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easily have dwindled into insignificance, he thinks, as many of its nineteenth-century critics thought that it would and should. Is he right, or did antiquity effectively shield it from the possibility of failure? Oxford, like Cambridge, possessed what were by European standards huge endowments. But how much do these historic endowments explain? There are two reasons for thinking that they do little to explain Oxford's survival. First, they were overwhelmingly held by colleges rather than by the university itself, and to some degree have been deployed for purposes that have more to do with intercollegiate competition than for the common interests of the university as a whole. Second, for Victorian reformers, endowments were a hindrance, since they yoked Oxford to the pursuit of purposes prescribed by wealthy benefactors in the past. Whereas today's university managers see endowments as a way of generating an income stream which can be used freely for strategic purposes, Victorian reformers confronted endowments which were, by and large, tied to very specific purposes (scholarships for the study of classics, fellowships restricted to natives of a particular county, and so on) and which were defended by conservatives who insisted upon the sanctity of founders' intentions. For Thomas Babington Macaulay, espousing the cause of the unendowed London University in 1826, the new university was well placed to provide for the needs of nineteenth-century society precisely because it was unencumbered by historic endowments. It was therefore "destined to a long, a glorious and a beneficent existence" (*Edinburgh Review*, February 1826, 340).

But is Brockliss right to discount the advantages conferred by antiquity? I doubt it. For one thing, although it is undeniable that Oxford changed radically in the nineteenth century and again in the post-1945 period, it still remained powerfully marked by its past. University fund-raisers have no doubts about the advantages conferred by a long and distinguished past, and indeed universities across the world are more alive than ever to the potential to use heritage to construct a distinctive brand and hence to gain an advantage in the competition for students. Among the various communities that universities serve, alumni are often underestimated, but they constitute a powerful force on the side of continuity as opposed to discontinuity; or, to put it more accurately, on the side of the preservation or construction of traditions that join today's university with a particular sense of its own past.

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Antoinette Burton. *The Trouble with Empire: Challenges to Modern British Imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. Pp. 336. $29.95 (cloth).
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At a time when voices increasingly suggest that the imperial turn is over, this fine essay by Antoinette Burton comes as a salutary reminder that even in the case of Britain, much work remains to be done before we have anything like a complete account of the imperial experience. Burton maintains that conventional histories of the British Empire, which are framed by powerful but overly simple narratives of rise and fall, rarely capture the extent to which the empire was contested, not merely during the final years of decolonization but throughout its entire existence. To understand more fully the challenges to which the empire was subject, we therefore need to acknowledge and take seriously the multiple forms of resistance that were mounted by colonial peoples. This is not a matter of simply adding instances of insurgency to the story, however, but of incorporating them analytically to provide counter-narratives of protest and resistance, thereby disclosing the fragile and tenuous hold that the imperial metropolis held over its subject peoples.

In some respects, the thesis is not a new one; no serious account of the empire has ignored, say, the events surrounding the Indian Revolt of 1857 or the Irish Home Rule movement of

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the 1870s, let alone the protracted and painful experience of decolonization, but what Burton does so well is to demonstrate that such incidences, far from being sporadic and isolated, were part of the quotidian reality of colonial rule, and unless and until they are integrated fully into narratives of empire, our grasp of the imperial experience as a whole remains impoverished. Much of the book serves to remind us, therefore, of how the military, economic, and sovereign power of the colonial state, from Afghanistan to Zululand, was constantly under siege. The cover illustration provides a strong clue to what follows. In an etching taken from *Le Petit Journal*, Paris, British soldiers making up a contingent of the Malakand Field Force come under attack from a well-armed group of Afghans, forcing a retreat. Because of the strategic importance of the Swat Valley in Afghanistan to the security of India, the 1897 siege was of particular significance, so Burton takes up the story in some detail. This she does by providing a response to Winston Churchill's *The Story of the Malakand Field Force*, which was written as a firsthand account of the campaign. At face value, Churchill's rhetoric is of a confident imperial expansion based on a conviction of the civilizing mission, but beneath this is a deep apprehension about the military capability of the British, particularly when faced with a "primitive," "savage" yet determined challenge from hostile forces.

Important lessons follow from this. It is not merely that a sense of insecurity can be detected in prominent imperial activists such as Churchill but also that the Malakand campaign and many other acts of insurgence prompt us to decenter much better-known incidences, such as the Indian Revolt, and help move lesser insurrections center stage. Much of the remainder of the book, therefore, is taken up with Burton's skillful discussions of instances of insurgency from across the temporal and geographical span of the British Empire in all their various manifestations. Thus, we learn of attempts of the British to neutralize the threat posed by Dost Mohammed, the emir of Afghanistan, who held the key to a network of complex alliances and eventually declared jihad against the East India Company; the series of wars launched against Maoris from the 1840s to 1870s; the role of boycotts in the long history of rural protest in Ireland, culminating in the Land War of 1879–1882; the anti-tax campaign of 1913–14 led by the Mekatalili Wa Menza, the leader of coastal Kenya; the international Ghadar movement of the early years of the twentieth century, which created an enduring revolutionary network of sedition; and many more. Striking here is the extraordinary diversity and resourcefulness of indigenous resistance—and its longevity: the struggle for decolonization was contingent on imperial expansion from its earliest phase, not merely a feature of its terminal years.

The agenda placed on the table by Burton is compelling, even more so if we note what other lines of inquiry it opens up. The fragility and insecurity of empire derived not merely from challenges mounted by the resistance of imperial subjects but also from fault lines in the imperial formation itself. To take the example of India, the authority exercised by the East India Company was severely compromised by internal and external conflict. Internally, fissures between the court of directors and court of proprietors (which in principle at least had ultimate authority) constantly hampered the management of company affairs, while the relationship between the directors and imperial administrators on the ground in India was fraught, often reaching the breaking point. This is to say nothing of the rivalries which beset the Governor General's Council in the various presidencies, most notably, the bitter rancor between Warren Hastings and Philip Francis in the late eighteenth century. Externally, company affairs came increasingly into conflict with Parliament, leading to the gradual supersession of its authority. No other issue better epitomizes these fissiparous tendencies than the whole messy business of reform to the administration of land revenue, which was dogged by internal indecision and a considerable repertoire of indigenous resistance, from a reluctance among zamindars to provide information on land holdings to incidences of armed insurrection.

It is important also to recover the patterns and networks of resistance. What were the synchronicities and homologies between, say, Ireland and India in terms of the organizations, strategies, and political programs of anti-colonial struggles? How can we better locate critiques

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of empire which emerged within the colonial metropolis (a topic raised by Burton but little developed)? Finally, although Burton's focus is on Britain, much can be learnt from comparative studies of other imperial formations. What forms of resistance were mounted to French and Dutch rule? Were the Mughal and Ottoman empires similarly fractured by dissent?

These are weighty questions; to provide satisfying answers, historians of empire will, one hopes, find gainful employment for some time yet.

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TIMOTHY CAMPBELL. *Historical Style: Fashion and the New Mode of History, 1740–1830*. Material Texts. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. Pp. 363. $65.00 (cloth).
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Where an earlier tradition of literary scholarship once tended to dismiss the realities of the book trade as a distraction that needed to be brushed aside in order to engage more directly with weightier historical contexts like French Revolution, a new generation has emphasized the influential nature of the connections between Britain's developing sense of commercial modernity and debates about literature and the visual arts. Timothy Campbell's *Historical Style: Fashion and the New Mode of History, 1740–1830* is an important addition to this growing collection of books that explore the material and intellectual connections between the various forces that we understand today as print culture and the protean world of commerce. As Campbell argues, these debates were shaped by an "emergent historicism" when "ordinary Britons for the first time began to recognize and to care about the precise ways in which their culture had changed over time" (11).

The spirit of ceaseless change that defined fashion's power epitomized the instabilities of a transactional world driven by credit where inherited notions of value had come untethered from the reassuring promise of the foundational models that had characterized earlier ages, but its iterative nature also allowed for new forms of historical specificity. Where fashions had once been associated with particular epochs, critics had, by the mid-eighteenth century, grown used to associating them with specific decades or years or even seasons. It was hard to imagine any phenomenon that more perfectly epitomized the sense of acceleration that critics have identified as a hallmark of modernity. If, as Campbell suggests, this was an era when Britons "began to see how they themselves, in their subjective and social being, were present-day products of contingent historical circumstances," the idea of fashion, in all its various forms, offered them a compelling lens through which to understand this sense of contingency (11–12). It had become enmeshed with the most exciting and unsettling intellectual and artistic currents, a form of "shadow play" that simultaneously fueled and troubled the historicist impulses of the day (23).

Campbell's book is organized into two sections. Beginning with a focus on Anna Barbauld, the first section explores these earlier critics' struggle to understand British history in ways that acknowledged their implication within the empire of fashion. Campbell reads Barbauld's deeply ambivalent meditation on the fate of the nation in her poem *Eighteen Hundred and Eleven* (1812) alongside her ongoing analysis of fashionable life in essays such as "Comparison of Manners in Two Centuries" (*Athenaeum* 1, no. 1 [January 1807]: 1–10; *Athenaeum* 1, no. 2 [February 1807]:111–21), which has been attributed to her, but also in the context of a rich visual-cultural archive. Reading Barbauld's work alongside "the rise of the regularly issued fashion plate and the iconic genre of the 'dress of the year' in women's pocketbooks" (36–37), as well in relation to texts such as Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (first drafted in the 1790s but published in 1817), Campbell reminds us of both the force and the complexity

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