



Empire: The Rise and Demise of the British World Order and the Lessons for Global Power

Niall Ferguson

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The British Empire was the largest in all history: the nearest thing to world domination ever achieved. By the eve of World War II, around a quarter of the world's land surface was under some form of British rule. Yet for today's generation, the British Empire seems a Victorian irrelevance. The time is ripe for a reappraisal, and in *Empire*, Niall Ferguson boldly recasts the British Empire as one of the world's greatest modernizing forces. An important new work of synthesis and revision, *Empire* argues that the world we know today is in large measure the product of Britain's Age of Empire. The spread of capitalism, the communications revolution, the notion of humanitarianism, and the institutions of parliamentary democracy—all these can be traced back to the extraordinary expansion of Britain's economy, population, and culture from the seventeenth century until the mid-twentieth. On a vast and vividly colored canvas, *Empire* shows how the British Empire acted as midwife to modernity. Displaying the originality and rigor that have made him the brightest light among British historians, Ferguson shows that the story of the Empire is pregnant with lessons for today—in particular for the United States as it stands on the brink of a new era of imperial power, based once again on economic and military supremacy. A dazzling tour de force, *Empire* is a remarkable reappraisal of the prizes and pitfalls of global empire.

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