

The commonwealth of Nations:
From Empire Management
to the Challenges of the 21st century

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I- The Commonwealth in the making (1776-1971)

A) Looking for a new way of managing the Empire

1- From Boston to Ottawa: Transforming an American failure into an American success for the Empire

The lessons drawn from the independence of the US: the emergence of a more informal conception of the empire

Consequences for settlement colonies: the Durham report on Canada (1839) and the pragmatic emergence of "Dominion status"

2- The formalisation of the Empire in non settlement territories

The doctrine of trusteeship – the Indian mutiny (1857) – The Berlin conference (1885) – the scramble for Africa

B) Transforming the Empire into a "British Commonwealth of Nations"

1- From the colonial conferences to the Statute of Westminster

Attempts at unifying the self-governing empire (from the 1887 colonial conference to the experience of the war Cabinet)

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The imperial policy in the non-settlement colonies – towards an extension of the Dominion status to the whole empire?

The impact of WW2: the end of the ideal of a British-centred imperial community

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The 1949 London Declaration – the British King as Head of the Commonwealth

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3- The Commonwealth in search of a new role

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The way forward: The Singapore declaration (1971)

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