Introduction

Geography has engaged in the study of empire since its early days as an academic discipline. Few disciplines have such a clear complicity with this political formation, that feeds on territorial growth through military power, and that limits political sovereignty in the peripheries. In fact, a temporal correspondence exists between the birth of modern geography and the emergence of a new phase of capitalist imperialism during the 1870s. Viewed as the queen of the imperial sciences over a century ago, geographies of empire have changed throughout time, reflecting the modifications in the discipline and the transformation in the nature of empires. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and under environmental determinism, geographical knowledge produced by the likes of Frederick Ratzel or Alfred Mackinder lent scientific credibly to ideologies of imperialism while, at the same time, they legitimized the scientific claims of geography as an academic discipline. Climatic and acclimatization studies and prerogatives were pivotal to construct moralistic considerations of both people and places. During the first half of the 20th century, geographies of empire were dominated, in part, by the regional tradition of French geographic inquiry, which cultivated a regional, zonal approach, while work with a focus on empire had a global and zonal tropicality architecture. Quantitative and neopositivist geography approaches in the second half of the 20th century had a less marked influence. Since the late 1980s, a concern for “empire” has returned to geography, and various subdisciplines have focused on the imperial genealogy of the discipline, the links between geography and empire, and the consequences of those links. A more critical engagement with the history of geography has provided contextual histories of global spatial practice and discourse over the past two centuries. The reconsideration of imperialism in view of postcolonial theory, tackling “historical amnesia,” has also promoted a new wave of studies. In a broad way we can be tempted today to make a division between geographical research, which participated in imperial development and maintenance, and geographical research “after Empire,” which aims to study and understand the past and present spatialities of empire.

General Overviews

Despite the diversity of empires throughout history—Roman, Ottoman, Imperial Chinese, Russian, Soviet, Austro-Hungarian, Napoleonic, British, French, Spanish, Portuguese—geographical research on empires has been dominated by the history and consequences of modern Western colonization in the “Age of Empire” (c. 1870–1914). Furthermore, scholarship has been dominated by Anglo-American geographic, which has worked from a constricted notion of empire, mostly drawn from a 19th-century European model, especially the British Empire. Young 2015 provides a good starting point, as it offers a straightforward introduction to related concepts like empire, colony, imperialism and colonialism, anti-colonialism and decolonization, neo-colonialism, and postcolony and postcolonialism. Various studies, notably within historical geography, and those concerned with the history of science, have attempted to assess how geography has worked as an imperial discipline. Livingstone 1992 provides a refined analysis of how geography has been inexorably connected with imperialism, from the “Age of Reconnaissance” in the 15th century to “Geography, Race and Empire” in the 19th and 20th centuries. Godlewska and Smith 1994 and Bell, et al. 1995 present a diverse range of geographical research on the history of imperialism and are good examples of the reexamination of the heritage of the discipline of geography and interest in the historical relationship between geography and imperialism. Driver 1992, indicates how the construction of empires stimulated and was stimulated by geographical knowledge. The author first coined the term geography’s empire to capture both the discipline’s 19th-century service to empire and how such assistance helped to shape the ways in which geography became a professional discipline, at the same time as empire developed into a key concept of theoretical debate within geography. Singaravélou 2008 focuses on the French Empire at the turn of the 19th century. It underlines the existence of powerful, inseparable ties of interdependence between colonial expansion and the evolution of geography as a discipline. The book includes contributions from key French geographers who analyze the plurality and complexity of colonial geography and the evolution of geographic knowledge (see also Singaravélou 2011). Clayton 2003 and Clayton 2004 remain arguably the best introductory overviews to the subject of geographies and empire.

The book includes eleven chapters that focus on the growth of the discipline of geography and its relation to the extension of European rule and influence, mostly in British Africa.


A state-of-the-art text that crosses the boundaries of the subdiscipline of cultural geography.


Locates geographical scholarship on colonialism, relating it to the postcolonial turn and to the historiographic revisitations, identifying key research avenues in the 2000s.


Discusses the relations between modern geography and European colonialism during the “Age of Empire”; argues against a totalizing view of “imaginative geographies,” such as those related to Orientalism; and defends a heterogeneity of geographical knowledges.


This collection of seventeenth essays, mostly written by geographers, presents a diverse range of themes, and the book was influential in the development of the study of geographies of empires in the 1990s. Book based on papers presented at a conference held at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, in April 1991.


Key publication on the contested tradition of the discipline of geography. It highlights how the tentacles of empire have stretched throughout the globe.


Dealing with the French Empire, the book covers four aspects: the places where colonial geography was produced; the political and military uses of geography in colonial contexts, especially in North Africa; the colonial imaginary, including an analysis of the correspondence of Tahiti’s obsessed artist Paul Gauguin; and a discussion of the heritage of colonial geography, traced to tropical geography and development geography.


An analysis of the practical and political roles of academic networks and the ways in which geographical knowledge was shaped in early colonial times.

Interesting publication akin to a textbook that provides an introduction and educational resource to how colonial and imperial geographies can be revisited from postcolonial perspectives. It underlines how colonial injustice and domination are present conditions, engaging with current issues and debates such as the rise of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) and the 2014 Scottish referendum.

Journals

Given the broad scope, diversity, and eclecticism of geographies of empire, it is possible to find publications in numerous journals, within and outside the discipline of geography. The overwhelming international journals publishing materials related to geographies of empire are dominated by a few publishers and by Anglo-American editorial boards and authors. *Les Cahiers d’Outre-Mer* is a francophone journal based in Bordeaux. Created by Louis Papy at a time when France was a colonial power, it was endorsed from its early days by Pierre Gourou. It regularly publishes papers on development geographies, postcolonial studies, and subaltern studies, and it focuses on the geographies of the south. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, initially *Malayan Journal of Tropical Geography* (1953–1956) and then the *Journal of Tropical Geography* (1958–1960), publishes articles on “the tropics,” understood as a complex and contested field of geographical inquiry. It is published in partnership with the Geography Department of the National University of Singapore. *Journal of Historical Geography* is an interdisciplinary journal publishing regularly on the imaginaries, logics, and practices of imperialism. *Annales de Géographie* is a wide-ranging international geography journal with a francophone editorial board that occasionally publishes articles related to empire and the colonial. *Progress in Human Geography* is one of the leading journals in the discipline of geography. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* and *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* occasionally publish articles related to empire. *Political Geography* is an important subdisciplinary geography journal that frequently publishes papers on empire and colonial and postcolonial aspects from a political-geographical perspective. *Social & Cultural Geography* is an international journal that emerged following the development of critical social geography and “new” cultural geography in the 1990s. It regularly publishes on empire, the colonial past and present, decolonization, and orientalism. Although not specifically a geography journal, *Settler Colonial Studies* is a multidisciplinary journal aiming at contributing to the consolidation of a new scholarly field. *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* is an international forum for theoretically informed papers on gender-related issues, combining human geographical research with various other disciplines. It occasionally publishes materials that intersect geographies of empire and the colonial/decolonial with gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity, among others. Many other geography journals publish materials that are relevant for the geographies of empire. They include, among others, *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space; Area; Antipode; Hérodote; Revue de Géographie et de Géopolitique; Boletín de la Asociación de Geógrafos Españoles; Géographie et Cultures; Cultural Geographies; and Southern Africa Geographical Journal.*

*Annales de Géographie*. 1891–.

Founded by Vidal de la Blache, it is an international journal based in France, publishing mostly in French but also in English. It occasionally publishes works on empire and the colonial. It has published several special issues on the geographies of the south.

*Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. 1911–.

Leading journal of the professional Association of American Geographers, it frequently publishes articles on geographies of empire, colonialism, and decolonization.

*Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*. 1994–.

Emerging as a journal anchored in feminist geography, it is the flagship journal for research in the fields of gender and feminist research in geography. It sometimes publishes paper related to empire or the colonial.

*Journal of Historical Geography*. 1975–.

It is a key journal for examinations on the representation of “the tropics” as a complex and contested field of geographical inquiry.

*Les Cahiers d’Outre-Mer*. 1948–.

Francophone journal which regularly publishes papers related to geographies of empire, with strong geopolitical and environmental concerns. It puts a robust emphasis on empirical materials.

**Political Geography. 1982–.**

Subdisciplinary geography journal that regularly publishes important articles on imperialism, mostly from a political-geography perspective.

**Progress in Human Geography. 1977–.**

High impact factor journal that focuses on the state of the art of all areas of human geography. It includes various progress reports that provide critical views on empire, coloniality, decolonization, and settler colonialism, among others.

**Settler Colonial Studies. 2011–.**

Multidisciplinary journal that publishes critical scholarship on settler colonialism as a distinct social and historical formation.

**Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography. 1953–.**

Despite its national denomination, it is a key journal that focuses on the wider tropical world, perceived as conceptual rather than merely physical space. Its core aims are the diversity of spatialities, histories, and trajectories of tropical geography.

**Social & Cultural Geography. 2000–.**

Transnational journal that publishes empirical research and debates current issues in the field of social and cultural geography, often drawing on contributions from the field of geographies of empire.

**Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers. 1965–.**

The journal of the professional associations of geographers in the United Kingdom—Royal Geographical Society/Institute of British Geographers—it is a wide-ranging spectrum journal that sporadically publishes on empire.

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**Seeing Empire**

In different ways, the discipline of geography has participated in the study of visual representations of empire, from maps and paintings to photography and film. Visual culture has been key in inquiring how race, masculinity, conquest, and nature are mutually constitutive of the imperial rule that constructs people and places, of home/metropole and abroad/colony. Direct observation of nature and empirical science started to produce comprehensive pictorial depictions of tropical imperial landscapes. Said 1994 points to the need for studies addressing the intimate connection between empire and imperial expansion and the history of Western culture. Empire, Said argues, is empowered through the circulation of imperial images, which naturalize imbalanced relations of race, the economy, and the environment. Driver 2004 is concerned with the ways in which the imperial eye of Western naturalists, navigators, and explorers viewed, sketched, and recorded the tropics in the 18th and 19th centuries. An edited collection, Driver and Martins 2005 includes ten captivating chapters on accounts of European notions of the “torrid zone.” Contributors make an analytical distinction between views and visions of the tropics, the former being related to imperial ways of translating landscapes into recognizable codes such as mapping, sketching, and color painting and the latter referring to the imaginative escalations brought by the work of Western observers (see Bassin 1999 for a non-Western imperial vision). Inspired by the work of Edward Said and Simon Schama, the author of Schwartz 1996 focuses on how mid-19th-century photographs, understood as instruments of cultural imperialism, worked as an extension of the Enlightenment project. Her work illustrates how photographers, in a similar fashion to travel writers, focused on distance and difference and participated and contributed to the tropes of Western colonial and Orientalist discourse. Ryan 1997 and Ryan 2013 illustrate how photographs have often been used to promote claims to power, especially when connected to the construction of national and imperial identity. An edited collection, Vicente 2014 provides a broad view of how the Portuguese Empire was portrayed by anthropologists and...
ethnographers throughout the 20th century, privileging the role not only of photography, but also of film. Akerman 2009 and Akerman 2017 examine maps and empire, and the two edited books complement each other. Akerman 2009 examines how modern imperial powers used mapping to conquer and sustain colonies and to foster and promote and imperial identities. Akerman 2017 investigates the role of mapping in the passage from colony to nation, spanning from the late 18th century to the mid-20th century.


Discusses the role of cartography in the construction of empire and imperialism, in places and contexts as diverse as the Russian imperial mapping of Siberia, early modern mapping of the Manchu Empire in China, and Portuguese mapping in the Amazon region, among others.


Makes a comparative analysis of colonial cartography and the cartography of newly independent nation-states, noting how pervasive cartographic idioms and practices are and how incomplete decolonizing is present in these ways of seeing space.


Examines the divergence between the geographical imaginations and imperial vision of the newly annexed territory of the Amur region, part of the Russian Empire, which were surrounded by discourses of promise, plenty, and euphoria as well as the disenchantment and abandonment of this region in only a few years.


The author examines how European ideas and images of tropicality, mostly in the 18th and 19th centuries, helped in constructing knowledge about the tropical world.


This edited collection explores European representations of the tropics in the 18th and 19th centuries, focusing on British travelers and naturalists.


Examines how photographic practices and aesthetics played a critical role in conveying and articulating the ideologies of British imperialism.


An analysis of how photography has been key to imperial exploration, and how nations have used images as an instrument of scientific development and territorial conquest.


After Orientalism, Said engaged in the relationship between culture and empire. The analysis expands beyond the Middle East and articulates the modern metropolitan West and its overseas territories.

Explores the ways in which photographs insinuated themselves into the relationship between travel and geography.


The book focuses on the role of photography in the Portuguese colonial experience. The eclectic interdisciplinary twenty-eight chapters explore four different aspects: classification, knowledge and circulation, exhibition and reproduction, resistance and memory. Translated as: "The empire of vision: Photography in the Portuguese colonial context."

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**Travel and Exploration**

Travel and exploration have been accomplices to the imperial project of conquest and settlement. In its expansionist trajectory, travel and exploration writing produced “the rest of the world” for European readerships in particular ways. Currently, a renewed geographical interest is growing in exploration as a geographical practice, which departs from a more common or traditional emphasis on the endeavors of intrepid, heroic, and courageous explorers. Driver 2000 emphasizes the heterogeneous and contingent nature of imperial projects and examines the ways in which the British imperial mind, both popular and academic, processed explorers’ information. In focusing on *Itinerario*, a geography book published in Amsterdam in 1596, Saidanha 2011 examines how this publication endorsed a leap in Dutch imperial aspirations and geographical epistemé. Brescius 2019 looks at the expedition of the Schlagintweit brothers in South and Central Asia under the East India Company in the 1850s and considers how their surveys constituted an opportunity to observe, record, collect, and loot manuscripts, maps, and artifacts. This enterprise illustrates the passage from Humboldtian inquiry to new modes of science making. A growing body of feminist scholarship has brought alternative epistemologies to the study of exploration. Carey-Webb 2017 examines the narratives produced by a female European explorer in the Amazon region at the turn of the 20th century (see Pratt 1992; Blunt 1994; and Garcia-Ramon, et al. 1998, all cited under Gender and Empire). An edited collection, MacDonald and Withers 2015 engages with imperialism by looking at how a whole assemblage of “instruments” promoted new forms of authority over people and nature. Finnegan and Wright 2015 is also a good read on the relationships between imperial explorations and scientific practices. An edited volume, MacGregor 2018 is a rich contribution that retraces the processes by which natural world collections came to be assembled in the field. This mammoth book follows a diversity of approaches to the making of colonial collections, from analysis of the paths of individual naturalists to wider perspectives related to imperial ambitions. In looking at the Kilimanjaro ascent by the German geographer Hans Meyer, Michel 2019 focuses on the Germanization of the mountain and on the complex material and symbolic translations from Africa to Germany. Driver and Jones 2009 explores the role of forgotten Indigenous people in exploration. Focusing on expeditions, Leshem and Pinkerton 2019 calls for a renovation and critical appropriation of expeditions as malleable practices and as valid research methods. These ventures are more than simple imperial remnants; they involve other perspectives that depart from myths of conquest or masculine heroics.


Examines German science and its role in shaping foreign empires, at a time when Germany lacked a formal empire.


The article examines the view of imperialism of a female European explorer the turn of the 20th century in the Amazon region.


A key book that examines the relationship between geographical knowledge and the cultures of exploration, particularly the sites and nature of its production and consumption. It deals, in particular, with the Royal Geographical Society and the lives and practices of explorers such as David Livingstone and Henry Morton Stanley.
Destabilizes work on colonial exploration by telling the stories of largely forgotten Indigenous people, emphasizing the contributions and the role of a large number of people who rarely occupied center stage.

The eleven chapters in this book treat how imperialism and exploration shaped scientific practice in the 19th century. Focusing on the British Empire, it contains studies ranging from Burma to Cyprus and Canada to the South Pacific.

Suggests that the expedition as a practice is a valid research method in the critical social sciences.

Explores the interconnections and tensions between humans and technology in the context of modern exploration.

An interdisciplinary work that makes a fascinating contribution to the history of science. It focuses on scientific expeditions and, more specifically, on early natural science collectors and collections.

A study of the journey of Hans Meyer and how it related to an imperial production of knowledge that allowed the construction of the white, male, and German geographer as a reliable observer. It also looks at how the German colonial project constituted a part not only of a Eurocentric discourse and practice, but also of a specific nation-building project.

Explores European and Dutch geographical imagination, and how Jan Huygen van Linschoten’s *Itinerario* (1596) contributed to knowledge production and to new struggles for the Indian Ocean.

**Tropicality**

Just like the Orient, “the tropics” need to be understood as an imaginative geography as well as a physical space. The tropics have been constructed as the West’s environmental other, and they have a special place in Western representations, practices, and experiences. Tropicality is not a stable and monolithic discourse, but rather a geographical construction that implicates particular kinds of representations and specific practices. It encompasses intertropical comparison as well as temperate/tropical zonal contrast. Bruneau and Dory 1989 provides an early reflection on the meaning of tropicality and tropical geography, and of possible research directions within the discipline (see also D’Alessandro 2003). Arnold 1996 coins the term in relation to a European invention and as a supplement to Said’s Orientalism (see also the Oxford Bibliographies in Geography article “Orientalism and Geography”). Arnold 2000 constitutes a key work on tropicality and discusses the ways in which the representations of the tropical world developed from “images of natural abundance” to ideas related to untamed nature. This shift made possible ascertaining the moral and material supremacy of...
northern climates, races, and civilizations. In a similar fashion, Bruneau 2005 examines how, in France, tropicality as a system of knowledge went from being centered on debates about the determinist influence of the natural milieu to a rejection of environmental determinism and ethnocentrism until integrating the study of tropical geography into wider debates in the social sciences. In tracing the genealogy of “tropic and tropicality” back to classical cosmography, Cosgrove 2005 warns of the risks of perpetuating the silencing of voices speaking from within tropical space. Driver and Martins 2005 illustrates how tropicality is implicated with multiple spaces and sites such as oceans, mountains, islands, ships, botanical gardens, and exhibitions; with numerous technologies of seeing; with various representations; and with sophisticated networks. Pimenta, et al. 2011 highlights the importance of considering historical and geographical “peripheral” examples to the tropicality debates. The authors discuss Portuguese tropical geography in the context of Lusotropicalism, a term coined by the Brazilian sociologist Gilberto Freyre in the 1930s to denote a particular formulation of tropicality that defended the uniqueness and benign form of Portuguese colonialism. A study of Orlando Ribeiro’s Angola fieldnotes in the 1960s, Sarmento 2021 reveals the efforts of this Portuguese geographer in establishing how the practice of doing geography was key to the geographical production of tropicality in Portugal’s African empire. Bowd and Clayton 2019 explores the concept and genealogy of tropicality throughout the 20th century in examining Pierre Gourou’s entanglement with tropicality and that of French geography more generally.


Proposes the concept of tropicality as an idea, image, and exotic “other” constructed or invented by Europeans.


Departing from Pierre Gourou’s The Tropical World (published originally as Les pays tropicaux: Principes de géographie humaine et économique [Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1947]), the author examines how the tropics were constructed as an impoverished and pestilential region, dependent upon outside agency for development.


Explores Pierre Gourou’s entanglement with tropicality and the particularities of his work and academic trajectory at the same time as it looks at wider processes of development and decolonization.


Bruneau reviews the study of the tropical milieu of monsoon Asia by French geographers and colonial actors in the last 150 years.


This edited book emerged from a round table debating “the challenges of tropicality.” It represents an early publication that deals with geographical research on imperial/colonial issues.


An afterword that discusses at length the concept of tropicality, using in detail the case of Alexander von Humboldt as a central figure who represents a new way of seeing and experiencing the tropics.


An edited volume that aims at discussing how the tropics were constructed and entered colonial imagination via the arts, science, and commercial networks.


Traces the role of Portuguese tropical geography in late colonialism and in wider academic debates on “tropicality.”


Part of a book series analyzing and reproducing fieldnotes. It includes a facsimile and transcription of the fieldnotes of the Portuguese geographer and reviews how geographical knowledge was produced in and about the tropics in an attempt to reform colonial administration. Sarmento reveals how Ribeiro foreshadowed a decolonization of the scientific gaze without clearly adhering to the idea of political decolonization.

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**Gender and Empire**

In a discipline dominated by an androcentric imperial system view, the agency of women in the colonial encounter has been, until recently, widely neglected. Travel, exploration, and empire have been predominantly studied as masculine affairs, and masculinist constructions of landscapes have been dominant. Furthermore, the thoughts, words, and performances of explorers and early geographers have not been erased, and, in many ways, they have a continuity in contemporary geography, in field practices, in a sort of the geography militant in the present. However, since the 1990s feminist epistemological critiques of social sciences and of geography, in particular, have been responsible for encouraging a construing of gender in the subjects of colonization, counterbalancing field geography as a heroic and manly endeavor, associated with imperial science. Pratt 1992 illustrates how Western women played a particular feminine imperial intervention, paying attention to things different from those that drew the attention of men when traveling. Blunt 1994 examines how women transgressed the dominant masculinity of travel and empire. Garcia-Ramon, et al. 1998 treats the intersection of travel writing, orientalism, colonialism, and gender. In looking at the travel writing of the Catalan woman Aurora Bertran in the 1930s. In accordance with Blunt 1994, Garcia-Ramon, et al. 1998 criticizes the position of Edward Said (see Said 1978 [cited under Anticolonialism]) of masking gender and concealing the heterogeneity of coloniality. McEwan 2000, also working against the dominance of the “extraordinary masculine history,” examines the ambiguity of white women travelers, as they moved between “home” and “away,” playing different roles as women, scientists, explorers, writers, and agents of empire. Cultural and historical geographers have made important contributions to this field. Gregory 1995 examines the imaginative geographies of Egypt produced by Florence Nightingale and Gustave Flaubert in their mid-19th century travels. Phillips 1996 explores how adventures on imperial grounds were represented in adventure stories for boys as a way of stimulating manliness. Legg 2010 looks at the regulation of prostitution in colonial India, calling for further engagements with the complex and volatile imperial social formations and contexts of the practice of imperial feminists. Phillips 2006 deals with both formal and informal networks of knowledge in examining the numerous (and ambivalent) sites of sexual subjection and resistance in British India and Australia. Sablin and Savelyeva 2015 focuses on the ways in which Indigenous peoples of Siberia, in general, and Indigenous women, in particular, suffered from the recolonization of the totalitarian regime carried out in the first half of the 20th century.


Drawing from the life and travels of Mary Kingsley, a 19th-century travel writer and critic of the Crown Colony system, Blunt cogently examines the relationships among travel, gender, and imperialism.

Challenges the notion of “Othering,” as coined by Edward Said, and highlights the idea of the heterogeneity of colonial power.


Highlights the fractured formation of Orientalism as a mixture of power, knowledge, and spatiality, and it examines its relations with sexuality.


Underlines how the idea that “other” women need saving, often by the judgments of white Western women, was rooted in the theory of imperial feminism.


A volume contributing to critical feminist scholarship, it focuses on geography and imperialism in looking at women travelers and their writings.


Provides and interesting picture of the complex relationships between empire and gender from the 1600s to present times.


Illustrates how the regulation of sexuality across the British Empire was intimately connected to the running of the empire and to the networks of knowledge on which it relied.


Seminal work in the study of travel literature and the field of postcolonial criticism, which attempts to unravel imperial meaning-making.


In looking at the transitional period between the Russian Empire and the totalitarian Soviet state, this paper focuses on the existing gendered power asymmetries within Indigenous communities.

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**Anticolonialism**

It is possible to locate a small number of European geographers, notably Élisée Reclus and Pyotr Kropotkin, who, in the second half of the 19th century, endorsed strong anticolonialist views, within what we now name anarchist geography. At a time when the discipline was umblically connected to imperialism, they demonstrated how well geography supports emancipatory ideas. Although focusing mainly upon Halford Mackinder, Kearns 2009 presents ideas from Reclus and Kropotkin, considering the existing alternatives to imperialism in the late 1800s. Ferretti 2018 stresses the rediscovery of anarchist geographies and highlights the role of early anarchists in ideas of anticolonialism, antiracism, and resistance to Eurocentrism. In looking at the role of geographer Arcangelo Ghisleri
(b. 1855–d. 1938), Ferretti 2016 focuses on opposition movements to imperial conquests in Africa and in the struggle against the “internal colonialism” of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Various classic writings associated with anticolonial movements and directed against colonial and imperial powers paved the way to post–World War II thinking on empire, decolonization, and independence. These works on anticolonialism, focusing on resistance, justice, equality, and self-determination, continue to hold salience to geographers working on empire. A key anticolonial text, Césaire 2019 focuses on how colonialism worked through language, imagery, texts, economics, politics, and the military. In his analysis of the discursive nature of tropicalité, Césaire is very critical of Pierre Gourou’s understanding of tropicality (see Bowd and Clayton 2019 [cited under Tropicality]). Fanon 1961 is part of a set of works that spurred an African intellectual awakening, which, in making a strong critique of imperialism and colonial power, scratched national borders onto the surface of the earth. Locating Césaire, the Martinican-born theorist in Marxism, Negritude, and Pan-Africanism and in the historical context of postwar decolonization, specifically the Algerian Revolution, has spurred a current rebirth of Fanoism and opens avenues to rethink and subvert the structure of “othering.” A critical line of inquiry has been influenced by Said 1978, which examines the process of “othering.” An edited collection, Craggs and Wintle 2016 mostly considers the historiography or the cultural history of decolonization. Yet the contributors conceptualize decolonization as including anticolonial struggles. This collection includes an eclectic, interesting, and transnational set of analyses and examples of anticolonial politics, experiences, and cultures. Dealing with memory, a key theme in the sphere of empire, McGregor 2017 explores the narratives of Zimbabweans in exile in Britain and their engagements with anti-imperial campaigns in the 1960s and 1970s.


Originally published in 1950. One of the sharpest and most influential anticolonial texts, written by the Martinican thinker, poet, and activist. It connects empires, via the links of colonizers and the colonized, decisively contributing to the colonizers’ consciousness of oppression and unacceptable status.


An interdisciplinary edited collection that focuses on cultural forms of decolonization, covering architectural, visual, and literary materials as well as theatrical practices and other performances. It opens up the field of comparative research into decolonization.


A key work of anticolonial criticism that understands violence as a significant, if transitory, step toward liberation. Fanon’s last book is a world order change manifesto, supported by a provocative revolutionary rhetoric, and it contributed to the development of an intellectual space in which subaltern and racialized people may deconstruct and challenge colonial thought and power. Translated as: “The wretched of the earth.”


This paper focuses on the work of early critics of colonialism and Eurocentrism within Italian geography in the middle of the Age of Empire, and how they criticized imperial politics and contested the predominant colonial discourses.


Explores how the British and Irish space became a fertile ground for Reclus and Kropotkin to discuss and publish on anticolonialism, among various other subjects.


While it looks biographically at Mackinder and his influences on the theory and practice of imperialism, the book constitutes a fascinating contribution toward the study of the necessary geopolitical imaginary to maintain empire.

Drawing on life histories from Zimbabweans who lived and studied in Britain in the 1960s and 1970s, the author locates anti-imperial political campaigns and related social spaces in both Zimbabwe and Britain.


Said’s work attempts to map the emergence of the concept of the Orient through an analysis of the shifting assemblages of power, knowledge, and geography carved out in various imperialisms.

**New Imperialisms**

A large group of academics, among them geographers, have highlighted how many of the urgent issues today are permeated by, and intimately tied to, imperial histories and spatialities. Earlier imperial configurations are not simply reflected in the contemporary world (Gregory 2004). Stoler 2002 examines how many of the assumptions of the colonial past continue to impact the environmental and psychic fragments in which people live, long after colonial polities have formally ended. In looking at the demolished migrant camp in Calais, France, Davies and Isakjee 2019 calls for a consideration of the legacies of imperialism in analysis of the current refugee crisis, as modern imperial forms of subjugation are strikingly visible in the camps. After a crescendo of empire-talk that followed the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, Stoler 2016 insists on the importance of looking at the toxins of imperial debris, as opposed to analyzing the benign overlays of colonial remnants. A key line of inquiry that blossomed in the early 2000s analyzed the role of the United States as a new empire. Hardt and Negri 2000 challenges traditional debates surrounding the concept of empire, which became known either to celebrate preemptive counterinsurgency policies or to condemn unilateral intervention in the name of peace. Inspired by Deleuze and Guattari, the authors of Hardt and Negri 2000 rearticulate the rhizomatic nature of capitalism. They focus on the ways in which popular movements may transgress the turbulent spaces of capitalism. Harvey 2003 also argues that, since the early 2000s, the idea of an American empire has gained force and that the emergence of a “new imperialism” is connected to “capitalist imperialism,” a concept that refers to a contradictory fusion of “the politics of state and empire.” Focusing on the biography of Isaiah Bowman, possibly the most “public” of American professional geographers in the early 20th century, Smith 2003 details and explores the hidden geographies of the globalizing reach of the United States. Byrd 2011 claims that neo-liberalism and colonialism have influenced the contemporary oppressive order of capitalist imperialism and our reactions to it. The work destabilizes the benign articulation between a national construction of American settler colonialism as a multicultural and multiracial democracy and the fact that the unrelenting colonization of American Indian nations, peoples, and lands has allowed the United States to disperse the economic and material resources needed to cast its imperialist gaze globally. Grigas 2016 proceeds from the notion that Russia and its president are pursuing a policy of “reimperialization” through the restoration of the state’s geopolitical status in the post-Soviet space in aspiring to regain positions in world politics.


Byrd attempts to understand American imperialism through examining the relationships between settler colonialism and Indigenous knowledge.


Underscores how race, othering, and empire are key to make sense of the inequalities of the present.


Inspired by Said’s Orientalist imaginative geographies, Gregory provides a historical account of the spatiality of colonial violence in three theaters of war—Afghanistan, Palestine, and Iraq—and the book draws attention to the intensification of that violence in the early 2000s.

Examines the current Russian policy of "reimperialization" through the development of a neo-imperialist idea of a "Russian world." It deals with the reterritorialization of Russia as an alternative non-Western model of modernity.


Provides an attempt to conceptualize the new form of high speed globalized capitalism and the rhizomatic nature of postmodern capitalism, exploring the empire of capitalism.


Harvey explores the territorialized politics of state and empire, and the relationship of those politics with capital accumulation and overaccumulation.


A detailed work that scrutinizes the remaking of the geographies of American empire through the lens of Isaiah Bowman's career.


Stoler explores how various knowledges (carnal, domestic, intimate) mattered to a colonial governing apparatus. Furthermore, it confronts the ambiguity of she names in contemporary imperial moralizing missions, such as humanitarian interventions, detention centers, refugee camps, and the distribution of North-South compassion.


Stoler uses "duress" as a category of domination through which to examine how the toxins of imperial debris continue to impact relations of exploitation in the contemporary world.

Decolonization

Decolonization is a difficult and contested concept, and, until recently, it was difficult to locate it as a subject in the discipline of geography. This may seem surprising considering not only the effervescent ideas that emerged with the formal dissolution of colonial empires, but also the inherent spatiality of decolonization. At least three distinct avenues of inquiry have developed in the last decade. One, led mostly by historical geographers, concerns the revisitation of the history of the discipline during the postwar era of decolonization (1945–1980) (Craggs and Wintle 2016 [cited under Anticolonialism]). Craggs 1999 and Clayton 2020 argue that geographers have been more enthusiastic in tracing their discipline's historical engagements with empire than exploring how geographers in the past could have interrogated these engagements. Both authors agree that literature on geography and empire focuses either on the imperial past or on present-day colonialisms, paying insufficient attention to different spatialities of decolonization (see Gupta 2018 on the transnational nature of the geographies of decolonization). Recently, the authors of Clayton and Kumar 2019, an article in a special section of the *Journal of Historical Geography*, look at the historiography of postwar decolonization, including experiences in the British, French, American, and Portuguese Empires. The second research direction, often with little connection to the first one, focuses on the decolonization of the discipline of geography itself, which, according to De Leeuw and Hunt 2018, has seen limited progress. Ferretti 2020 argues that this process should consider the growing number of histories of geography produced in the South about scholars in the North, which marks a welcoming inversion of the traditional colonial gaze (Radcliffe 2017 [cited under Knowledge and the Decolonial]). The third direction, related to the former, is broader and far more interdisciplinary. Included here are studies that engage with decolonization within settler colonialism (Byrd 2011 [cited under New Imperialisms]). In simple terms, unlike colonialism, which operates under an imperial framework, settler colonialism relies on an ongoing system that becomes
dissociated from an external imperial structure. As stated in Harris 2004, settler colonialism controls land and resources beyond the edges of traditional empire. Sablin 2014 examines how sovietisation led to a forced settlement and resettlement and to spatial rearrangements of Indigenous people in Soviet Chukotka. Tuck and Yang 2012 calls for a need to recognize that decolonization necessitates grounded material practices, activism, or a lived reality, but De Leeuw and Hunt 2018 argues that considering, placing, and engaging Indigenous worldviews is still mostly theoretical.


Clayton stresses the fact that the decolonial agenda in geography should not be disconnected from the particular situations and everyday geographies of decolonization within which geographers have worked.


This introduction to a special section on geography and decolonization highlights the importance that should be accorded the subject of decolonization in geographic thought and scholarship.


Examining David Livingston’s book, Craggs calls for a consideration of geographers from the Global South and for more inclusionary knowledges and practices in the discipline.


The authors call for geographers to unsettle the project of decolonizing geography and points to a geographical praxis that politicizes the academics’ own situated positions in relation to stolen or colonized land and to colonial violence.

Ferretti, Frederico. “History and Philosophy of Geography I: Decolonising the Discipline, Diversifying Archives and Historigising Radicalism.” Progress in Human Geography 44.6 (2020): 1161–1171.

This report by Ferretti engages with various geographical traditions other than Northern ones, and highlights the increasing recognition of the need for rediscovering voices from the South.


Gupta engages with the affectual dimensions of people who fled following decolonization in the Portuguese Empire, connecting stories and experiences in South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, Goa, and Portugal.


Harris attempts to explain colonialism’s basic geographical dispossessions of the colonized by focusing on the powers underlying the reservation system in British Columbia, Canada.

The author explores the ways in which the incorporation into the Soviet state of the remote northeastern region of Chukotka beginning in the 1930s led to a disruption and subjugation of Indigenous populations.


The authors argue that scholars should not stop at the decolonization of the mind as decolonization is about bringing the repatriation of Indigenous land and life.

**Knowledge and the Decolonial**

Empires have been key to the spatial mobility of knowledge and to the politics and geopolitics of knowledge production and transfer. A significant number of approaches have emerged from, and engaged with, a wide range of critical and radical scholarship, such as critical black scholarship, Indigenous, feminist, and race theories. In different ways they have contributed to the decolonial turn, characterized by the encouragement of a rethinking of the world from other places, notably from Latin America, Africa, Indigenous places, and from marginalized institutions in the Global South. Quijano 1991 engages with the idea of coloniality of knowledge, followed by Mignolo 2000, highlighting how despite the formal end of colonial rule and the establishment of postcolonial nation-states, the dominant forms of knowledge through which the world is apprehended, explained, and displayed are rooted in post-Enlightenment Euro-American claims. Mignolo’s “de-linking” project requires an epistemic shift that allows the histories and thought of other places to be claimed and assumed as prior to European arrivals. Influenced by Quijano and Mignolo, Marla Lugones re-reads modernity/coloniality from a consciousness of race, gender, and sexuality, and she proposes a new geopolitics of knowledge (Lugones 2007). Decolonial scholars, in works such as Jazeel 2017 and Santos 2018, defend that we should be attentive to multiple, diverse epistemic and ethical projects as, after all, knowledge production occurs beyond the discipline’s formal established sites, alongside and outside universities, conferences, or journals, and can be enriched by South–South flows of knowledge. They endorse knowledge-making under a broader responsibility. Furthermore, while providing methodological steps that reject the separation of knowledge from the embodied experiences of social practice, Santos 2018 emphasizes how Global North and Global South are built on the hierarchies structured around the abyssal line centered on the triad of capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy. Rivera Cusicanqui, et al. 2016 recognizes the ways in which Western ways of thinking have been vernacularized in Latin America. The authors seek to contribute toward delinking knowledge-making from Euro-American frameworks and to promote critical southern theory. In line with Rivera Cusicanqui, et al. 2016; Radcliffe and Radhuber 2020 argues that the decolonization of geography demands a more profound recognition of the asymmetrical geopolitics of knowledge production. The need for scholarship that considers racialization in geographical theory, practice, and institutions has also been increasingly noted (Kobayashi 2002, Tolia-Kelly 2017, Hawthorne 2019). In sum, decolonizing geographical knowledge, as well as decolonizing the discipline of geography, is urgent (Radcliffe 2017).


Good departure point as the paper reviews the state of the field of black geographies, arguing for a provincializing of Western knowledge and for further research into Latinx and Native/Indigenous geographies.


Jazeel promotes the engagement of the discipline of geography with “southern” knowledges as a way to challenge geography’s colonial legacies.


The author calls for research that considers how racialization is vital to understanding knowledge production in the discipline of geography.


Quijano, Aníbal. “Colonialidad y modernidad/racionalidad.” *Perú Indígena* 13.29 (1991): 11–20. The author puts forward the idea that the coloniality of power that emerged with the colonization of Latin America, born out of political and economic domains, was also connected with a coloniality of knowledge.

Rivera Cusicanqui, Silvia, José M. Domingues, Arturo Escobar, and Enrique Leff. “Debate sobre el colonialismo intelectual y los dilemas de la teoría social latino-americana.” *Cuestiones de Sociología* 14 (2016): e009. A text built in four parts/four authors that explores the long scholarly trajectory of critical studies on the colonization of the mind in Latin America, the geopolitics of knowledge, and the ways in which knowledge is produced in marginal places.


Tolia-Kelly, Divya P. “A Day in the Life of a Geographer: ‘Lone’, Black, Female.” In Special Section: *Decolonising Geographical Knowledge in a Colonised and Re-colonising Postcolonial World*, Edited by Patricia Noxolo. *Area* 49.3 (2017): 324–328. Part of a special section of the journal *Area*, the author highlights how the question of black feminisms is gaining increasing importance in inspiring initiatives that examine the “colonial present” of the discipline.

back to top

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