The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/fich20

On Accumulation and Empire

Jonathan Saha

To cite this article: Jonathan Saha (2022) On Accumulation and Empire, The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, 50:3, 417-442, DOI: 10.1080/03086534.2022.2057745

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/03086534.2022.2057745

Published online: 08 Apr 2022.

THE JOURNAL OF IMPERIAL AND COMMONWEALTH HISTORY
2022, VOL. 50, NO. 3, 417–442
https://doi.org/10.1080/03086534.2022.2057745

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

On Accumulation and Empire

Jonathan Saha

University of Durham, Durham, UK

ABSTRACT

In recent decades, accumulation has become a curiously neglected concept in imperial history. Despite this, it remains a powerful heuristic for understanding the drives, dynamics, and effects of modern imperialism. Juxtaposing early Marxist conceptualizations of accumulation with some formative historiographic debates about colonial knowledge in Africa and Asia, I argue that accumulation can provide a better account of the 'lumpy' spatiality of empire than the currently predominant model of the network. Its advantages stem from it being a concept inherently concerned with the relationship between appropriation and accrual. Using accumulation to frame the study of empire foregrounds the relationships between spaces of extraction and dispossession, and sites of aggregation and accretion. The lens of imperial networks struggles to attend to places of disconnection and asymmetries of power. In contrast, the concept of accumulation was developed precisely to better understand uneven distributions and the production of inequalities.

KEYWORDS

Imperialism; colonial knowledge; Asia; Africa; empire; accumulation; networks

***

Over the course of the twentieth century, 'accumulation' has gone from being recognised as a (if not *the*) crucial process for understanding modern imperialism to becoming an ancillary concept, one that is rarely explicitly interrogated or explored. This decline in the term's analytical purchase was the consequence of shifts in the approaches and questions that have animated historical research in the fractious field of imperial history – or, at least, in the Anglophone literature on the British Empire with which this article is predominantly engaged. To gloss a contested and complex story, the concept is likely a casualty of the turn away from political economy and toward cultural critique.[1] However, it remains a powerful concept, the precise meaning of which is often masked by the word's superficial synonymity with related terms like 'aggregation',

CONTACT Jonathan Saha Jonathan.Saha@durham.ac.uk, University of Durham, 13 Geoffrey Avenue, Durham, DH1 4PF, UK

'collection', or 'gathering' that connote the simple amassing of things. In early theorizations, accumulation encapsulated much more than the build-up of stuff. It was a concept with considerable explanatory power. It was used to dissect processes of accrual as relational, dynamic, and contradictory. It entailed an excavation of the pre-conditions for these processes, as well as an assessment of their effects. Of course, these theorizations were tightly tethered to analysing the accumulation of capital. But in reviving the concept, it can be unmoored from this principal empirical anchor to explicate imperial accumulations in a range of forms. This is illustrated below with reference to the accumulation of colonial knowledge.

Having returned to early Marxist writings on accumulation, I am persuaded that when freed from economistic tendencies within this tradition and resituating within current historiographic debates, the concept is particularly helpful for better understanding the historical geography of imperial formations.[2] In making this claim, I am not advocating a resurrection of older, unreconstructed methods of historical materialism.[3] Nor am I proposing to reawaken the mostly dormant historiographic controversies over any causative relationship between capitalism and empire. My contention that accumulation deserves greater attention from imperial historians is instead offered as a tentative suggestion; it is an invitation to nuance the spatial frameworks through which we study imperial pasts. I am not calling for another 'turn', and certainly not for a 'turn back', but I am pushing at the established geographic models that risk becoming banal and staid.[4] Put more precisely, my concern is with the predominant spatial framing of empires as connective networks. While the notion of imperial networks has not been the sole concern of historians of the British Empire, far from it, it has proven to be a generative geographic framework for many. But, despite its evident strengths, it is a framework that risks reifying its own analytical exclusions.

Over the last three decades, the framing of empire as an entity made up of webs, networks, and circuits that reached across the globe has replaced the rigid model of a planet sharply divided between competing imperial metropoles and a vast colonial periphery as the default geographic framework for historians. While strongly associated with the New Imperial History, this move has been furthered by a range of historians working on disparate locales and across varied time periods.[5] Consequently, it is by no means a unified approach. Yet, in spite of its varied roots, as the novelty of the framework has worn off, the notion that empires were constituted by networks has become an unconceptualised starting point for historical inquiry. This ubiquity is suggestive of its general analytical utility. Network approaches have done important work. Empires are now frequently conceived of as multidirectional in terms of the circulation of people, goods, and knowledge. Rather than a single imperial centre, multiple nodes have been acknowledged, as have the routes and flows between colonies that bypassed "home" nations entirely. The tracing of these networks

has encouraged a focus on the material arrangements underpinning circulations, figuring them as inseparable from the travelling and transformation of ideas. In the hands of scholars with postcolonial training, the uneven power relations of imperial networks have been uncovered and kept front and centre in the analysis.[6]

I am not opposing this geographic conception of empire *per se*, but its reification. While the network conceptualisation of the spatiality and geography of modern imperialism remains demonstrably useful, it is, however, only one lens to help study and explain empires. This point, that the network is a heuristic device and a descriptor, has been lost on some—especially when the approach has been folded into a study of globalisation, itself taken to be a dense network of worldwide interconnection.[7] Empires have been written about as if they *were* networks. Places and peoples disconnected from them are consigned to historical irrelevance. This reification obscures how a focus on networks and nodes, circuits and circulation, make some aspects of imperialism, and some historical actors, more visible than others.[8] It is here that accumulation can provide a useful counterbalance.

Some of the limits of network frameworks can be discerned in the metaphors deployed by two notable historians who in ambitious monographs draw attention to the 'lumpiness' of imperial geographies. Frederick Cooper writes of the world being structured by space "filled with lumps", noting that networks might penetrate some places, but that their effects can diminish rapidly at just short distance from these points of intervention.[9] Similarly, Lauren Benton's study of the legal seascapes of imperialism describes how overlapping jurisdictions and conventions produced lumpy space.[10] This use of a haptic metaphor to capture the viscosity of empire indicates the need for a concept that can help historians analyse the uneven density of imperial formations, and not merely its interconnectivity. A spatial framework of networks and nodes is of limited use for understanding the thinning and thickening of imperial formations since these were not just matters of circulation, movement, and mobility, but of accretion, viscidity, and absence. How and why do imperial structures amass in some places? And what forces wrought the density and sparsity of empires? In other words, the acknowledgement of lumps, as well as thinness, might move us towards theorising imperial accumulations. To do so, it is necessary to briefly (and rather cursorily) revisit the place of capital accumulation in imperial historiography.

While accumulation was acknowledged as an economic driver for European imperialism in the canon of early imperial historiography, it has not always been subjected to theoretical exposition as a concept in its own right. For Vladimir Lenin, building on John Hobson before him and addressing the geopolitical exigencies of his time, capitalist accumulation in overdeveloped imperial nations drove their transformation into competing rentier states holding colonies in dependency through violence and debt.[11] For Eric

Williams, the capital accumulated from the transatlantic slave trade provided considerable stimulus for the industrial revolution in Britain. In addition, although it is less frequently noted, Williams also argued that the accumulated capital from exporting white indentured servants supported seventeenth-century Bristol's transformation into the preeminent city for slave trading; and that the capital from slavery that accumulated in eighteenth-century Liverpool sustained the growth of Lancashire—an acknowledgement of different scales of accumulation, beneath that of the nation-state.[12] These arguments have not merely had their fair share of criticism, they have launched historiographic fields of debate that have engendered monograph upon monograph.[13] I am not concerned here with assessing the career of their arguments regarding accumulation as they have been revised by subsequent historians, but only in noting that in both Lenin and Williams' formative books accumulation is taken to be a self-evident concept. The reader should have already read their Marx.

Karl Marx presents capitalist accumulation as a puzzle to be solved: how does the totality of capital not only reproduce itself, but do so in an expanded form? In addressing this problem in volume one of *Capital*, Marx offers a conceptualisation of accumulation that can be abstracted from his concern with elucidating the self-perpetuation of capitalism. For Marx, to put it crudely, capitalist accumulation refers to the dynamic through which surplus value, derived from the exploitation of human labour power, is speculated by capitalists, usually in form of money, to generate expanded value, or greater profit.[14] There are two aspects of his conceptualisation of accumulation that are valuable for abstracting a more generic concept. It is the *active* and *expanded* nature of accumulation that distinguished it from what we might call simple aggregation or collection (what he called "simple reproduction"). Marx himself explicitly draws this out through a contrast with hoarding, a comparison that takes him into a discussion of the psychology of capitalism. The hoarder keeps all they extract and guards it jealously. The capitalist not only saves and consumes their wealth, they risk a part of their capital in the hope of increasing its value. Taken more generally, the distinction is pivotal. Accumulation is not passively getting more and more stuff; it is an active form of acquisition orientated towards increasing the magnitude of acquisition itself. Under capitalism, at least as Marx observed it, accumulation had its own dynamism, driven by the pressures of competition as well as crises of profitability and underconsumption. This insight too might be abstracted. Accumulation can become an end in itself, with its own logic and momentum, all the while generating its own obstacles.

While Marx's formulation contains a conceptualisation of accumulation that can be applied to entities other than capital in the form of money—as I show below through a discussion of the acquisition of knowledge and its material forms—it is in the writings of Rosa Luxemburg that we can glean

methodological insights into how accumulation might be studied. Set in contrast to Lenin's *Imperialism* that sought to outline the effects of capitalist accumulation, Luxemburg's *The Accumulation of Capital* might be thought of as uncovering the necessary pre-conditions for capitalist accumulation. The problem that she is primarily addressing is that of the general trend of capitalism's expansion in spite of periodic crises. She was interested in understanding why capitalism seemed to consistently meet and overcome its limits, even at the brink of apparent collapse.[15] The answer she proposed entailed reworking the place of Marx's idea of "so-called primitive accumulation". At the end of the first volume of *Capital*, Marx subverted earlier economists' mythic conceit of the capitalist's original capital that was earned (rather than extracted from the labour of others) to trace how common lands and producer-owned means of production were violently alienated to become capitalist property.[16] Luxemburg repositions this insight in the schema of capitalist accumulation to make it a necessary precondition for accumulation to occur. Put more simply, accumulation required new sites for exploitation, production, and consumption. This need manifested itself in the violence of imperialism.[17] More recently, David Harvey has taken Luxemburg's argument further by arguing that these prerequisite externalities were not finite and limited, as Luxemburg believed, but instead perpetually moved geographically. In Harvey's conception capitalist accumulation entailed the constant reproduction of new sites to exploit through what he termed "accumulation by dispossession".[18] The insight that can be abstracted from these crucial debates over the accumulation of capital is that accumulation is premised on seeking out new terrain and forcibly incorporating it.

Out of this Marxist tradition of analysing capitalist accumulation I am proposing a rudimentary, generic conceptualisation of accumulation that I think a valuable addition to the imperial historian's theoretical toolkit. To reiterate: accumulation can be defined as an active form of acquisition orientated towards increasing the magnitude of acquisition itself, a process with its own internal dynamism; and, it is a mode of expanded acquisition that relies on seeking out and forcibly incorporating new terrain. To illustrate why this generic concept might be useful, in what follows I trace this broader notion of accumulation in debates in the literature on colonial knowledge in Africa and Asia. I argue that accumulation sharpens an understanding of the unevenness of imperial space because it reveals how knowledge—materialized in the assemblage of state apparatus and accrual of archival records—coalesced in certain places. Or, phrased in an active voice, my focus on accumulation foregrounds an examination of how empires accrued knowledge in particular places having extracted it from elsewhere. As I will show, the historiography already hints at this process of accumulation. Debates over the construction of colonial knowledge and its archive have been centred on the nature of information gathering, as well as on the relationship between this acquisition with the

culminative generation of essentializing tropes. These studies are closely tied to the history of uneven state formation in colonies and, in turn, the generation of official imperial archives. Thinking of imperialism as being animated by accumulatory processes does not entail upending these areas of research. It may, however, help to explicitly address the lumpy asymmetries of imperial space.

Before moving to this discussion it is worth noting that in abstracting a generic concept of accumulation from these foundational theorisations of capitalist accumulation I am not eschewing the history of capitalism, which is undergoing something of a renaissance.[19] Importantly, knowledge could take the form of capital—or perhaps, more accurately, go through a process of capitalisation.[20] Even more frequently, it took the form of a commodity. But in the histories that I recap below it was not always, or even primarily, accumulated through capitalist speculation.[21] In other words, it was not acquired because of the prospect of its acquisition increasing the value of the capital expended on it. The ends for the acquisition of knowledge might be multiple—scientific, governmental, or, no doubt, driven by other more esoteric imperatives—but nonetheless it can still be usefully conceived of as being subject to accumulatory dynamics. The history of capitalism may prove to be a complimentary approach, particularly as the field expands its geographic ambit to the Majority World.[22] It provides essential context for imperial accumulations writ large. I would, however, resist making these imperial accumulations ancillary or subordinate to the accumulation of capital. They have their own logics and dynamics that need to be understood on their own terms.

In the field of political economy, this move to resist reducing accumulation to being conceived in purely economic terms is well developed. Since the late 1990s Jonathan Nitzan and Shimshon Bichler have argued, persuasively, that capital should not be understood narrowly as an economic unit of analysis, but as a symbolic quantification of power. On this basis, they collapse a division between the political and the economic. For them, accumulation is better understood as operating through a *differential* dynamic; that is, understanding it to be a process that is driven by the desire to have more power than others, rather than an absolute motivation to ever-expand economic activity.[23] Within feminist scholarship that critically engages with Marx's wider commentary on social reproduction and how this is sustained through accumulation, Nancy Fraser and J. K. Gibson-Graham have exploded his famous focus on the "hidden abode" of the labour process to reveal a wider world of relations and practices that are necessary for social reproduction and accumulation. These not only include reproductive labour and the patriarchal formations that structure it, but the racial and ecological forms of exploitation foundational to accumulation.[24] Taking inspiration from these works, returning to accumulation may provide imperial historians with nuanced political economic approaches with which to analyse colonisation, both the drivers for

expansionist practices (viz., Nitzan and Bichler) and the actors entangled in its reproduction (viz., Fraser and Gibson-Graham).

Knowledge makes for a powerful case study to explore these methodological issues. The acquisition of knowledge has long been conceived of as a central pillar of imperial power, and its absence as a driver of expansion. Historians studying these processes and dynamics frequently work with an underlying conception of accumulation, but one that has not be theorised, explicated, or brought to the centre of the analysis. Through a whistle-stop tour of some prominent interventions in these debates, I show how a more elaborated and explicit framing of colonial knowledge production as a mode of accumulation might bring together approaches frequently conceived of as at odds with one another. In addition, it suggests a way to bring together the study of colonial epistemologies with material histories of state formation.[25] I then conclude by arguing that accumulation provides a lens with which to keep processes of exploitation and marginalisation central to the analytics of imperial history.

***

Historians of modern colonialism in Africa and Asia have long been working with an intuitive, undefined concept of accumulation. This is particularly apparent at the point of intersection between knowledge production and state formation. In this section I tease out the implicit accumulatory dynamics shown to be in operation in the literature. I argue that foregrounding the accumulation of knowledge, particularly the material arrangements for its acquisition and the material forms that it took, provides one avenue for exploring the lumpy spatiality of imperialism.

The production of colonial knowledge has been an area of significant historiographic debate, one that has been identified as an engine of the New Imperial approach, as well as an inspiration for the maximalist argument for the impact of empire on British culture put forward by John Mackenzie.[26] Taken broadly, these studies have shown how culture and identities "at home" were mutually constituted with perceptions of colonised "others". Mrinalini Sinha's *Colonial Masculinity*, published in Mackenzie's *Studies in Imperialism* series, is perhaps one of the most sophisticated and most cited examples of this approach. She traces the interplay between notions of the "manly Englishmen" and the "effeminate Bengali", showing how both were artefacts of colonial encounters and class politics that became animating figures for national identities in Britain and South Asia.[27] Feminist historians of Britain in particular have delved into deep engagements with the historiographies of particular colonies in order to make similar arguments about the construction of imperial subjectivities.[28] Nevertheless, historiographic essays on the state of the field—of which there are many—have not always meaningfully acknowledged the developments within colonial historiography, other than to note its influence in

precipitating the 'imperial turn' in a cultural history mode.[29] In an influential essay, Richard Price even makes the erroneous claim that the state and state-formation have fallen out of favour as topics of study because of the influence of postcolonial theorisations, dismissing a whole swathe of scholarship on nationalism in a footnote and conflating the study of the state and the nation-state.[30] As a closer study of the historiography on colonial knowledge in Africa and Asia reveals, research into imperial perceptions of colonised populations were routinely tied to the study of governance and state formation.[31] As this field has turned towards tracing the production of the archive, the connection with state formation has only been strengthened.[32]

Within Edward Said's *Orientalism*, often taken to be the fountainhead or original sin of the study of colonial knowledge (depending on the historians' theoretical persuasion),[33] the notion that knowledge accumulated under imperialism was put forward, albeit passingly. He noted that modern Orientalist research was not simply an additive form of study, with findings incrementally contributing to scholarly understandings. It was instead a form of systematic and selective accumulation through which a research consensus was produced that could be used to operationalise imperialism.[34] Although he outlined a concept of knowledge accumulation that was both active and expanding, with its own internal dynamism, this systematised view of knowledge accumulation does not fully accord with the conceptualisation developed in the pages of this article. It presents too steady and too rationalising a dynamic. Accumulatory dynamics, building on Marx and Luxemburg's analyses of capitalist accumulation, are better framed as speculative, uneven, and faltering. For both, realising an ever-greater magnitude of capital across society in its totality was beset with frequent crises. At the level of the individual capitalist, speculation was not assured to bring a return. Of course, Said's wider arguments have come in for similar critiques from a variety of quarters, including Lauren Benton's discussion of cartographic knowledge in which she acknowledges the lumpy spatiality of colonial understandings. Knowledge also did not inexorably expand. Its acquisition involved unstable practices, assumptions, and approximations.[35]

In direct opposition to Said's knowledge accumulation, the framework of information gathering has been posited. This is perhaps most explicitly elaborated in Christopher Bayly's *Empire and Information*, which countered the social constructionism of post-Saidian historians with a network model.[36] In his framework, networks of intelligence gathering that preceded the advent of British colonialism in South Asia provided the foundation for imperial understandings of the subcontinent. Thus, colonial knowledge was not the product of the systematic, selective accumulatory dynamics of a pre-defined imperial discursive field but had empirical roots in pre-colonial structures. For Bayly, this gathering was imperfect, leading to "information panics", but, flawed though it was, the intelligence acquired was not merely a colonial

construct.[37] His approach treated information as having an inherent stability that allowed it to move between South Asian and British imperial systems of governance without fundamentally changing in nature. It assumed that information gathered through these networks would be continuous in its meaning with the knowledge produced from it. This continuity is presented as holding true even while that information moved from an older set of productive and circulatory logics, into a new set orientated towards imperial ends.[38] Bayly's concept of information gathering was more simple acquisition than it was 'accumulation', at least as I conceive of it here.

In Bayly's work, colonial knowledge production rested upon an uneven dialogue with largely intact South Asian systems. The concept of accumulation I proffer in the opening section above, building on Luxemburg, would instead encourage a focus on the *continual* incorporation, re-production, and appropriation of indigenous sources of information for the purpose of *expanding* colonial knowledge. Following Nitzan and Bichler, we might note that this expansion was driven, as Bayly suggested, by the need to know more than competitors, both other European empires and South Asian antagonists. Just as artefacts and matter are conceived of as being transformed in meaning and value when drawn into capitalist relations,[39] knowledge too changed in meaning and value within new systems of acquisition—often becoming instrumentalised and syncretised; a process well illustrated by subsequent studies that transcend the parameters of these earlier debates.[40]

It is worth dwelling on Bayly's conceptualisation briefly to show the early importation of late-twentieth century social theories of networks and information into the imperial historian's repertoire. Bayly's understanding of information was drawn directly from the work of economic geographer Manuel Castells.[41] Castells argued that access to information, and its flow through networks, were increasingly the most important factors governing the formation of social structures.[42] It is this insight that Bayly is building upon. However, Castells was primarily interested in the impact of new information technology; technology that allowed information to move almost instantaneously across long distances without changing. Combined with Bayly's earlier interests in the role of pre-colonial trading networks in facilitating the emergence of imperial structures,[43] an Anglo-Indian network emerges as his model for understanding the generation of what he terms "state intelligence". Andrew Liu has recently astutely observed that as circulation and logistics have become ever more important to global capitalism, historians have tended to trace long-distance networks of exchange backwards in time as evidence of a world economy. This has been at the expense of studies that favoured a focus on the accumulation of capital, studies that dominated literature in the mid-twentieth century, particularly in the early work of Dependency Theorists.[44] Bayly's work suggests that there is perhaps a parallel to be drawn here with the history of colonial knowledge.

This issue aside, a more circumscribed and precise conception of accumulation can incorporate aspects of both Said and Bayly's understandings. Colonial knowledge did have its own dynamic, creating fields of inquiry that evolved according to their own disciplinary logics and exclusions, as Said argued. However, at the same time, colonial knowledge incorporated (or attempted to co-opt) pre-existing systems of information, and in ways that made impossible any smooth, orderly acquisition, processes that form the focus of Bayly's study.[45] Rather than contrary understandings of the generation of colonial knowledge, they might be better thought of as dialectically related to one another as intrinsic aspects of accumulation. Imperial actors sought to extract and incorporate indigenous knowledges into their own governing structures, structures that were conditioned by the attempts (not always successful) to extract and incorporate indigenous knowledges. Neither were processes that can be easily abstracted from either the larger cultural project of imperialism, that Said focuses upon, or the nitty-gritty of negotiations on the ground, that Bayly wished to emphasise.

It may seem abstruse to trace the potential utility of a generic concept of accumulation through an area of historiographic debate within South Asian history that has been largely resolved by an understanding of colonial knowledge as the ambivalent and sometimes unanticipated product of uneven entanglements between colonisers and the colonised.[46] But this debate appeared concurrently in other areas of colonial historical research, and the resolutions have similarly led to an intuitive conception of accumulation that has not often been extracted or named. Perhaps the closest analogue in the history of colonial sub-Saharan Africa was over the "invention of tradition". Particularly animating in this debate was the intervention of Terence Ranger in his essay on the importation and transformation of elite British traditions and the concurrent fabrication of African traditions; although the notion that African traditions were 'invented' was a position that he himself came to revise and critique.[47] The most common point of critique, as with Bayly's critique of Said's South Asianist interlocuters, was the absence of indigenous actors and systems in shaping colonial knowledge and its associated governmental institutions. In scholarship on South Asia this was a debate that mostly centred on caste.[48] In Africa the focus was frequently on chieftainship.

Taken in broad terms, the consensus that has emerged through this debate has been to consider colonial knowledge and institutions as syncretic, hybrid constructs produced through uneven encounters with Africans and African systems over which white imperialists had limited control.[49] Pushing these insights further, Justin Willis has shown how some of the concepts of governance produced in these encounters were beyond the realm of either colonial or pre-colonial structures, irreducible to either.[50] Collectively, these studies point to the mutual constitution of knowledge and governance; although authors differ in the emphasis they place on colonial and colonised actors. Expressed

abstractly: knowledge accrued through arrangements of power that were themselves recursively refined by that very accrual of knowledge. And, some of the knowledge produced was itself the product of those newly refined arrangements of power. This recursive, reiterative process of reification has been unpacked in Andrew Apter's analysis of the incorporation of the imperial Durbar into Nigerian state pageantry. Apter identified in this process (after Pierre Bourdieu) the accumulation of cultural capital.[51] Pushing this insight further, a generic concept of accumulation neatly captures the reiterative, internal dynamism of the expanding nature of colonial knowledge production.

Apparent in these colonial histories is the insight that knowledge and governmental imperial structures coalesced in certain geographic areas and physical spaces, concurrently with the marginalisation of other spaces. Acknowledging the role of knowledge accumulation in state formation provides a framework for studying the empire as constituted in clusters and clumps, as well as in networked nodes. As John Comaroff has argued, the 'colonial state' was in no sense a unitary entity. It took myriad forms across the empire. It was shaped by topography and resistance. The unevenness and asymmetries of where its bureaucratic assemblages developed, and how it was encountered, can be traced through everyday material engagements with it. It was thickly layered and dense in some parts; sparsely dispersed and thin in others.[52] Routine bureaucratised mechanisms of knowledge acquisition frequently built on points of relative density—such as semi-urban hubs in which coercive institutions and administrative offices clustered—the information itself having been periodically gathered by intermediaries from places at a greater remove from these clumps of colonial authority, places often more resistant to imperial penetration. Regardless of the historiographic division between direct and indirect rule, this lumpy spatiality in state processes of knowledge production is discernible in studies of policing, census-taking, surveying, sundry clerical work, and other everyday performances of state power.[53] From this low-level acquisition, knowledge was sorted, weeded, and circulated upwards to higher tiers of government located at denser clumps of bureaucratic structures. Following Stephen Legg, these circulations can be thought of as constituting variable (and competing and contested) governmental scales.[54] They might be imagined as 'layered networks'.[55]

As the structure and location of archives shows, knowledge moved and accumulated at different nodes in these overlaid scalar networks. As an illustration, the enormous collection of records produced in British India remains dispersed across divisional collections and provincial collections across the successor states, in the National Archives of India in Delhi (excluding those 'not transferred' from the previous capital of Calcutta), and in the India Office Records in London. The clustered, scalar organisation of record-keeping and the uneven density of state formation were both forms of imperial spatiality informed and conditioned by the accumulation of knowledge.[56] On the other

side of the coin, in places at a remove from these sites, such as in the mountainous ranges of the Southeast Asian Massif where authority of the Raj was more superficial and weak, information was extracted and co-opted but often did not remain in institutionalised, official repositories located at those places themselves.[57] Embedded imperial actors engaged indigenous knowledges through, at best, unequal exchanges, but their formal collecting habits and modes of knowledge production (as frustrated, restricted and piecemeal as they were) were often unidirectional, gravitating towards clusters of colonial authority.[58]

Studies of official colonial archives, however, show this to be only a partial picture.[59] Even these formalised archival collections were rarely (if ever) as orderly and systematic as the bureaucratic structure they were constituted with would have it appear; perhaps, in part, because colonial bureaucracies themselves were rarely orderly and systematic in practice.[60] The content of colonial archives is uneven, structured as much by absence as by abundance.[61] The factors conditioning their content could be many. Notoriously, the British government has deliberately acted to suppress and destroy records pertaining to colonial violence.[62] During decolonisation, as imperial regimes confronted their accumulated paperwork, local officials on the ground were motivated by conflicting desires to protect collaborators, hide atrocities, and to preserve the historical record.[63] Chance and circumstance were also factors; documents might surreptitiously survive. Myopic imperial concerns and the aloof hubris of colonial rulers produced archival silences.[64] Imperial hostility towards segments of the colonised population encoded the record.[65] But most interesting for an understanding of accumulation are the drives behind acquisition.

Instructive in this is Ann Laura Stoler's call to read along the archival grain to uncover the colonial "common sense" underpinning collection and the anxieties about the stability of the colonial order that drove the production of records.[66] She argues that the drive to learn more about transgressions of colonial categories stimulated the correspondence of officials, filling the files and filing cabinets of offices.[67] As this suggests, the 'archival turn', that Stoler's work was a prominent proponent of, requires a simultaneous attentiveness to both the psychological and the material nature of archives.[68] This methodological approach resonates with Marx's own approach to understanding the dynamics of capital accumulation. It also lends itself to Nitzan and Bichler's conception of differential accumulation, but here conceived of as the need to know enough to exercise power and overcome opposition. The physical arrangements for collating and keeping all the leather-bound, papery matter produced by colonialism made up some of the clumpy, nodal stuff of empires.[69] Understanding its accumulation necessitates understanding its shifting sites of production; studying the places where knowledge was extracted by colonial states that were perpetually in the making.

Drawing these strands together, historians of colonialism in Asia and Africa have shown how colonial state formation was predicated upon, and perpetuated

by, attempts to incorporate indigenous systems of knowledge production and circulation. This was a generative process, which produced syncretic and novel cultural forms. While this was often driven by instrumental and systematising ends, it was far from orderly or smooth. Engagements with colonised actors, both in their collaborative acts and modes of resistance, shaped and limited the acquisition and formation of colonial knowledge. The material apparatus for acquiring, recording, and preserving knowledge were thus uneven, coalescing in particular sites in clusters and clumps ostensibly ordered into the scalar layered networks of imperial bureaucracies. There was an internal dynamism to this knowledge production that is revealed through a close reading of the archive itself. The tensions and insecurities of imperial formations drove the production and accrual of more knowledge of specific, troubling subjects.[70] At times, figments produced through colonial knowledge became themselves a source of anxiety and spurred the generation of more records.[71] In sum, we have in the existing historiography the sketch of an accumulatory process: an active form of acquisition orientated towards increasing the magnitude of acquisition itself, with its own internal dynamism that relied upon seeking out and incorporating external sources.

This brief overview is not meant as a prescriptive model for imperial historians to adopt, or as a comprehensive survey of what are vast, complex fields of study. Admittedly, this article just scratches the surface of these historiographic debates. Moreover, colonial knowledge is not such a self-evident or unitary subject as this discussion might read to imply.[72] Nevertheless, the review presented here is as an illustration that in the historiography of modern colonialism in Africa and Asia, an imperial accumulation of knowledge is discernible, even while it is often unstated. This history is entangled with that of the material production and aggregation of state apparatus and of official archives. Teasing out these processes of accumulation serves to foreground the clumpy, lumpy, uneven spatiality of imperialism. Through this, it keeps the connected nodes of empire in the same frame as marginalised sites of knowledge production and appropriation. As such, it suggests the heuristic utility of a generic concept of accumulation for other aspects of imperialism.[73]

***

Framing imperial geographies as having been shaped by accumulations provides a renewed emphasis on subalternity and marginality in writing imperial histories. Network approaches can leave some colonised peoples and marginalised regions of the world out of the picture, particularly where historians implicitly take their disconnection to read as inertia or irrelevance. This implication is perpetually a risk because the work of bringing in the foundations and hinterlands of imperial networks beyond the nodal points of connectivity is not intrinsic to a network model. Antionette Burton and Tony Ballantyne have

identified this problem in relation to the focus on mobility. Their insistence on the importance of intimate, 'translocal' arrangements reproduced at imperial nodes across the world, and their argument that these arrangements were a pre-condition for imperial mobility, broadens the network framework. It creates the analytical space to bring in marginalised historical actors whose lives and labours sustained mobility.[74] There is in this expanded framework the scope to not just assert the uneven and asymmetrical distribution of power under imperial rule, but to analyse these relations. However, like the lumps identified by Cooper and Benton, their approach is also testament to the limitations of the spatial framework of the network. The focus on imperial networks does not *necessitate* an analysis of inequalities, even though the best examples of it do bring this into their studies. By contrast, the concept of accumulation is inherently concerned with uneven distributions, asymmetries of power, and the reproduction of inequity.

Relatedly, accumulation may also provide new ways of bringing oppressed and marginalised historical actors into the centre of analysis. In the last decade, network models have been used effectively to excavate the histories of subaltern actors. Clare Anderson's *Subaltern Lives* does this through painstakingly reconstructed and powerfully rendered biographies of men and women of a range of ethnicities and cultural backgrounds who were prisoners, performers, and other liminal figures across the Indian Ocean World.[75] James Beatie, Edward Melillo, and Emily O'Gorman have further expanded the ambit of imperial networks to bring in nonhuman actors. They name the relational connections between environmental and animal actants that both shaped and were shaped by imperialism "eco-cultural networks".[76] This tendency towards writing networked histories of a greater range of actors can be strengthened by an accumulation approach. Indeed, since the 1980s there have been creative re-workings of the concept within African studies. Building directly on the Marxist tradition, Mahmood Mamdani put forward the notion of "accumulation from below" to understand post-colonial land politics in Uganda.[77] The term is now more widely deployed to connote the strategies adopted by peasants to acquire capital at a small scale;[78] but it could be deployed for other forms of imperial accumulation. The co-option of colonial knowledge for anti-colonial purposes, for instance, could be conceived as a mode of accumulation from below.[79]

However, and more importantly, the framework of accumulation *necessarily* entails an understanding of the actors exploited or dispossessed in the process. Looking again to the study of capitalist accumulation, in recent scholarship this has meant elucidating the racialisation of dispossession and appropriation.[80] This work touches on two central themes in the historiography on colonial knowledge, but not addressed at length above: that of tracking the erasure of colonised informants and researchers; and that of the generation of racial differentiations between rulers and the ruled.[81] Theories of racial capitalism refuse to

reduce racism and racialisation to being the mere epiphenomena of capitalism. Instead, racism and racialisation are considered to be intrinsic and foundational to accumulation. Exploitation, expropriation, and extraction all operated through racial divisions, in this analysis. And, crucially, race itself emerged through accumulation, as a range of modes of human differentiation came to be ossified into racial divisions and hierarchies in tandem with the expansion of capitalist relations.[82] The taxonomization of the humans into racial groups to both extract information and to govern might be considered fundamental to the accumulation of colonial knowledge; although such a grand claim requires further research. Nevertheless, these innovations suffice to illustrate that, unlike in a network model, it is not on account of their mobility (whether voluntary or forced) that subaltern actors are drawn into imperial history through the framing of accumulation, but on account of their subjugation itself.[83]

An attentiveness to imperial accumulations need not overturn an understanding of empires as constituted through webs and networks; I believe it to be complimentary to this framework. Nor does accumulation provide the key to comprehending imperialism in its totality. This is not a conceptualisation of accumulation that conceives of it as an inexorable, teleological, causative process, but as one beset with barriers and riddled with contradictions. Like the network, it is only a useful heuristic. Treated as such, the explicit framing of accumulation serves as a reminder that imperialism not only entailed movement, but extraction, appropriation, and aggregation. Foregrounding accretions and accruals, and displacements and dispossessions, provides a method for analysing the historical geography of empire's lumpy viscosity and clumpy viscidity.

Notes

1. Price, "One Big Thing"; Kennedy, "The Imperial History Wars".
2. I am taking my inspiration, and philosophical justification, for this act of abstraction from a reading of Marx's own thought as conjunctural and disentanglable from its subsequent uses and interpretations. Balibar, "Introduction to the New Edition: From Althusserian Marxism to the Philosophies of Marx? Twenty Years After"; Prominent thinkers have already expanded the remit of Marx's concept of accumulation to cultural and social phenomena. Henri Lefebvre made a similar move to conceptualise the Christian church's accumulation of peasant alienation, later developing a broader distinction between accumulatory and non-accumulatory societies. In a quite different vein, social accumulation is central to Pierre Bourdieu's work on different forms of capital. Neither of these theorists, however, revisit the mechanisms of accumulation laid out by Marx in their expansion of the concept. Lefebvre, *The Critique of Everyday Life*, 221–47, 609–33; Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital".
3. It does, however, engage new materialist approaches and, as I note later, may be complimentary to studies of the economic. Lipartito, "Reassembling the Economic".

4. Here I am building on Durba Ghosh's thoughtful assessment of imperial history as a field, and hope to be writing in the spirit of her generous reading of the field's internal debates, Ghosh, "Another Set of Imperial Turns?"
5. Cooper and Stoler, "Tensions of Empire"; Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes Towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia"; Lester, "Imperial Circuits and Networks"; Potter and Saha, "Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories of Empire".
6. This literature is too voluminous to reference fully here, but an excellent survey can be found here, Curless et al., "Editors' Introduction"; some influential examples include, Lester, *Imperial Networks*; Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race*; Wilson, *A New Imperial History*; Metcalf, *Imperial Connections*; Burton and Ballantyne, *Moving Subjects*.
7. The explicit acknowledgement of a network approach is present in, Magee and Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, c.1850–1914*; however, this work has still cut significant areas of study from its analytical scope through this approach, Laidlaw, "Empire and Globalisation"; also see the careful conditioning of the utility of network approaches and their connection to narratives of globalisation in Potter, "Webs, Networks, and Systems"; also see this earlier critique of globalisation as planetary networks, Cooper, "What Is the Concept of Globalization Good For?"
8. As Antionette Burton points out in relation to histories of globalisation it is often "local" colonised spaces as site of resistance and resilience that recede from analysis. Burton, "Not Even Remotely Global?"
9. Cooper, *Colonialism in Question*, 91–2, 95, 101.
10. Benton, "Spatial Histories of Empire"; Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty*.
11. Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*.
12. Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*.
13. Robinson, *Africa and the Victorians*; Platt, "Economic Factors in British Policy during the 'New Imperialism'"; Wolfe, "History and Imperialism"; Edelstein, "Foreign Investment, Accumulation and Empire, 1860–1914"; Solow and Engerman, *British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery*.
14. Marx, *Capital*.
15. Luxemburg, "The Accumulation of Capital".
16. Marx, *Capital*.
17. Luxemburg, "The Accumulation of Capital".
18. Harvey, *The New Imperialism*; Glassman, "Primitive Accumulation, Accumulation by Dispossession, Accumulation by 'Extra-Economic' Means".
19. Beckert et al., "Interchange".
20. Levy, "Capital as Process and the History of Capitalism".
21. Although, it is worth flagging that knowledge production is and was an important part of speculation itself, see Bear, "Speculation".
22. Liu, "Production, Circulation, and Accumulation"; Yazdani and Menon, *Capitalisms*.
23. They are highly critical of unreconstructed economistic reads of Marx's understanding of accumulation, including David Harvey's work. But they still deploy the generic aspects of the concept within their own analysis. See: Nitzan, "Differential Accumulation"; Nitzan and Bichler, "Capital Accumulation"; Nitzan and Bichler, "New Imperialism or New Capitalism?"; Nitzan and Bichler; There are parallels in this approach with David Graeber's conception of value as world making: Graeber, "It Is Value That Brings Universes into Being".

24. Fraser, "Behind Marx's Hidden Abode"; Gibson-Graham, *The End of Capitalism (as We Knew It)*; Gibson-Graham, "A Feminist Project of Belonging for the Anthropocene".
25. A compelling study that already does something akin to what I am outlining here, is Bhattacharyya, *Empire and Ecology in the Bengal Delta*, 1–41; She has also worked to recover South Asian modes of speculation from Eurocentric lens that have rendered them as unproductive 'hoarding', see: Bhattacharyya, "Provincializing the History of Speculation from Colonial South Asia".
26. Price, "One Big Thing"; Kennedy, "The Imperial History Wars"; MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*; Tony Ballantyne, *Orientalism and Race*.
27. Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity*.
28. Burton, *Burdens of History*; Midgley and Midgley, "Introduction: Gender and Imperialism: Mapping the Connections"; Hall, *Civilising Subjects*; this approach of rooting a study in the connections of one colony and its entanglements with imperial formations is now widely used as a model, see: Dirks, *The Scandal of Empire*; Price, *Making Empire*; Epstein, *Scandal of Colonial Rule*.
29. Dane Kennedy's essay, for instance, discusses the shift contexts in the Global North, and scholarly contributions from there, but does little to trace changes within the formerly colonised Majority World, see: Kennedy, "The Imperial History Wars".
30. Price, "One Big Thing," 613–4.
31. Indeed, this was methodologically foundational, even definitive of, early Subaltern Studies approaches, as it was for studies of colonial governance. See: Guha, "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency"; Scott, "Colonial Governmentality"; Mamdani, Mahmood, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*.
32. Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance".
33. Not to downplay the influence of his work, his arguments were foreshadowed in earlier texts, see: Guha, *A Rule of Property for Bengal*; Alatas (Syed), *The Myth of the Lazy Native*.
34. Said, *Orientalism*.
35. Benton, "Spatial Histories of Empire".
36. A prominent example of the work Bayly was writing against was Inden, *Imagining India*.
37. Bayly, *Empire and Information*; Choudhury, "Sinews of Panic and the Nerves of Empire".
38. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*; Dirks, "The Policing of Tradition".
39. Graeber, "It Is Value That Brings Universes into Being".
40. For a study that traces these shifts and multiplicities in colonial knowledge acquisition, see Sivasundaram, "Trading Knowledge".
41. Bayly, *Empire and Information*.
42. Castells, *The Informational City*; Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*.
43. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*.
44. Liu, "Production, Circulation, and Accumulation"; This trajectory might be mapped in the concerns of Andre Frank. See Frank, *Dependent Accumulation*; Frank, *ReOrient*.
45. Stoler, "In Cold Blood"; Ludden, "Orientalist Empiricism: Transformations of Colonial Knowledge"; Ballantyne, "The Changing Shape of the Modern British Empire and Its Historiography".
46. Roque and Wagner, "Introduction".

47. Ranger, "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa"; Ranger, "The Invention of Tradition Revisited".
48. Dirks, *Castes of Mind*; for a more recent approach that provides a more circumscribed role for colonial ethnology on caste, see: Fuller, "Anthropologists and Viceroys".
49. Spear, "Neo-Traditionalism and the Limits of Invention in British Colonial Africa"; Vaughan, "Chieftaincy Politics and Communal Identity in Western Nigeria, 1893–1951".
50. Willis, "Hukm".
51. Apter, "Introduction".
52. Comaroff, "Reflections on the Colonial State, in South Africa and Elsewhere".
53. Appadurai, "Number in the Colonial Imagination"; Lawrance, Osborn, and Roberts, *Intermediaries, Interpreters, and Clerks*; Pierce, "Looking Like a State"; Lees, "Discipline and Delegation"; Giuliani, "Strangers in the Village?"; Ratcliff, "Hand-in-Hand with the Survey".
54. Legg and Brown, "Moral Regulation"; Legg, *Prostitution and the Ends of Empire*.
55. Harvey, "Layered Networks".
56. Ogborn, *Indian Ink*.
57. de Rugy, "Looting and Commissioning Indigenous Maps".
58. See, for instance, the discussion of Zomia as a site perpetually out of reach for colonial regimes in their attempts to acquire knowledge and establish structures of governance on a more uniform basis. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed*; Michaud, "Editorial – Zomia and Beyond"; Tagliacozzo, "History, Zomia, Closure".
59. Burton, "Archive Stories: Gender in the Making of Imperial and Colonial Histories".
60. Gould, *Bureaucracy, Community and Influence in India*; Saha, *Law, Disorder and the Colonial State*; Pierce, *Moral Economies of Corruption*.
61. Hodder, "On Absence and Abundance".
62. Sato, "Operation Legacy".
63. Banton, "Destroy? 'Migrate'? Conceal?"
64. Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*; Arondekar, "Without a Trace".
65. Guha, "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency".
66. Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*.
67. Stoler, "Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers"; Bailkin, "The Boot and the Spleen".
68. Derrida, *Archive Fever*; Steedman, *Dust*; Kafka, *The Demon of Writing*; Anderson, "The Case of the Archive".
69. Ogborn, *Indian Ink*; Raman, "The Duplicity of Paper".
70. There were other drivers too. In the first of her Royal Historical Society presidential lectures, Margot Finn has drawn out the dynamics through which East India Company looting interacted with South Asian rulers' pre-existing modes of wealth accumulation, showing how resultant claims to these prizes drove the production of British historical knowledge of the region. The lecture offers a rare insight into the dynamics between different forms of imperial accumulation, as well as with South Asian modes of accumulation. Finn, "Material Turns in British History"; For a study that examines the relationships between African and British modes of accumulation, see: McCaskie, "Accumulation, Wealth and Belief in Asante History"; McCaskie, "Accumulation".
71. Wagner, "Treading Upon Fires".
72. Sivasundaram, "Tales of the Land".
73. Jonathan Saha, "Accumulations and Cascades".
74. Ballantyne and Burton, "Introduction: The Politics of Intimacy in an Age of Empire".
75. Anderson, *Subaltern Lives*.

76. Beattie, Melillo, and O'Gorman, "Rethinking the British Empire through Eco-Cultural Networks".
77. Mamdani, "Extreme but Not Exceptional".
78. Neocosmos, *The Agrarian Question in Southern Africa and 'Accumulation from Below'*; Cousins, "Smallholder Irrigation Schemes, Agrarian Reform and 'Accumulation from Above and from Below' in South Africa"; Woods, "Smaller-Scale Land Grabs and Accumulation from Below".
79. Ludden, "Orientalist Empiricism: Transformations of Colonial Knowledge"; Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity*.
80. Chakravartty and da Silva, "Accumulation, Dispossession, and Debt"; Whitehead, "John Locke, Accumulation by Dispossession and the Governance of Colonial India".
81. Dirks, "Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament"; Jacobs, "The Intimate Politics of Ornithology in Colonial Africa"; Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*; Kolsky, "Codification and the Rule of Colonial Difference".
82. Bhattacharyya, *Rethinking Racial Capitalism*; Jenkins and Leroy, *Histories of Racial Capitalism*.
83. This builds on an understanding of 'subaltern' groups, human and nonhuman, as constitutive presences, effaced from record itself. Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?"; Roy, "Nonhuman Empires".

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

Funding for this paper was provided by the Independent Social Research Foundation through a Mid-Career Fellowship, and I am very grateful for their generous support.

References

Alatas (Syed), Hussein. *The Myth of the Lazy Native: A Study of the Image of the Malays, Filipinos and Javanese from the 16th to the 20th Century and Its Function in the Ideology of Colonial Capitalism*. London: Frank Cass, 1977.

Anderson, Clare. *Subaltern Lives: Biographies of Colonialism in the Indian Ocean World, 1790–1920. Critical Perspectives on Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Anderson, Warwick. "The Case of the Archive." *Critical Inquiry* 39, no. 3 (2013): 532–47.

Appadurai, Arjun. "Number in the Colonial Imagination." In *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia*, edited by Peter van der Veer, and Carol Appadurai Breckenridge, 314–39. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993.

Apter, Andrew. "The Subvention of Tradition: A Genealogy of the Nigerian Durbar." In *State/Culture: State-Formation After the Cultural Turn*, edited by George Steinmetz, 213–52. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999.

Arondekar, Anjali. "Without a Trace: Sexuality and the Colonial Archive." *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 14, no. 1/2 (2005): 10–27.

Bailkin, Jordanna. "The Boot and the Spleen: When Was Murder Possible in British India?" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 48, no. 02 (2006): 462–93.

Balibar, Étienne. "Introduction to the New Edition: From Althusserian Marxism to the Philosophies of Marx? Twenty Years After." In *The Philosophy of Marx*, translated by Chris Turner and Gregory Elliot, New and Updated Edition, xi–xx. London: New York: Verso Books, 2017.

Ballantyne, Tony. "The Changing Shape of the Modern British Empire and Its Historiography." *The Historical Journal* 53, no. 2 (2010): 429–52.

Ballantyne, Tony, and Antoinette M Burton. "Introduction: The Politics of Intimacy in an Age of Empire." In *Moving Subjects: Gender, Mobility, and Intimacy in an Age of Global Empire*, edited by Tony Ballantyne, and Antoinette M. Burton, 1–28. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009.

Banton, Mandy. "Destroy? "Migrate"? Conceal? British Strategies for the Disposal of Sensitive Records of Colonial Administrations at Independence." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 40, no. 2 (2012): 321–35.

Bayly, C. A. *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780–1870*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Bayly, C. A. *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770–1870*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Bear, Laura. "Speculation: A Political Economy of Technologies of Imagination." *Economy and Society* 49, no. 1 (2020): 1–15.

Beattie, James, Edward Melillo, and Emily O'Gorman. "Rethinking the British Empire through Eco-Cultural Networks: Materialist-Cultural Environmental History, Relational Connections and Agency." *Environment and History* 20, no. 4 (2014): 561–75.

Beckert, Sven, Angus Burgin, Peter James Hudson, Louis Hyman, Naomi Lamoreaux, Scott Marler, Stephen Mihm, Julia Ott, Philip Scranton, and Elizabeth Tandy Shermer. "Interchange: The History of Capitalism." *Journal of American History* 101, no. 2 (2014): 503–36.

Benton, Lauren. *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, Itinerario 1400–1900*. Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Benton, Lauren. "Spatial Histories of Empire." *Itinerario (leiden, Netherlands)* 30, no. 3 (2006): 19–34.

Bhattacharyya, Debjani. *Empire and Ecology in the Bengal Delta: The Making of Calcutta. Studies in Environment and History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Bhattacharyya, Debjani. "Provincializing the History of Speculation from Colonial South Asia." *History Compass* 17, no. 1 (2019).

Bhattacharyya, Gargi author. *Rethinking Racial Capitalism: Questions of Reproduction and Survival. Cultural Studies and Marxism*. London ; Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield International, Ltd, 2018.

Bourdieu, Pierre. "The Forms of Capital." In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by J Richardson, translated by Richard Nice, 241–58. New York: Greenwood, 1986.

Burton, Antoinette. "Not Even Remotely Global? Method and Scale in World History." *History Workshop Journal* 64, no. 1 (2007): 323–28.

Burton, Antoinette, and Tony Ballantyne. *Moving Subjects: Gender, Mobility, and Intimacy in an Age of Global Empire*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009.

Burton, Antoinette M. "Archive Stories: Gender in the Making of Imperial and Colonial Histories." In *Gender and Empire*, edited by Philippa Levine, 281–93. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Burton, Antoinette M. *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865–1915*. Chapel Hill: Univ of North Carolina Press, 1994.
Castells, Manuel. *The Informational City: Economic Restructuring and Urban Development*. Oxford: Wiley, 1992.
Castells, Manuel. *The Rise of the Network Society. The Information Age, v. 1*. Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell Publishers, 1996.
Chakravartty, Paula, and Denise Ferreira da Silva. "Accumulation, Dispossession, and Debt: The Racial Logic of Global Capitalism—An Introduction." *American Quarterly* 64, no. 3 (2012): 361–85.
Chatterjee, Partha. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994.
Choudhury, D. K. Lahiri. "Sinews of Panic and the Nerves of Empire: The Imagined State's Entanglement with Information Panic, India c.1880–1912'." *Modern Asian Studies* 38, no. 04 (2004): 965–1002.
Cohn, Bernard S. *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India. Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1996.
Comaroff, John L. "Reflections on the Colonial State, in South Africa and Elsewhere: Factions, Fragments, Facts and Fictions." *Social Identities* 4, no. 3 (1998): 321–61.
Cooper, Frederick. *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
Cooper, Frederick. "'What Is the Concept of Globalization Good for? An African Historian's Perspective'." *African Affairs* 100, no. 399 (2001): 189–213.
Cooper, Frederick, and Ann Laura Stoler. "Between Metropole and Colony: Rethinking a Research Agenda." In *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, edited by Frederick Cooper, and Ann Laura Stoler, 1–56. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.
Cousins, Ben. "Smallholder Irrigation Schemes, Agrarian Reform and "Accumulation from Above and from Below" in South Africa." *Journal of Agrarian Change* 13, no. 1 (2013): 116–39.
Curless, Gareth, Stacey Hynd, Temilola Alanamu, and Katherine Roscoe. "'Editors' Introduction: Networks in Imperial History'." *Journal of World History* 26, no. 4 (2015): 705–32.
Derrida, Jacques. *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1998.
Dirks, Nicholas B. *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2001.
Dirks, Nicholas B. "Colonial Histories and Native Informants: Biography of an Archive." In *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia*, edited by Peter van der Veer, and Carol Appadurai Breckenridge, 279–312. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993.
Dirks, Nicholas B. "The Policing of Tradition: Colonialism and Anthropology in Southern India." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 39, no. 1 (1997): 182–212.
Dirks, Nicholas B. *The Scandal of Empire: India and the Creation of Imperial Britain*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006.
Edelstein, Michael. "Foreign Investment, Accumulation and Empire, 1860–1914." In *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain*, edited by Roderick Floud, and Paul Johnson, 190–226. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
Epstein, James. *Scandal of Colonial Rule: Power and Subversion in the British Atlantic during the Age of Revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Finn, Margot C. "Material Turns in British History: I. Loot." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 28 (2018): 5–32.
Frank, Andre Gunder. *Dependent Accumulation*. New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1979.
Frank, Andre Gunder. *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*. Berkeley ; London: University of California Press, 1998.
Fraser, Nancy. "Behind Marx's Hidden Abode: For an Expanded Conception of Capitalism." In *Critical Theory in Critical Times: Transforming the Global Political and Economic Order*, edited by Cristina Lafont and Penelope Deutscher, 141–59. New York: Columbia University Press, 2017.
Fuller, C. J. "Anthropologists and Viceroys: Colonial Knowledge and Policy Making in India, 1871–1911." *Modern Asian Studies* 50, no. 1 (2016): 217–58.
Ghosh, Durba. "'Another Set of Imperial Turns?" *The American Historical Review* 117, no. 3 (2012): 772–93.
Gibson-Graham, J. K. *The End of Capitalism (as We Knew It): A Feminist Critique of Political Economy*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.
Gibson-Graham, J. K. "A Feminist Project of Belonging for the Anthropocene." *Gender, Place & Culture* 18, no. 1 (2011): 1–21.
Giuliani, Erin M. "Strangers in the Village? Colonial Policing in Rural Bengal, 1861 to 1892." *Modern Asian Studies* 49, no. 5 (2015): 1378–1404.
Glassman, Jim. "Primitive Accumulation, Accumulation by Dispossession, Accumulation by "Extra-Economic" Means." *Progress in Human Geography* 30, no. 5 (2006): 608–25.
Gould, William. *Bureaucracy, Community and Influence in India: Society and the State, 1930s - 1960s*. 1st ed. London: Routledge, 2010.
Graeber, David. "It Is Value That Brings Universes into Being." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 3, no. 2 (2013): 219–43.
Guha, Ranajit. *A Rule of Property for Bengal: An Essay on the Idea of Permanent Settlement*. Paris: Mouton, 1963.
Guha, Ranajit. "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency." In *Subaltern Studies II: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, edited by Ranajit Guha, 1–42. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983.
Hall, Catherine. *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830–1867*. Cambridge: Polity, 2002.
Harvey, David. *The New Imperialism. Clarendon Lectures in Geography and Environmental Studies*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
Harvey, Elizabeth A. ""Layered Networks": Imperial Philanthropy in Birmingham and Sydney, 1860–1914." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 41, no. 1 (2013): 120–42.
Hodder, Jake. "On Absence and Abundance: Biography as Method in Archival Research." *Area* 49, no. 4 (2017): 452–59.
Inden, Ronald B. *Imagining India*. Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1990.
Jacobs, Nancy J. "The Intimate Politics of Ornithology in Colonial Africa." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 48, no. 3 (2006): 564–603.
Jenkins, Destin, and Justin Leroy. *Histories of Racial Capitalism. Columbia Studies in the History of U.S. Capitalism*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2021.
Kafka, Ben. *The Demon of Writing: Powers and Failures of Paperwork*. New York: MIT Press, 2012.
Kennedy, Dane. "The Imperial History Wars." *Journal of British Studies* 54, no. 1 (2015): 5–22.

Kolsky, Elizabeth. "Codification and the Rule of Colonial Difference: Criminal Procedure in British India." *Law and History Review* 23, no. 3 (2005): 631–83.

Laidlaw, Zoë. "Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, c.1850–1914, by Gary B. Magee and Andrew S. Thompson." *The English Historical Review CXXVI* 520 (2011): 729–30.

Lawrance, Benjamin N, Emily Lynn Osborn, and Richard L Roberts, eds. *Intermediaries, Interpreters, and Clerks: African Employees in the Making of Colonial Africa*. Madison, Wisc: University of Wisconsin Press, 2006.

Lees, Lynn Hollen. "Discipline and Delegation: Colonial Governance in Malayan Towns, 1880–1930." *Urban History* 38, no. 1 (2011): 48–64.

Lefebvre, Henri. *The Critique of Everyday Life*, Translated by John Moore.. London: Verso, 2014.

Legg, Stephen. *Prostitution and the Ends of Empire: Scale, Governmentalities, and Interwar India*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2014.

Legg, Stephen, and Michael Brown. "Moral Regulation: Historical Geography and Scale." *Journal of Historical Geography* 42 (2013): 134–39.

Lenin, Vladimir Il'ich.. *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism: A Popular Outline*. 13th ed. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1966.

Lester, Alan. "Imperial Circuits and Networks: Geographies of the British Empire." *History Compass* 4, no. 1 (2006): 124–41.

Lester, Alan. *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth-Century South Africa and Britain*. London: Routledge, 2001.

Levy, Jonathan. "Capital as Process and the History of Capitalism." *Business History Review* 91, no. 3 (2017): 483–510.

Lipartito, Kenneth. "Reassembling the Economic: New Departures in Historical Materialism." *The American Historical Review* 121, no. 1 (2016): 101–39.

Liu, Andrew B. "Production, Circulation, and Accumulation: The Historiographies of Capitalism in China and South Asia." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 78, no. 4 (2019): 767–88.

Ludden, David. "Orientalist Empiricism: Transformations of Colonial Knowledge." In *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia*, edited by Carol Appadurai Breckenridge, and Peter van der Veer, 250–78. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993.

Luxemburg, Rosa. "The Accumulation of Capital." In *The Complete Works of Rosa Luxemburg*, edited by Peter Hudis, and Paul Le Blanc, translated by Nicholas Gray and George Shriver, II: Economic Writings 2:7–331. London: New York: Verso, 2015.

MacKenzie, John M. *Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880–1960*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.

Magee, Gary B., and Andrew S. Thompson. *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, c.1850–1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Mamdani, Mahmood. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Mamdani, Mahmood. "Extreme but Not Exceptional: Towards an Analysis of the Agrarian Question in Uganda." *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 14, no. 2 (1987): 191–225.

Marx, Karl. *Capital. Translated by Ben Fowkes. Vol. 1*. New York: Vintage Books, 1977.

McCaskie, T. C. "Accumulation, Wealth and Belief in Asante History: I. To the Close of the Nineteenth Century." *Africa* 53, no. 1 (1983): 23–43.

McCaskie, T. C. "Accumulation: Wealth and Belief in Asante History: II the Twentieth Century." *Africa* 56, no. 1 (1986): 3–23.

Metcalf, Thomas R. *Imperial Connections: India in the Indian Ocean Arena, 1860–1920. The California World History Library 4*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.
Michaud, Jean. "Editorial – Zomia and Beyond." *Journal of Global History* 5, no. 2 (2010): 187–214.
Midgley, Clare, and Clare Midgley, eds. "Introduction: Gender and Imperialism: Mapping the Connections." In *Gender and Imperialism*, 1–19. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995.
Neocosmos, M. *The Agrarian Question in Southern Africa and 'Accumulation from Below': Economics and Politics in the Struggle for Democracy*. Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute, 1993.
Nitzan, Jonathan. "Differential Accumulation: Towards a New Political Economy of Capital." *Review of International Political Economy* 5, no. 2 (1998): 169–216.
Nitzan, Jonathan, and Shimshon Bichler. "Capital Accumulation: Breaking the Dualism of "Economics" and "Politics"." In *Global Political Economy: Contemporary Theories*, edited by Ronen Palan, 67–88. London: Routledge, 2000.
Nitzan, Jonathan, and Shimshon Bichler. "New Imperialism or New Capitalism?" *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 29, no. 1 (2006): 1–86.
Ogborn, Miles.. *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
Pierce, Steven. "Looking Like a State: Colonialism and the Discourse of Corruption in Northern Nigeria." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 48, no. 04 (2006): 887–914.
Pierce, Steven. *Moral Economies of Corruption*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2016.
Platt, D. C. M. "Economic Factors in British Policy during the "New Imperialism"." *Past & Present* 39 (1968): 120–38.
Potter, Simon J. "Webs, Networks, and Systems: Globalization and the Mass Media in the Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British Empire." *Journal of British Studies* 46, no. 3 (2007): 621–46.
Potter, Simon J., and Jonathan Saha. "Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories of Empire." *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 16, no. 1 (2015): np.
Price, Richard. *Making Empire: Colonial Encounters and the Creation of Imperial Rule in Nineteenth-Century Africa. 1st ed*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
Price, Richard. "One Big Thing: Britain, Its Empire, and Their Imperial Culture." *Journal of British Studies* 45, no. 3 (2006): 602–27.
Raman, Bhavani. "The Duplicity of Paper: Counterfeit, Discretion, and Bureaucratic Authority in Early Colonial Madras." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 54, no. 2 (2012): 229–50.
Ranger, Terence. "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa." In *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm, and Terence Ranger, 211–63. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
Ranger, Terence. "The Invention of Tradition Revisited: The Case of Colonial Africa." In *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth-Century Africa: Essays in Honour of A. H. M. Kirk-Greene*, edited by Terence Ranger, and Olufemi Vaughan, 62–111. St Antony's/ Macmillan Series. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1993.
Ratcliff, Jessica. "Hand-in-Hand with the Survey: Surveying and the Accumulation of Knowledge Capital at India House during the Napoleonic Wars." *Notes and Records: The Royal Society Journal of the History of Science* 73, no. 2 (2019): 149–66.
Robinson, Ronald. *Africa and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism*. London: New York: Macmillan & Co.; St. Martin's Press, 1961.

Roque, Ricardo, and Kim A. Wagner. "Introduction: Engaging Colonial Knowledge." In *Engaging Colonial Knowledge: Reading European Archives in World History*, edited by Ricardo Roque, and Kim A. Wagner, 1–32. Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies Series. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2012.

Roy, Rohan Deb. "Nonhuman Empires." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 35, no. 1 (2015): 66–75.

Rugy, Marie de. "Looting and Commissioning Indigenous Maps: James G. Scott in Burma." *Journal of Historical Geography* 69 (2020): 5–17.

Saha, Jonathan. *Law, Disorder, and the Colonial State: Corruption in Burma c.1900*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Saha, Jonathan. "Accumulations and Cascades: Burmese Elephants and the Ecological Impact of British Imperialism." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* (Forthcoming).

Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.

Sato, Shohei. ""Operation Legacy": Britain's Destruction and Concealment of Colonial Records Worldwide'." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 45, no. 4 (2017): 697–719.

Scott, David. "Colonial Governmentality." *Social Text* 43 (1995): 191–220.

Scott, David. *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2004.

Scott, James C. *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.

Sinha, Mrinalini. *Colonial Masculinity: The 'manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995.

Sivasundaram, Sujit. "Tales of the Land: British Geography and Kandyan Resistance in Sri Lanka, c. 1803–1850." *Modern Asian Studies* 41, no. 5 (2007): 925–65.

Sivasundaram, Sujit. "Trading Knowledge: The East India Company's Elephants in India and Britain." *The Historical Journal* 48, no. 1 (2005): 27–63.

Solow, Barbara Lewis, and Stanley L. Engerman. *British Capitalism and Caribbean Slavery: The Legacy of Eric Williams*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Spear, Thomas. "Neo-Traditionalism and the Limits of Invention in British Colonial Africa." *The Journal of African History* 44, no. 1 (2003): 3–27.

Spivak, Gayatri C. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson, and Lawrence Grossberg, 271–316. Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1988.

Steedman, Carolyn Kay. *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000.

Stoler, Ann Laura. *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Commonsense*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009.

Stoler, Ann Laura. "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance." *Archival Science* 2, no. 1 (2002): 87–109.

Stoler, Ann Laura. ""In Cold Blood": Hierarchies of Credibility and the Politics of Colonial Narratives." *Representations* 37 (1992): 151–89.

Stoler, Ann Laura. "Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Colonial Southeast Asia." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34, no. 3 (1992): 514–51.

Subrahmanyam, Sanjay. "Connected Histories: Notes Towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia." *Modern Asian Studies* 31, no. 3 (1997): 735–62.

Tagliacozzo, Eric. "History, Zomia, Closure." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 80, no. 2 (2021): 423–30.

Tony, Ballantyne. *Orientalism and Race: Aryanism in the British Empire*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001.
Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995.
Vaughan, Olufemi. "Chieftaincy Politics and Communal Identity in Western Nigeria, 1893–1951." *The Journal of African History* 44, no. 2 (2003): 283–302.
Wagner, Kim A. ""Treading Upon Fires": The 'Mutiny'-Motif and Colonial Anxieties in British India." *Past & Present* 218, no. 1 (2013): 159–97.
Whitehead, Judith. "John Locke, Accumulation by Dispossession and the Governance of Colonial India." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 42, no. 1 (2012): 1–21.
Williams, Eric. *Capitalism and Slavery*. London: Deutsch, 1964.
Willis, Justin. "Hukm: The Creolization of Authority in Condominium Sudan." *The Journal of African History* 46, no. 1 (2005): 29–50.
Wilson, Kathleen. *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660–1840*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
Wolfe, Patrick. "History and Imperialism: A Century of Theory, from Marx to Postcolonialism." *The American Historical Review* 102, no. 2 (1997): 388–420.
Woods, Kevin M. "Smaller-Scale Land Grabs and Accumulation from below: Violence, Coercion and Consent in Spatially Uneven Agrarian Change in Shan State, Myanmar." *World Development* 127 (2020): 1–16.
Yazdani, Kaveh, and Dilip M. Menon, eds. *Capitalisms: Towards a Global History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.