

Unfinished Empire: The Global Expansion of Britain

John Darwin



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John Darwin's *After Tamerlane*, a sweeping six-hundred-year history of empires around the globe, marked him as a historian of "massive erudition" (the *Guardian*) and narrative mastery. In *Unfinished Empire*, he marshals his gifts to deliver a monumental one-volume history of Britain's imperium?a work that is sure to stand as the most authoritative and compelling treatment of the subject for a generation. It was hailed as one of the 10 best books of 2013 by Jonathan Yardley of *The Washington Post*.

Darwin's penetrating analysis offers a corrective to those who portray the empire as either naked exploitation or a grand "civilizing mission." Far from ever having a "master plan," the British Empire was controlled by a range of interests often at loggerheads with one another and was as much driven on by others' weaknesses as by its own strength.

Unfinished Empire is a remarkable, nuanced history of the most complex polity the world has ever known, and a serious attempt to describe the diverse, contradictory ways?military and cultural?in which empires really function.

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