



# Europe after Empire: Decolonization, Society, and Culture (New Approaches to European History)

By Elizabeth Buettner

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Europe after Empire is a pioneering comparative history of European decolonization from the formal ending of empires to the postcolonial European present. Elizabeth Buettner charts the long-term development of post-war decolonization processes as well as the histories of inward and return migration from former empires which followed. She shows that not only were former colonies remade as a result of the path to decolonization: so too was Western Europe, with imperial traces scattered throughout popular and elite cultures, consumer goods, religious life, political formations, and ideological terrains. People were also inwardly mobile, including not simply Europeans returning 'home' but Asians, Africans, West Indians, and others who made their way to Europe to forge new lives. The result is a Europe fundamentally transformed by multicultural diversity and cultural hybridity and by the destabilization of assumptions about race, culture, and the meanings of place, and where imperial legacies and memories live on.

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### **Editorial Review**

#### Review

"Trying to understand how 'the empire came home' has inspired some of the most important historiography of twentieth-century Europe during the past two decades, bringing colonialism's legacies under scrutiny in challenging new ways. With an approach both comparative and transnational, Elizabeth Buettner builds on this new work to craft a vividly insightful account of decolonization and its effects, one that deals not just with Britain and France, but with the Netherlands, Belgium and Portugal too."

Geoff Eley, University of Michigan

"This pioneering study plumbs the post-decolonization histories of multiple European societies - the Netherlands, Belgium, and Portugal alongside Britain and France - and brings them into dynamic conversation. It is a continental history, necessary reading for anyone seeking to understand how the long history of overseas empires still fashions European lives and understandings today.?"

Todd Shepard, Johns Hopkins University

"A book that truly demonstrates the global impacts of decolonization, Europe after Empire blends comparative and transnational analyses to illustrate how Western European societies were reimagined and remade as imperial bonds were broken. The breadth of coverage is immense, the insights are invaluable."

Martin Thomas, University of Exeter

"Europe after Empire lives up to its promise: acknowledging the ongoing present of the imperial past in Europe, it provides an important contribution to a 'new imperial history' that is sensitive to postcolonial critique on the implicit Eurocentrism in many historiographies of colonialism and decolonization. After the first two comparative parts on decolonization, immigration and multicultural society in Britain, the Netherlands, France, Belgium and Portugal, Part III urges us to reflect on European memories of empire beyond national frames."

Susan Legêne, VU University Amsterdam

#### About the Author

Elizabeth Buettner joined the University of Amsterdam as Professor of Modern History in 2014, prior to which she taught at the University of York. She received her BA from Barnard College of Columbia University and her MA and PhD from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. In 2012-2013, she held a Senior Research Fellowship at the Freiburg Institute for Advanced Studies in Germany in conjunction with a British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship, and in 2006 she was selected to participate in the International Research Seminar on Decolonization sponsored by the National History Center, the Mellon Foundation, and the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. Her publications include *Empire Families: Britons and Late Imperial India* (2004), which was awarded the Women's History Network Book Prize and led to her being shortlisted for the Young Academic Author of the Year award by the Times Higher Education Supplement in 2005. She has written articles in the *Journal of Modern History*, the *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, *History and Memory*, the *Scottish Historical Review* (where her piece won the Royal Historical Society's David Berry Prize), *Annales de Démographie Historique*, *Ab Imperio*, and *Food and History*. Contributions to edited collections include the chapter 'Ethnicity' in *A Concise Companion to History*, edited by Ulinka Rublack (2011).

### **Users Review**

#### **From reader reviews:**

**Grace McClellan:**

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**Louise O'Neill:**

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