Migration and empire

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History

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Abstract

Migration and Empire provides a unique comparison of the motives, means, and experiences of three main flows of empire migrants. During the nineteenth century, the proportion of UK migrants heading to empire destinations, especially to Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, increased substantially and remained high. These migrants included so-called 'surplus women' and 'children in need', shipped overseas to ease perceived social problems at home. Empire migrants also included entrepreneurs and indentured labourers from south Asia, Africa, and the Pacific (together with others from the Far East, outside the empire), who relocated in huge numbers with equally transformative effects in, for example, central and southern Africa, the Caribbean, Ceylon, Mauritius, and Fiji. The UK at the core of empire was also the recipient of empire migrants, especially from the 'New Commonwealth' after 1945.

These several migration flows are analysed with a strong appreciation of the commonality and the complex variety of migrant histories. The volume includes discussion of the work of philanthropists (especially with respect to single women and 'children in care') as well as governments and entrepreneurs in organising much empire migration, and the business of recruiting, assisting, and transporting selected empire migrants. Attention is given to immigration controls that restricted the settlement of some non-white migrants, and to the mixture of motives explaining return-migration. The book concludes by indicating why the special relationship between empire and migration came to an end. Legacies remain, but by the 1970s political change and shifts in the global labour market had eroded the earlier patterns.

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- Political Change
- Canada
- Recipient
- New Zealand
- Government
- Fiji
- Surplus

Keywords

- Migration
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The Migration Period was a period that lasted from 375 AD (possibly as early as 300 AD) to 538 AD, during which there were widespread migrations of peoples within or into Europe, during and after the decline of the Western Roman Empire, mostly into Roman territory, notably the Germanic tribes and the Huns. This period has also been termed in English by the German loanword Völkerwanderung and—from the Roman and Greek perspective—the Barbarian Invasions. It is only by studying the reactions to Asian migration, however, that historians can understand why, over time, the concept of empire became less compelling to the settler colonies and why alternative imagined communities like that of a Greater Britain were called into existence. As Bridge and Fedorowich have explained, ‘being British anywhere meant exercising full civil rights within a liberal, pluralistic polity, or at least aspiring to that status. Higher History Notes Paper 2 Migration and Empire 1. The migration of Scots 2. The experience of immigrants in Scotland 3. The impact of Scots emigrants on the Empire 4. The effects of migration and the Empire on Scotland, to 1939. 1. The migration of Scots How fully . . . the reasons for the migration of Scots? How far . . . the reasons for internal migration within Scotland? How far . . . the opportunities that attracted Scots to other lands? How far . . . the factors that forced Scots to leave Scotland?