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I would like to warmly thank SCS for publishing my article and, on top, commissioning comments by three outstanding historians, Ikuko Asaka, Antoinette Burton, and Sidney Lu. My necessarily brief response – an addendum of sorts to my article – builds on their incisive thoughts, in particular the fact that, differences aside, they agree settler colonialism does not differ categorically from colonialism. The explanations of Burton, a doyen of New Imperial History, are autobiographic and historiographic. Asaka focuses on teleology and on settler colonialism's role for empire and vice versa. And Lu underlines that colonialism, too, can be both event and process, and stresses 'overlaps' in 'violence, exploitation of natural resources, and land-taking'. I broadly agree with them, and would like to add a few notes.

1. In the modern period and until today, only US-Americans, Australians, Canadians, and New Zealanders (a) became independent¹ and (b) decimated, using various methods, indigenous people such that the latter lastingly became a minority² and (c) regulated non-white immigration such that whites remained a majority.³ This three-factor combination is exceptional. We may call it the 'Anglo-exception': an outlier that cannot be the yardstick for defining 'the settler colonial'.
2. However, though outliers, those four cases have had tremendous cumulative visibility and influence, in academia and beyond. The reason is simple. North America in the 1700s and the Dominions from the mid-1800s were central to the British Empire, which was one of the two most powerful modern empires; and the United States became the other most powerful modern empire.
3. The above note links to Asaka's reflections on the relationship between settler colonialism and empire, which I think is supported by the following two points. First, the US empire's twin East-Coast-and-West-Coast metropolitan center is protected by three immense spaces at least two of which – the Pacific, home to the US Pacific Fleet that is headquartered in Hawaii; and the northern US heartland, home to the US ICBM arsenal and the nuclear-strategic part of the Air Force – in effect form settler-colonial buffer-zones, i.e. peripheries to the empire's metropolitan centers.⁴ And second, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the British Empire/Great Britain were corner stones of Washington's globally expanding strategic and military

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posture from the dawn of the Cold War. Think of Five Eyes; of the US–Canadian air defence of North America; or of New Zealand and especially Australia’s military role in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, recently through AUKUS.

4. Let me circle back to the question of the relationship between the settler colonial and the colonial (i.e. in Burton’s case, imperial). As noted, Asaka, Burton, and Lu posit linkages. However, they conceptualize those linkages differently. Asaka argues that the US imperial project ‘depended on ... settler colonial processes’ and that the US armed forces – critical to empire – are (a military) part and parcel of US settler-colonialism. By contrast, Burton sees settler colonialism as part and parcel of a larger whole: the history of empire, her ‘big tent’. And Lu posits that (in his case Japanese) colonialism sometimes ‘encompassed’ settlers’ activities.
5. What explains these differences is different definitions of ‘settler’, i.e. of what is foundational to being a settler. Burton focused considerably on race- and gender-related traits manifest across the British Empire. Lu looks at indigenous labor exploitation *and* land dispossession. This holds for Asaka, too. However, she sees (US) empire as the chronological outgrowth and spatial projection of a (US) settler colonialism gone global. By contrast, Lu sees (Japanese) settler colonialism as being imbricated from the start – from the 1870s, in the Ryukyu Islands – within (*Japanese*) empire formation.
6. These differences are instructive. I think all historians enact a four-step process. A historian’s *politics* influences her/his view of what is *empirically* central to the past. This in turn influences how he/she *conceptualizes* the past, whether explicitly or not. (Here: is settler colonialism part of empire or colonialism? Vice versa? Or do they overlap? Or interplay?) And this in turn influences the scholar’s opinion about which *disciplinary* (sub)fields make sense.
7. Thus, the political context of SCS’s founders – see Part I of my article – influenced their empirical view of who really count as ‘settlers’: collectives who became sovereign and a lasting demographic majority. This led them to posit a rather clear conceptual difference between settler colonialism and colonialism. And this in turn made them create a new disciplinary field.
8. To perhaps state the self-evident, no political-empirical-conceptual-disciplinary approach is inherently superior. And all historians ought to be somewhat self-reflective about their approach.
9. Doing so may entail, certainly in the case of settler colonialism and/versus colonialism and empire, paying attention to three variables. First, what is one’s theme of interest? A focus on, say, race, may yield different views and definitions than a focus on land dispossession. Second, what is the nature and stretch of the timeframe of one’s study? Is it, say, an eruption of indigenous resistance and settler angst? A pivotal event that affected a structure? A longer stretch of time encompassing several twists and turns? And last, what is one’s space of inquiry? A house, town, region, (settler) colony? Or a set of connections, carried by humans and goods and by institutions and infrastructures, that may show mutual interest and linkages between (settler) colonies across one or several empires?
10. To echo my text’s conclusion, this last approach – far-ranging intra-imperial and trans-imperial connections – may offer a particularly fruitful approach to revisit the settler colonial/colonial/empire question. Studying such connections does not equal

abandoning particularities like the afore-noted Anglo-exception. Rather, it may help us resituate that Anglo-exception. Yes, provincialize it – but also better appreciate the force, *not just now but back in time*, of Anglo-cases as a powerful reference point for colonization. As Janne Lahti has put it, ‘it seemed that every expanding colonial empire had its own [US] “West” somewhere’ in the modern period.⁵

Notes

1. By contrast, for instance, British Kenya or Portuguese Angola did not become independent as a white-led postcolonial polity (though South Africa first of course did).
2. By contrast, for example, Algerian demographics recovered in the later 1800s. And to take another example, Palestinians after 1948 continued to form around half of the overall population in Israel/Palestine.
3. By contrast, for instance, early modern Caribbean islands were repopulated by African slaves such that ‘whites’ formed a minority on most islands.
4. The third space is the Atlantic.
5. Janne Lahti, *The American West and the World* (New York and London, 2019), 160.

Disclosure statement

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