long-standing interest in nineteenth century liberalism, which I began in an earlier book. In that book, *Class Formation and Urban Industrial Society: Bradford, 1750-1850*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990), I examined the ways in which liberal hegemony was achieved in the context of a single industrial city. By extending the scope of my enquiry to encompass the British Empire, I aim to expand, but also to complicate, my earlier analysis. The progress narrative, when couched as a liberal imperial romance, was the product of industrial capitalist social relations, but its hegemonic aims were even more ambitious, purporting to encompass and integrate every social group throughout the world. How far this liberal imperial romance simply reflected British global capitalist hegemony, and how far it *actively constructed* this hegemony, is one of the questions that I am exploring in the present book.

18. British identities were not merely constructed in opposition to some dangerous alien. They also flowed from the sense of participation in a common historical project. My argument is that Greater Britain (like Great Britain) was a contested terrain, in which different lines of inclusion and exclusion were being drawn by different people, at different times, and in different ways. Between the defeat of France and the rise of Germany (c.

1815-1896), the British other became primarily internal. It now consisted of subordinate social groups that needed to be assimilated, rather than of hostile powers which had to be thrust back. At home, it was imperative to make the working class respectable. In the Empire, it was necessary to civilize colonial subalterns. At the same time, global capitalism, with its massive inequalities, seemed to complicate and even undermine these goals. It is for this reason that the lines of Greater British inclusion and exclusion were relative rather than absolute. They usually carried the implication that civic inclusion was possible, but always connected it to the larger progress of civilization, and insisted that it was a privilege which had to be earned.

21. As with the racial chauvinism of the evolutionary historians treated in chapter five, Froude's overt Protestant chauvinism (examined in chapter four) points to a feature that distinguished both from the original liberal imperialists examined in the first three chapters of this book. In contrast to the post-liberals of the 1850s 60s and 70s, all the men and women who figure centrally in the first three chapters eschewed overt expressions of religious or racial prejudice. Brought up by her father in the principles of enlightenment rationalism, Maria Edgeworth steered clear of any serious consideration of religion, and found the rabid anti-Catholicism of so many of her Protestant neighbors to be distasteful. While Scott's romance was more rooted in romanticism, he too told a tale of British reconciliation and unification in which religion played only a minor part. This eschewal of religious prejudice was shared by the two Macaulays, who also extended it to the category of race. Both men explicitly rejected the belief that white Anglo-Saxons were innately superior to dark skinned peoples. The superiority of English civilization was attributed to the dynamics of English historical evolution. Ancient England had been civilized by Roman imperialism. Building on this classical foundation, she had created her own free institutions in the seventeenth century. Now, in the modern capitalist epoch that England had inaugurated, the British Empire would spread its civilization around the globe.

There was, unfortunately, an intellectual price to be paid for this neglect of religious and racial prejudice as a factor in Greater British expansion. Finding such prejudices to be personally distasteful, these writers were ill-equipped to understand how they worked in practice. Far from eliminating racism or religious intolerance, this silence on unpleasant topics merely left the way open for their xenophobic successors to create new imperial romances on the exclusions of religion or race. Once the early nineteenth century liberals had embraced the very notion of a hierarchy of civilizations, it was but a short step to explaining the civilizational deficiencies of the subaltern others in terms of some biological taint or spiritual degeneracy.