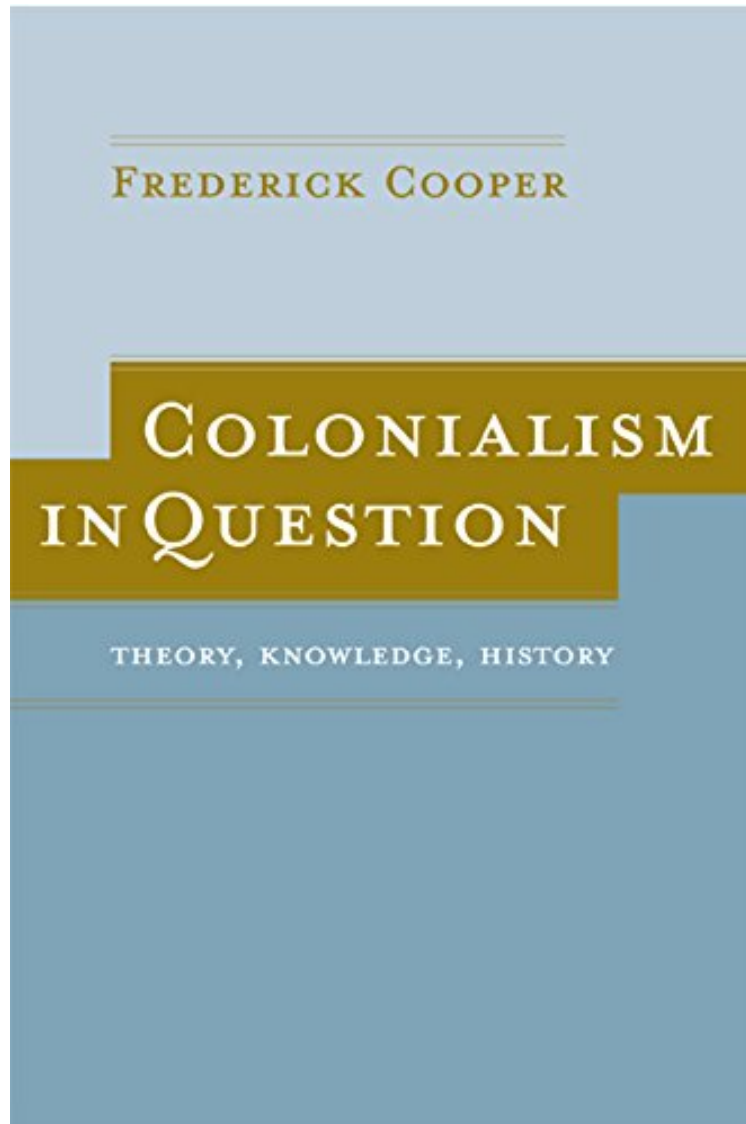


[Download free pdf] Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History

# Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History

*Frederick Cooper*

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**Frederick Cooper : Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History:

16 of 17 people found the following review helpful. vintage Cooper - magisterial, synthetic and criticalBy ingonyama1st of all, the reviewer below who claims that Cooper sees colonialism as an exclusively European phenomenon can't have read much of the book....the Ottoman Empire, e.g., appears 15 times in the book.This is an important work, which I'll be putting on my syllabus for an anthropological theory course (though Cooper's an

historian) because of its thoughtful, well-documented and forceful critiques of the concepts of identity, modernity and globalization. Cooper's reluctance to follow trends, his insistence upon the details of historical encounters, his attention to history of colonial studies prior to the rise of postcolonial theory, and his illustration of the questions that are closed off by postcolonialist texts like Chakrabarty's *Provincializing Europe*, all make this an essential read for anyone working in the social sciences or humanities. 15 of 112 people found the following review helpful. Good but misguided

By Seth J. Frantzman

In this interesting study the reader is taken on a tour of 'colonial studies' looking at colonialism as a discipline and its study as historiography. Colonialism is one of those topics that every western student is expected to have a knee jerk reaction of 'bad' when the word is mentioned. Along with 'imperialism' this is the word used to condemn the west and justify murder and terrorism everywhere in the world. From Hamas to the IRA to the Tamils, it is always generic 'colonialism' that is being fought against. But how does colonialism come into play with nationalism? What about the question of colonialism and the west. What was colonialism? These definitions and debates are interesting, however in seeking a broader understanding and looking at 'colonial studies' this book doesn't address some important questions. Most important this book accepts that 'colonialism' is a western creation when in fact it is not. Since the 7th century Islam has colonized 1/5th of the world. The Ottomans colonized Eastern Europe and the Afghans and Turks did the same to India. China colonized Korea. We have examples of colonial societies outside the west not usually recognized as such, in the pursuit of western academics to pursue their goal of self hate. The Roman Empire and the Assyrian empires were colonial constructs. Colonialism didn't start in 1492. For instance for 1000 years, 500 of which took place before 1492, the Arabs colonized East Africa and deported 5 million slaves from the region. They ran plantations and imported religion, in a similar model to the one applied by the Spanish in South America.

Seth J. Frantzman

In this closely integrated collection of essays on colonialism in world history, Frederick Cooper raises crucial questions about concepts relevant to a wide range of issues in the social sciences and humanities, including identity, globalization, and modernity. Rather than portray the past two centuries as the inevitable movement from empire to nation-state, Cooper places nationalism within a much wider range of imperial and diasporic imaginations, of rulers and ruled alike, well into the twentieth century. He addresses both the insights and the blind spots of colonial studies in an effort to get beyond the tendency in the field to focus on a generic colonialism located sometime between 1492 and the 1960s and somewhere in the "West." Broad-ranging, cogently argued, and with a historical focus that moves from Africa to South Asia to Europe, these essays, most published here for the first time, propose a fuller engagement in the give-and-take of history, not least in the ways in which concepts usually attributed to Western universalism including citizenship and equality were defined and reconfigured by political mobilizations in colonial contexts.

"This is a very much needed book: on Africa, on intellectual artisanship and on engagement in emancipatory projects. Drawing on his enormous erudition in colonial history, Cooper brings together an intellectual and a moral-political argument against a series of linked developments that privilege 'taking a stance' and in favor of studying processes of struggle through engaged scholarship." *From the Inside Flap*

"Probably the most important historian of Africa currently writing in the English language. His intellectual reach and ambition have even taken influence far beyond African studies as such, and he has become one of the major voices contributing to debates over empire, colonialism and their aftermaths. This book is a call to reinvigorate the critical way in which history can be written. Cooper takes on many of the standard beliefs passing as postcolonial theory and breathes fresh air onto them." Michael Watts, Director of the Institute of International Studies, Berkeley

"This is a very much needed book: on Africa, on intellectual artisanship and on engagement in emancipatory projects. Drawing on his enormous erudition in colonial history, Cooper brings together an intellectual and a moral-political argument against a series of linked developments that privilege 'taking a stance' and in favor of studying processes of struggle through engaged scholarship." Jane I. Guyer, author of *Marginal Gains*