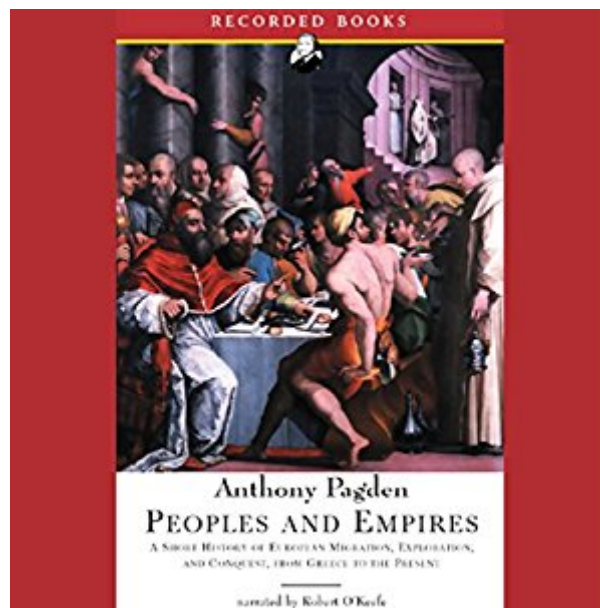


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People And Empires: A Short History Of European Migration, Exploration, And Conquest, From Greece To The Present [Modern Library Chronicles]



Synopsis

Peoples and Empires is the story of the great European empires – the Roman, the Spanish, the French, the British – and their colonies, and the back-and-forth between – ours – and – theirs, – culture and nature, civilization and barbarism, the center and the periphery. It relates the history of how conquerors justified conquest, and how colonists and colonized changed each other. It tells about how we came to think about world divisions the way we do. Written by the man who has been called the world's foremost historian of human migration, Peoples and Empires will become a seminal work. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is a fantastic introduction to the topic of European empire, granting readers a valuable global scope to the concept of empire. I would especially recommend this to any undergraduate student undertaking courses related to this topic (a good many). However, the book is not without its drawbacks or omissions, and these are not related simply due to the unnecessarily limited scope of considering such a broad topic in so few pages. Rather, they seem motivated by a) an unwillingness to consider the spread of European empire to polities based outside the continent of Europe itself and b) an odd and unjustifiably benign omission of the United States. However, although I discuss these points more fully below, this is not to detract from the value of this book. These points simply complement and broaden (for the modern period) Pagden's compact and generally excellent tract on the history of empire.¹) Pagden's omission of any detailed reference to 19th and 20th century Imperial Japan is unfortunate. The author neglects to make the valuable point

that European concepts of empire were so thoroughly disseminated in this period that a distant Asian nation attempted "modernisation" through a blatant mediation of European imperialism, from architecture to government.²) Even more surprising is Pagden's apparent unwillingness to consider the United States as an empire. He facetiously notes that Britain now refers to its fourteen remaining "colonies" as "dependant territories," and that Spain and France continue to retain vestiges of their former empires in the form of islands and enclaves, but neglects to include the US's retention of Puerto Rico, Guam, Hawaii, American Samoa, and the US Virgin Islands.

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