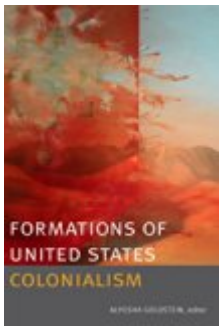
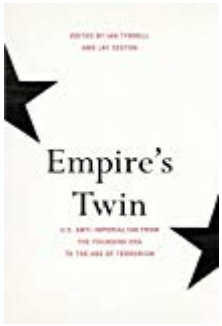
H-Net Reviews
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Alyosha Goldstein. *Formations of United States Colonialism.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2014. VI, 423 S. hardcover, ISBN 978-0-8223-5796-4.



Ian Tyrrell, Jay Sexton. *Empire's Twin: U.S. Anti-Imperialism from the Founding Era to the Age of Terrorism.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015. 312 S. , hardcover, ISBN 978-0-8014-7919-9.

Reviewed by Julio Decker

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Since 9/11 and the ensuing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, historians have re-engaged with the imperial dimension in American history, resulting in an impressive output. While scholars have complicated narratives of American overseas expansion after 1898, other aspects of American imperial history have not yet received as much attention. Two recently published edited collections promise to address these historiographic gaps. While Ian Tyrrell and Jay Sexton have compiled an overview of the diverse forms anti-imperialism did take throughout American history, the volume edited by Alyosha Goldstein promises to systematically place settler colonialism and the US overseas empire in the same analytical framework.

Although historians have applied the theoretical concept of settler colonialism productively to histories of genocide, dispossession and continued oppression, few have followed Walter Williams' approach of investigating parallels and connections between US Indian policies and colonial rule. Walter Williams, United States Indian Policy and the Debate over Philippine Annexation: Implications for the Origins of American Imperialism, in: Journal of American History 66, 4 (1980), pp. 810–831. The volume edited by Alyosha Goldstein, as he explains in his introduction, sets out to highlight the continuities between settler expansion in North America and colonial practices overseas. Without implying causalities, the collection provides a genealogy of US colonialism that

engages with the "complex reciprocities, seemingly opaque disjunctures, and tense entanglements" (p. 2) of American imperial formations on the continent and overseas.

The geographical and temporal scope of the thirteen contributions is ambitious, covering indigenous history and imperial policies and their legacies in the Pacific (Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, and the Philippines) and the Caribbean (Puerto Rico, Cuba). Within these settings, the authors address diverse topics, ranging from the legal configurations of settler sovereignty to the dynamics of imperial rule, resistance, and reconfigurations. The articles are organized into three sections: "Histories in Contention", "Colonial Entanglements", and "Politics of Transposition".

The first section's four chapters revolve around the politics of history and representation, covering nineteenth-century colonial practices and their aftermath. Joanne Barker, for example, explores how history and authenticity was contested in the Delaware Tribe's fight for federal recognition, while Manu Vimalassery investigates the role of rumours in interactions between Chinese railroad workers and Paiute communities to read against the archival grain. The remaining two articles engage with the concept of settler sovereignty, exploring how it redefined indigenous history and continues to operate even while acknowledging past injustices.

The five articles in the second section complicate the narrative of colonial encounters by moving beyond a colonizer/colonized binary. In a particularly strong contribution, Dean Itsuju Saranillio disentangles the politics of national identity and environmental history in the different layers of the Kēpaniwai Heritage Gardens on Maui. Constructed after 1968, the gardens marked the representational shift of the US from settler nation to a supposedly liberal multiculturalism inclusive of all ethnic groups in Hawaii. Saranillio's essay is paradigmatic for the volume's strengths, as he combines colonialism's representational erasure of settler violence with an analysis of its more tangible outcomes on the ground, namely how indigenous environmental knowledge of water management practices was overwritten by the logics of settler agricultural production and the needs of the tourism industry. Simultaneously, he includes the potential of indigenous resistance and agency in upholding this subjugated knowledge which could result in the reestablishment of more sustainable economic models on Maui. The section's remaining articles take up the dynamics of entanglement, covering the re-imagination of a Spanish imperial past in the articulation of critiques of colonialism as well as the dynamics of racialization in different colonial settings.

The final section assesses imperial knowledge and technologies of power. In his insightful contribution, Larry Thompson goes beyond the established scholarship on imperial mapping to argue that the military map of Puerto Rico did not just establish spatial knowledge, but was part of a larger network of colonial practices that helped to reconfigure and modify landscapes and populations alike. The remaining articles in this section help to remind readers of the disruptive potential epistemological orders offer, covering the legacies of colonial ideas of Navajo traditions, the relevance of international law for Native American resistance and the ambiguous nature of translation in imperial rule.

The volume's ambitious framework runs the risk of producing an array of only loosely connected articles. Indeed, a final chapter might have been productive to link the theoretical approach set out in the introduction to the different strands explored throughout the edited collection, and could have spoken to the broader historiographical significance of this volume as a whole. However, it may well be that the very diversity of American imperial formations is vital when it comes to understanding the complexity of the United States' colonial past and present. The authors' interventions indeed complicate our analysis of

American colonialism, as they uncover the persistence and constant reconfigurations of settler colonial practices. With their emphasis of indigenous agency and resistance, the articles challenge existing narratives of US colonialism and provide a productive and inspiring starting point for future research.

In contrast to the theoretical concept of settler colonialism, the classic history of anti-imperialism has not received much attention in recent years. For an exception to this rule, see M. Patrick Cullinane, Liberty and American Anti-imperialism, 1898–1909, New York 2012. This volume edited by Ian Tyrrell and Jay Sexton sets out to address this gap in the historiography, as our understanding of American imperialism would be incomplete without considering "Empire's Twin". As the editors explain in the introduction, the collection operates with a wide definition of anti-imperialism understood as "a strand of political thought and a form of social and political action", as one of its aims is to "broaden our conception of anti-imperialist actors, ideas, and actions" (p. 5). The editors' second goal is to trace anti-imperialism's variety of meanings and manifestations through American history while, thirdly, situating it in a transnational framework.

The twelve contributions are arranged chronologically and divided into four sections. The volume opens with Peter S. Onuf's article that lays out the reconfiguration of ideas of anti-imperialism after the Revolutionary War. While the Jeffersonian ideal of the "Empire for Liberty" as an inclusive form of continental colonization was meant to prevent the rise of a new despotic metropolitan center, similar anti-imperial language was used by Federalists who argued against expansion. They perceived the westward spread of slavery as the continuation of the immorality of British imperial rule. The dialectic nature of anti-imperialism is taken up in Jeffrey Ostler's contribution, which explores Native Americans' critique of imperial practices between the mid-eighteenth and the late nineteenth century. He identifies a range of actors such as millenarian movements, multi-tribal alliances, and individual writers who articulated systematic critiques of colonialism on moral, legal, and religious grounds. Jay Sexton traces the language of anti-imperialism in the causes of Republicans and Southerners in the Civil War era, demonstrating that both sides conceptualized themselves as fighting against the recreation of tyranny on American soil. The use of anti-imperial rhetoric, however, was not limited to debates about secession, but also articulated by settlers in their critique of the territorial system in the American West and European imperial policies in the hemisphere, as Sexton demonstrates. The critique was aimed at the absence of democratic participation on the federal in the time between the organization of incorporated territories and their admission into the Union. This process could take more than 50 years and was therefore criticized as a form of tyrannical or imperial rule.

The second section opens with Julian Go's impressive analysis of "trans-imperial and intra-imperial" (p. 80) entanglements in the resistance to American imperialism after 1898. Go situates activists from the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guam and their different aspirations in local and imperial contexts while exploring the solidarities and cross-fertilizations between their struggles and contemporary anti-colonial causes far beyond the American sphere. Alan Knight's article concentrates on the framing of American policies towards revolutionary Mexico. Disentangling the complex web of actors and motivations, he shows that the Veracruz occupation was justified as a progressive anti-imperial intervention while the informal means applied after the war did not provoke an anti-imperial response. Ussama Makdisi's contribution investigates American missionaries in the Middle East who articulated their vision for a post-war order in a language that was simultaneously anti-imperial and paternalistic. While their suggestions for a new political order in the Arab world were articulated in Wilsonian terms

of self-determination, they clashed with French and British imperial interests on the ground.

The third section starts with an article by Erez Manela, who, building on his earlier research, argues that the Wilsonian rhetoric channeled a systematic global critique of imperialism, which could be translated into practical demands for independence. Drawing on anti-colonial leaders in China, India, and Egypt, he highlights that the inter-war era revealed the contradiction between the principle of self-determination and imperial rule that ultimately brought about the end of European empires. Patricia A. Schechter's historiographic essay on feminism and anti-imperialism focuses on the intersection or gender, race, and power to explore global resistance to different forms of colonialism. Her insightful and elaborate discussion of theoretical approaches concludes that conceptualizing resistance as "decolonial" instead of anti-imperial is more productive for including the voices of subjects who disrupt "the national-imperial binaries of colonizer/subaltern and citizen/alien" (p. 156). While including many other theoretical writers, Schechter here refers to the definition articulated by Emma Pérez: Emma Pérez, The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History. Theories of Representation and Difference, Bloomington 1999. The section closes with a contribution by editor Ian Tyrrell. He argues that the absence of an ecological anti-imperial critique in the interwar period was due to the American Left's preoccupation with labor exploitation and the legacy of the pro-imperial conservationist movement. American colonial preservation initiatives in the Philippines, however, did clash with local traditions of forest use, resulting in anti-imperial subversions on the ground.

The three contributions in the last section focus on the postwar period. Laura A. Belmonte explores the limited success of American exceptionalism as a propaganda tool against Soviet accusations of imperialism in the Early Cold War. She shows that the framing of US foreign policy in anti-imperial language was met with skepticism by audiences in the developing world because it was inconsistent with policies on the ground. Robert Buzzanco focuses on objections against the Vietnam War brought forward by the military and financial elite. Their concerns about military spending as exacerbating the balance of payment deficit and endangering the Bretton Woods system, he argues, were embedded in the idea of imperial overstretch as the failure in Vietnam endangered American economic dominance. The volume concludes with the editors' sweeping summary of the forms anti-imperialism has taken since the 1970s, covering decolonization, Reagan-era covert operations, the post-1989 new order, and debates about American empire after 9/11. As the forms of imperial power changed radically, articulations of anti-imperialism still drew heavily on older symbols, language, and protest forms but increasingly incorporated transnational actors, Sexton and Tyrrell argue.

As the conclusion touches upon the variety of forms anti-imperialism took in the postcolonial world, the reader ultimately wonders about the topics not covered in the collection. There are many themes that could have been included: the impact of South American critiques of US imperial policies on North American discussions, the links between Soviet anti-imperialism and the American radical Left, or the insightful research on African-Americans' engagement with anti-colonial movements. See for example Penny van Eschen, Race Against Empire. Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937–1957, Ithaca 1997; Joshua Bloom, Martin Waldo, Black against Empire. The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party, Berkeley 2013. The edited collection thus lays out directions for further research while providing a helpful conceptual framework. Often explicitly referencing the other contributions in the volume, the authors trace the continual transformation of anti-imperialism over time, the change of the language and actions it used, and the global frame-

work it operated in. While the transnational dimension works most convincingly in the articles by Go and Manela where it is rooted in archival research, the analytical categories established in this volume will help to further explore the many facets of American anti-imperialism.

Both collections are indicative of the productive outcome of the renewed interest in American imperial history. The inclusion of transnational and global entanglements add to recent publications that aim at dismantling narratives of American imperial exceptionalism. Simultaneously, the authors' contributions add to our understanding of the American Empire by focusing on previously neglected or under-researched areas. While the volume on anti-imperialism with its clear-cut chronological order and contributions by established scholars is more likely to become a staple in classrooms, Goldstein's collection succeeds in connecting one of the most productive theoretical approaches of recent years to indigenous agency and resistance. Taken together, the two collections will serve as extremely helpful starting points for researchers rethinking the history and continued relevance of American imperialism and the opposition to it.

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