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“THE PAST NEVER REMAINS IN THE PAST”*

EMPIRES *of the* MIND

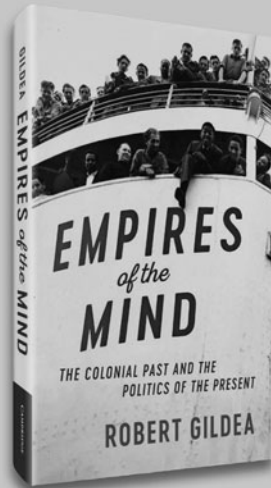
THE COLONIAL PAST AND THE POLITICS OF THE PRESENT

ROBERT GILDEA

*“The past never remains in the past, Robert Gildea skilfully reminds us as he recounts the brutal histories of both British and French colonial and neo-colonial ventures. This is a book that insists on the connections between what happens/ed ‘out there’ and what happens/ed ‘in here’ and helps us to think through that complex and dangerous entanglement, which continues to inform our contemporary politics today.”

CATHERINE HALL, author of *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination 1830–1867*

“The empires of the future would be the empires of the mind” declared Churchill in 1943, envisaging universal empires living in peaceful harmony. Robert Gildea exposes instead the brutal realities of decolonisation and neo-colonialism which have shaped the postwar world. Even after the rush of French and British decolonisation in the 1960s, the strings of economic and military power too often remained in the hands of the former colonial powers. The more empire appears to have declined and fallen, the more a fantasy of empire has been conjured up as a model for projecting power onto the world stage and legitimised colonialist intervention in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. This aggression, along with the imposition of colonial hierarchies in metropolitan society, has excluded, alienated and even radicalised immigrant populations. Meanwhile, nostalgia for empire has bedevilled relations with Europe and played a large part in explaining Brexit.



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Itinerario is affiliated with the Leiden Institute of Area Studies (LIAS) and the forum on European Expansion and Global Interaction (FEEGI) in the US.



The United National Independence Party protests the visit of Ian Macleod, Secretary of State for the Colonies, to Northern Rhodesia in March 1960. The "Year of Africa", now itself sixty years in the past, saw the independence of seventeen African nations as well as widespread anticolonial protests in others. Image courtesy National Archives, UK, CO 1069-125-10.

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