

the intersections of the art and work of the times. One of the consistent techniques Waithe employs is moving freely between one author and artist or worker of the time to another, often without returning to the primary thesis, which may prove frustrating to the reader.

The second section moves us through the Victorian period with a detailed discussion of the poetry of Elizabeth Barrett Browning and the symbiotic reflections her work may have had on the various theorists of the time. Again, the notion of work informs Waithe's exploration and how various contemporary critical theorists can similarly inform readers on how those intersections emerge.

Perhaps the least detailed exploration Waithe engages in is that of the modernists in his third section. While he freely admits in his introduction that he wished to reveal "paths" that are "well-worn or might better be handled in a dedicated study," his investigation of modernist literature and contemporaneous modernist theories of work and labor appear to be lacking. Given the depth of modernist authors whose ideas remind us work, specifically those surrounding manual labor, Waithe seems to focus primarily on Ezra Pound, who, while certainly apt, provides rather a limited lens when it comes to the potential of modernism (particularly high modernism) and the emerging philosophies of the time that informed many of the ideologies of the twentieth century.

Despite the numerous references to well-known and well-published authors, there remain some philosophical lines of thinking that might seem to many as in need of more exploration. Given the time period and the critical theorists Waithe invokes, one would have expected a close examination of the influences of both Marx and Engels not only on the writers of the time, but also on the cultural thinking of the times as reflected in the writers and their notion of work. While there are references to these schools of thought along the way, a closer exploration and consideration would have further strengthened Waithe's central theses. Indeed, Marx himself writes of the connections between the mental and physical capabilities of labor in Chapter 6 of *Capital*, and this would provide an apparent opportunity for further exploration.

Overall, Waithe employs no fewer than 1,394 footnoted references in his sweeping survey of philosophy, literary criticism, essays, critical theory, and literature. This evokes a sense of strong scholarship through which to assist the readers to explore the various subjects more closely. As such, his often survey-like quality provides well-defined, basic principles for scholarship for anyone interested in the literatures of the period, including scholars of philosophy, literature, sociology, and history.

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STUART WARD. *Untied Kingdom: A Global History of The End of Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023. Pp. ix + 691. \$35.95 (cloth).
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The significance of the connection between the rise of separatism in the United Kingdom and the end of empire has been frequently asserted but not previously properly scrutinized. Stuart Ward's immensely erudite and engaging book more than succeeds in remedying this neglect. In nearly 500 pages of text and a further 200 of notes, acknowledgements, and bibliography, he demonstrates a causal link, drawing on evidence from archives and newspapers across the globe, the most powerful of which comprises individuals' self-reflections on their own Britishness and its shifting purchase. Ward's account is not a simplistic story of "England's 'last

colonies' ... awaiting emancipation" (5). Rather, the key to "Britain's demise" lies in the "progressive rollback" of Britain's "imaginative frontiers," as the constituent parts of Greater Britain in the United Kingdom and beyond became "swept up in the global dislocation of imperial decline" (5).

The book is divided into three parts and fifteen chapters plus an introduction and conclusion. Each chapter is elegantly constructed, opening with exemplary micro-histories which illustrate Ward's keen eye for the contradictions and paradoxes of British colonialism. Part one provides an essential starting point for the rest of the book. Here, Ward charts how the development of Britishness was inextricably bound up with imperial expansion and registers its inherent heterogeneity and latent contradictions, most conspicuously between its liberal claims and racial exclusivity. These were fault lines on which Britishness would eventually fracture.

Part two, the longest part of the book, explores the unravelling of Greater Britain over six chapters which, in Ward's words, each document a "little death" of Britain-in-the-world" (14). Each adroitly foregrounds a different idiom or vocabulary of Britishness through a focus on a discreet episode or location. This structure enables Ward to capture the varied disposition of Britishness in its different local settings, while throughout the book exploring how each episode reverberated or resonated elsewhere in a British world. Common motifs emerge: of disappointed communities from very different corners of Greater Britain who found their investment in a common British identity challenged by developments associated with postwar decolonization; of nation-state formation and new human rights regimes amplifying the inherent tensions in contrasting tropes of Britishness; and by the rise of alternative imagined worlds to a global British one. Alongside the postwar weakness of the British center, and the emergence of new political movements and an international order, Ward places particular weight on the destabilizing effects of a modernizing globalization that brought distantly located individuals into greater virtual and sometimes lived proximity.

Part three shifts the focus. Over a further six chapters, Ward explores the repercussions of this faltering Britishness. The first two chapters home in on intimations of, and efforts to defy, decline in the very different guises of the Anglo-French military intervention in Egypt in 1956 and the domestic British 1967 "We're Backing Britain" campaign. But it is the next three chapters that lie at the heart of the book and on which Ward's thesis hinges. The first uses the issue of Kenyan Asian refugees in the late 1960s as a lens through which to examine Englishness after empire. In the following two, Ward's forensic analysis of speeches and media underpins a pioneering account of the Troubles and the connections between the rise of Scottish and Welsh separatism in the 1960s and the dynamics of decolonization and imperial decline. The final chapter in part three surveys a post-Greater British world through the forging of what (after Pocock) he characterizes as new "cosmologies" (450). This discussion encompasses the emergence of "Four Nations" history in the United Kingdom and the adoption of new national histories and symbols in the old Commonwealth. The latter was an uneven and halting process, handicapped on the one hand in the dominions by the absence of "coherent liberation struggles from which to structure a self-sufficient narrative" (453), and elsewhere in scattered locations like Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands by a persistent, strategic Britishness.

This last chapter feels the most uneven. Ward acknowledges that the "evident failure of Britain to come to an end raises obvious complications" (465). Despite the travails in spring 2023 of the Scottish National Party, few would wager much on the long-term survival of the Union: the Orkney Islanders' exploration of different national futures being one perhaps less predictable example of the centrifugal forces still in play. But the gesture here towards newer articulations of Britishness (and their limitations), particularly as these relate to different Black and minority ethnic Britons, is brief, especially in view of the length of the book and the extensive discussions of writers like J. R. Seeley, J. G. A. Pocock, and Tom Nairn. In this sense there is a disconnect between the book's overwhelming focus on the 1940s to the 1980s and its

central premise of an ongoing transition towards a future “end of Britain” with its many twists and permutations.

This is a huge work of scholarship that brings the scattered existing literature on de-dominionization and weakening Britishness within the old Commonwealth fully into dialogue with that on postwar decolonization and Britain. In so doing Ward opens new ways of reading the latter: not through the customary prism of the dissolution of the colonial empire but as “the diminished resonance of Britain-in-the-world, affecting an extended chain of communities located variously offshore” (4). In this formidably impressive book Ward sets an agenda that will surely shape work on twentieth-century Britain, empire, and its aftermath for years to come.

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