

Charles Reed. *Royal Tourists, Colonial Subjects, and the Making of a British World 1860–1911*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016. 256 pp. ISBN 9780719097010. £75.00.

Charles V. Reed's *Royal Tourists* is a sophisticated and nuanced analysis of the complexities of imperial ritual and identities in the late Victorian and Edwardian period of "high imperialism". Reed explains that: "the ritual space of the royal tour was an important site where a British imperial culture was made and remade by a diverse array of historical actors in Britain and the empire" (xix). This relatively short monograph, focusing on royal visits to the settler colonies of South Africa and New Zealand and the British Raj in India, covers a tremendous amount of ground.

Reed begins with the royals themselves, demonstrating how Queen Victoria—the first "imperial" monarch—was a relatively ambivalent participant in the governance of her Empire. It was Albert, her beloved consort, who was the driving force behind the creation of a reinvigorated, "useful" monarchy with close ties to its imperial subjects. Reed explores how this attempt to redefine the British monarchy was part of a more comprehensive effort by Victoria and Albert to reclaim some political power from a constitutionally neutered monarchy. At the same time Victoria, who achieved an almost totemic mythological position in the minds of her imperial subjects the world over, never visited her Empire, and only reluctantly sent her sons to tour her domains.

Skilfully making use of royal correspondence Reed demonstrates how Victoria's sons—Alfred and Albert Edward (later Edward VII)—experienced their royal tours of empire. Alfred, one of the most prolific royal tourists, was more preoccupied with the thrill of the hunt and the masculine bonhomie of life in the Royal Navy than his imperial role and his visits to the Empire "often represented an irritating interruption in the life he most enjoyed" (18). Albert Edward, meanwhile, was known as something of a playboy at home, but proved to be a popular imperial tourist. It was only with the second generation of royal tourists—George V was the first reigning monarch to visit the Empire—that a sense of a globalised imperial duty became inculcated. Though Victoria's aim of recapturing some political clout for the constitutional monarchy was ultimately a failure, the process she and Albert began reshaped the monarchy into a form that remains recognisable today.

Challenging the arguments of David Cannadine's *Ornamentalism*, Reed notes that the use of imperial ritual as a "technology" of rule was reflective "of a less expensive and more practical method of rule more than it did any sense of shared status or values" (37). Colonial administrators saw the overpowering spectacle of a royal tour as an opportunity to cement existing power hierarchies (both their own and those of the "traditional" local elites through which the British often ruled). Royal tours to South Africa and New Zealand in the 1860s offered the imperial government in Whitehall and colonial administrators "on the spot" the opportunity to sanitise indigenous contestations of their sovereignty, transforming military and cultural challenge into harmless spectacles such as the Zulu "war dances" choreographed by Natalian mandarin Theophilus Shepstone for Alfred's South African visit in 1860.

At the same time, some indigenous rulers exploited royal tours. In 1860 Sesotho leader Moshoeshoe used the language of allegiance to the monarch to consolidate his power, straying

from the subservient role he got assigned in the colonial administrators' script for the tour. Likewise, Tawhiao, the Maori leader of the Kingitanga (a pan-Maori movement established specifically to provide a similar site of sovereignty to Queen Victoria) refused to leave his territory, known as "King Country", to meet Alfred during the Prince's tour of 1869–70. Other notable displays of loyalty, such as when Maori Chief Tamihana te Rauparaha presented Alfred with a greenstone ornament that had been a family heirloom for centuries, were more nuanced and complicated than they first appeared. To New Zealand's colonial administrators, the presentation represented a transfer of authority from the Maori to the colonists, but to Tamihana te Rapauraha, the gesture was much more ambiguous, not least because gift-giving in Maori culture created expectations of reciprocity and obligation.

White settlers were invariably caught up in the spectacle of royal tours. Reed examines in detail the press of South Africa and New Zealand, to explore how settler elites created a sense of belonging in a more extensive "British World", of which the monarchy was a central symbol. The royal tours illustrated how emerging "national" identities were mutually dependent on transnational imperial ones. Like colonial administrators and canny indigenous leaders, settler elites used royal tours to boost their status, promoting impressions of class cohesion and "better" Britains abroad. Simultaneously, they sought to appeal directly to the crown for greater rights and responsibilities and to rail against "undemocratic" local systems of governance. There were prosaic motives too. Reed rightfully acknowledges the opportunities royal tours provided for ordinary settlers to let loose and have a good time. Royal tours offered a full panoply of celebrations—fireworks, bonfires, military parades, balls, native performances—and for settlers lower down the social scale "the celebration was ... an opportunity to drink and party in the streets, to contest social mores and hierarchy and to have fun" (88).

Reed also demonstrates how notions of a "British World" extended beyond the Empire's white communities. Western-educated "respectables" (as Reed terms them) also sought to employ discourses of imperial citizenship to highlight the abuses and "un-British" nature of British rule. Examining this phenomenon in South Africa and India, Reed again makes good use of print media to analyse the demands for rights and responsibilities expressed by the Queen's indigenous subjects. Noting how the expectations created by the rhetoric of British rule appealed beyond settler populations, Reed contends that we should better understand notions of "imperial" belonging that often seem peculiar in our nation-state-centric age. Reed shows that, ultimately, it was British hypocrisy about the benefits of its Empire that prompted western-educated elites in South Africa and India to move towards advocating national independence.

The experiences of two indigenous delegations to Britain, presented in the final chapter, show how much royal power and prestige depended upon theatricality and empty rhetoric. Tawhiao, arriving in 1884 to protest violations of the Treaty of Waitangi, was fobbed off with a meeting with the Colonial Secretary, Lord Derby. Derby explained that the imperial government could not interfere in New Zealand's domestic affairs even as his government, at the urging of New Zealand settler opinion, publicly questioned Tawhiao's legitimacy as King. Reed then uses the visit of an anti-Union South African delegation in 1909 to illustrate how definitions of Britishness became increasingly racialized as a "white" identity in the early twentieth century. The liberal imperial rhetoric, epitomised by the early royal tours, had long been on the wane by the later Edwardian period, and the failure of the delegation to secure a royal audience led to the creation of the African National Congress (ANC).

Reed describes the period of 1860–1911 so astutely that his narrative almost feels like a story half told, and a relatively brief postscript on the position of the royals in the Empire after 1911 could be expanded into a more comprehensive analysis. Also, Reed never systematically interrogates the concept of a “British World”. The royal tours of the 1860s were not solely imperial affairs (Alfred and Albert visited Europe and the United States too) suggesting that there may be a broader story to tell, and Reed does not explore what was so “British” about the “British World”. If the most effective usage of the term is as a description of a shared global imaginative space (a view Reed’s analysis would seem to support), it would be worth making this more explicit and engaging more critically with the growing body of literature on this subject.

In conclusion, Reed’s work successfully highlights the intricacies and complexities of British imperialism, intelligently deconstructing the phenomenon of imperialism and its operations across the world. A highly readable, yet sophisticated, deconstruction of a multifaceted and elusive subject, Reed’s work is essential reading for those seeking to understand imperialism as both a rhetorical construct and a daily lived experience.

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Kevin P. McDonald. *Pirates, Merchants, Settlers, and Slaves: Colonial America and the Indo-Atlantic World*. Oakland: University of California Press, 2015. 206 pp. ISBN: 9780520282902. \$60.00.

Scholarship on the peripheral localities of empire has recently come into vogue with the rise in popularity of borderland and frontier studies. While historians have long recognised maritime piracy as developing within spaces removed from the gaze of imperial officials and their regulations, there is a growing awareness of how critical illicit activities were to fledgling colonial settlements. Kevin McDonald’s monograph brings these issues together in an exploration of the interconnections between peripheral places of the early-modern British Empire—New York and Madagascar—through examining networks established and maintained by pirates.

At first glance, it seems that the book’s relatively small size of only 130 pages of written content is too little to accommodate all that *Pirates, Merchants, Settlers, and Slaves* sets out to cover. However, McDonald shows that these were interrelated and overlapping categories, many of which were embodied by the same individuals. Pirates, supported by merchant financiers, created settler outposts in Madagascar. These were built and sustained with slave labour, from which raids were staged against both maritime and land-based enemies. Profits, goods, and people accumulated through these illicit activities then found their way back to New York and other colonies in the Atlantic. This process reveals a story of how connections between distant outposts of empire operated to subvert the structures of colonial economies, which were legally controlled by companies with monopoly rights in trade, such as the East India Company. McDonald’s book is thus an influential contribution to world history demonstrating how European imperial expansion also took place through unofficial, and even illicit means, an issue that has been understudied by historians.