

the Santals with their primitive inadequate means of communication such as bullock stagers and human voices enjoyed other natural advantages like holding the interior of the districts while the Company's forces occupied and operated from the peripheral lines with the advantage of the cooperation of the inhabitants and local intelligence. Quoting company reports, the author pens a scene of utmost panic, "waves of fear among British communities" engaging boats ready to carry them to safety, fleeing railway refugees adding to the panic among the onlookers, Bhaugulpore district's collector George Brown putting a government steamer on hold at the ghat for evacuating ladies the moment insurgents show up and so on. For the first time Lloyd and his fellow officers were inventing a new strategy "counter-insurgency" which proved invaluable in the momentous Indian War of Independence of 1857.

Yet, it was inevitable that in this unequal conflict, the Santals ultimately had to suffer a defeat or in Dalhousie's words they had to be "repressed" as he inscribed in his "Farewell Minute" penned in the steamer while returning to Britain. The two rebel leaders Sidhu and Kanhu were captured and hanged. The human and financial losses of the colonial authority were also not insignificant. Many young Britons lost their lives and had to be content to accept the muddy fields of Bengal as their final resting place along with their local sepoys and barcondazes. In financial costs, the "Company accountants soon computed it to have been £28,320 in addition to quotidian expenses."

Like Vladimir Putin's dismissive description of the Ukraine war as a "special operation," the British authorities also continued to call the Santals' uprising an "execution" but Peter Stanley conclusively proves that "the Hull was more than just an 'execution' – it was indeed a war."

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IN DEFENSE OF GERMAN COLONIALISM AND HOW ITS CRITICS EMPOWERED NAZIS, COMMUNISTS, AND THE ENEMIES OF THE WEST, by Bruce Gilley. Washington: Regnery Gateway, 2022, x+256pp. ISBN: 9781684512379.

An intelligent reader looking for a genuinely neutral academic assessment of the history of German colonialism will find this book a welcome relief.

The tome was inspired by abundant evidence of native populations formally requesting a return to German colonial governance after 1918. German rule only lasted two to three decades in many places and, as is well known, it is

exceptionally difficult to govern polyglot multi-confessional societies. The plethora of political inclinations and opinions, backed by the social solidarity of each distinct group, make genuine consensus impossible: rebellions, civil disturbances, political compromises and carefully negotiated peace treaties are inevitable. Gilley asks how had this profound loyalty and dedication to German leadership and institutions been accomplished so rapidly? By the lash of a whip?

Originally the text was published as *Verteidigung des deutschen Kolonialismus* (2021), and this is a translated, revised and expanded version. The aim here is to critique German colonialism – a fascinating episode in itself – but also to explain the associated historiography for and against, particularly the capricious motifs that evolved after 1918. This study persuasively undermines the modern myth of *Die Kolonial Schuldflüge* (colonial guilt) entirely with irrefutable evidence and sound logic.

There are fourteen easily read chapters here, excellent footnotes and index, and several genuinely outstanding photographs from the era illustrating points under consideration.

To start with, Gilley demonstrates well that German colonial administration was guided by high ideals and good planning. The lands taken on board were conceptualised as *Schutzgebiete* (protected territories) rather than normative colonies for surplus populations from the Fatherland. In fact most German emigrants and investors preferred the Americas (so bang goes the Marxist theory about overseas colonies being driven entirely by metropolitan needs for raw industrial materials and cheap land, not to mention Socialist propaganda about European settlers automatically seizing native property and wealth.) Gilley agrees that facts on the ground did not always match these lofty aspirations – there were racist remarks said and written by various actors – but overall the system generally worked well, usually in favour of the native populations (in terms of law and order, economic and material advancement, and so on). Abuses and failures in the German colonies were invariably reported and handled efficiently and justly.

In summary, the Germans created a goal-oriented system established on consensual grounds throughout their empire, stressing economic development and progress. They possessed little resources to govern or pay for the Empire and did not encourage massive settler communities. Berlin fostered schooling in native languages (such as Swahili for instance) as much as was practical, rather than German, and aware that a system requiring compulsion would waste time and money at the enforcement level, they made pragmatic efficiency their main priority (the carrot rather than the stick.)

Before 1914, the German colonies were often held up as models for other nations. After the bitter violence of World War One, however, the mood changed and exaggerated charges against German administration were engaged by the British and French to justify stripping the country of her overseas lands and ports. The Bolshevik revolutionaries heartily shared these objectives and sentiments.

German colonialism had been liberal and democratic. German anti-colonialism was at birth illiberal and totalitarian. (p. 200)

From the 1920's to 1945, both the Communists and the Nazis unequivocally disdained the idea of tropical colonies in Asia or Africa governed by liberal practices predicated on benevolent Western cultural traditions. Hitler wanted a European empire with Russia and the Ukraine as colonies. Gilley argues that their anti-modernisation impulses, ratiocination and strategic considerations led them to encourage anti-colonial views as a means to undermine the British and French polities; they were not motivated by a genuine concern for colonial populations and shared a vision of the future that was fundamentally opposed to normative capitalism, democracy and that which a modern reader might call basic civil or human rights.

The author also convincingly links colonialism abroad to political moderation in the metropole: industrialised Western European nations like Britain and France, Holland and Belgium, were somewhat obliged to adhere to international standards of ethics and humanitarian administration in overseas territories. (They sometimes failed, but there was ongoing diplomatic pressure in that direction.) To a degree, this notion of bi-partisan, collaborative, humane universalism undermined extremist propaganda at home, and partly explained why the fringe political agencies of Communism and Fascism never gained traction in London or Paris and so forth. Stripped of her colonies, post-war German society – the new republic shorn of traditional institutions like a conservative monarchy or a large army – became increasingly bitter, inimical and hostile towards any colonial project, and especially towards the British and French empires: both Communist and Nazi totalitarian voices (and their intellectual successors) contributed to this mental scree. Within fifteen years the country gambolled dangerously into the Nazi Party election victory.

After 1945, when the colonial archives were seized by the Soviet army, East German scholars were able to pour over the documents for decades, producing a substantial corpus of Leninist critiques of the Wilhelmine colonial project – all stressing and reiterating their perverse ideological convictions with little serious opposition (and few contrasting voices in academic circles.)

The book is not entirely perfect. I am pedantic here but describing German East Africa as “an area the size of India” (p. 59) is incorrect. There is a tendency

to employ the adjective 'woke' too often: the evidence is compelling and the reader does not always need the reminder. Chapter 12, linking Nazi anti-colonialism to Arab nationalism, is perhaps the weakest section and would have benefited from better editing.

Above all, Gilley missed an opportunity to repeat the Rowan Atkinson joke about the German Empire constituting little more than a small sausage factory on the shores of Lake Tanganyika!

Elsewhere the author cuts through the Gordian knots and tangles of various popular political fantasies and the paralysing infantilism of their intellectual contradictions. On stronger ground, he illustrates well a critical failure in much of academic post-colonial studies to comprehend even elementary economics: too many contemporary scholars are obsessed with the "fairylane of Michel Foucault" (p. 160) and speculative efforts to impose a modern "moral framework" to dictate the history books far away from "stubborn facts" (p. 164).

Doubtless, readers may be most interested in the book's potential for education and teaching. Gilley's attention to political and material economy is outstanding, and will help readers grasp causal and fundamental concepts with which they occasionally struggle. Finally, the attention to source material illustrates how serious historians study the past free of ideology, and stimulate genuine discussion and thought. Overall, this work is a sound introduction to the field from which most folk can learn much.

Ausgezeichnet!

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EXCLUSION OF MUSLIMS IN INDIA: PARTICIPATION, TOLERANCE AND LEGITIMACY OF THE STATE, edited by Arshi Khan. New Delhi: Institute of Objective Studies, 2018, 454pp. ISBN: 9789389965711.

The book under review is an outcome of understanding the social exclusion, ethno-religious discrimination, and current political system and culture in India. It dwells on the exclusion and discrimination of Muslims in the sphere of power, opportunities, and equality. Though the legal process seeks legitimacy of governance in a multi-cultural mosaic, social and political trust and constitutional compromise to live together have been belied recently. It is propelled by the continuous growth of religion-based politics benefiting the majority against the constitutional rights of mainly the Muslim minority in India that has cemented the base of majoritarian democracy for about four