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**Proposal: The Imperial Geography of Commerce: British India and the
“Northeast Corridor” in Global Context, 1850-1900**

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the British had a conscious policy expanding their colonial activities to the northeast of British India, hoping to connect British India with China. This policy was largely driven by commercial concerns of the Empire, which considered the populous Southwest China to be the ultimate market for British machine-produced textiles. Together with French pressure from Indochina, the corridor between Assam and Yunnan became a crucial site of contestation in the global imperial expansion of commerce. Exploring a variety of sources from official expedition reports to the minutes of chambers of commerce, this project argues that the economic impetus from the industrial revolution in the mid-nineteenth century facilitated a grand, new imaginary vision of Asian political geography by the British Empire. Eventually annexing the Northeast and Upper Burma, the British took decades to execute such a geographical vision of commerce, which immensely shaped the colonial activities of the British Empire albeit being a failed ambition in the end.