Settling for less : why states colonize and why they stop (/review/10.5860/CHOICE.231364)

McNamee, Lachlan. (/search?exactauthor=McNamee, Lachlan) Princeton, 2023

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Settling for Less represents a revisionist view of classical theories of modern imperialism. McNamee (Univ. of California, Los Angeles) restores human agency to all three elements of settler colonialism—government officials, potential settlers, and Indigenous peoples—which Marxist and other systemic theories have neglected. Through specific case studies in China's imperialist expansion westward and Australian and Indonesian imperial colonization of Papua and New Guinea, McNamee illustrates the more general observation that imperial settler colonization throughout the world rarely follows any systemic script of structural theory. Human agency shifts with time, space, and conditions, rendering any structural theory fraught with exceptions and flaws when applied to any particular case. McNamee's emphasis on the agency of both settlers and Indigenous peoples, and the fascinating interactions between the incentives of these actors with each other and with government officials and policies, will attract the attention of readers. The reader is not required to agree with McNamee's revisionist approach to understand his point that both data and human agency significantly qualify reliance on structural theories of imperialism. The reader may therefore enjoy the prodigious research and presentation prominent in *Settling for Less* freed from any concern for theory whatsoever.

Summing Up: Highly recommended. Graduate students and faculty.

Reviewer: J. Rogers (/search?reviewer=J. Rogers), Louisiana State University at Alexandria
Recommendation: Highly recommended
Readership Level: Graduate Students, Researchers/Faculty
Interdisciplinary Subjects:
Subject: Social & Behavioral Sciences - Political Science - International Relations (/search?q=&sbj[]=intr)
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