Acknowledgments

Thanks, first of all, to Dan Schiller, and the Information in Society program at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign, for giving me a postdoc that both saved my career and started me on a new research path. Dan's seminars on the political economy of information were the first steps that eventually led to this book. I also want to acknowledge the influence of Jim Bennett, whose brilliant work introduced me to the material culture of science, and whose lessons I will never stop learning from.

I want to sincerely thank the institutions that, through grants and fellowships, have financially supported this project: the National Maritime Museum London, the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, the Singapore Ministry of Education, Cornell University and the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. I also want to give special thanks to Bronwen Bledsoe of the Cornell University Library, who managed to acquire funding to purchase access to an exorbitantly priced primary source database (Adam Matthew Digital's East India Company Online) after COVID-19 upended my research travel plans. Researching the East India Company generally requires expensive travel to London. Unfortunately, this new corporate-owned database of the British Library's East India Company records has not, as yet, made historical work of this kind any less expensive. This very situation – the political economy of access to these knowledge resources – is what this book is all about.

I am immensely grateful for the expertise, time and assistance of the archivists and librarians who made this work possible, including but not limited to: Margaret Makepeace and Antonia Moon at the British Library; Carole Atkinson at Cornell University Library; Sushma Jansari at the British Museum; Stephen Sinon at the New York Botanical Gardens Library; Divia Patel at the Victoria and Albert Museum; and Mark Glancey at the National Museum of Scotland. Thanks also to Lucy Rhymer and Rosa Martin at Cambridge University Press for all of the work they have done to help bring this book to print. Sally Evans-Darby

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 15 Nov 2026 at 00:57:37, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009379526

was a fabulous copyeditor. Thanks also to Reshma Venkatachalapathy and her team at Integra Software Services in Pondicherry, who managed the book's production phase.

Several generations of graduate and undergraduate research assistants have contributed to this research by doing primary and secondary source surveys, organizing data and engaging with libraries and museums. My thanks and appreciation to: Christian Go (Yale–NUS College), Edwin Rose (Cambridge University), Samuel Schrivar, Minna Chow, Nnenna Ochuru, Milan Taylor and Skylar Xu (Cornell University).

I have also relied upon the support and feedback of many of my colleagues, who have been very generous with their time and ideas. Thanks to my colleagues at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois, Yale–NUS College (RIP!) and the Department of Science and Technology Studies at Cornell University. I would like to give special thanks to those who have taken the time to read and comment on draft versions of this book: Suman Seth, Nico Silins, Robert Travers, Anna Winterbottom, Malte Ziewitz and the anonymous reviewers of the book. In addition, I want to acknowledge those who have discussed and debated the project with me over the years and contributed to its final shape: Caroline Cornish, Felix Driver, Fredrik Albritton Jonsson, Taran Kang, Arun Kundnani, Odette Lineau, Owen Marshall, Simon Naylor, Aziz Rana, Simon Schaffer and Sujit Sivasundaram.

To Darcie ("Dar Dar") and Nicole ("Cole"), immense thanks for the all-important work that you do that has made this work possible. Nicole: without you, this book could not have been written.

Finally, to Nico and Ada (and Clover): thanks for the laughter, the hugs, the adventures and ∞ + 9 other things that make it all worthwhile.

Downloaded from https://www.cambridge.org/core. UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA METROPOLITANA, on 15 Nov 2026 at 00:57:37, subject to the Cambridge Core terms of use, available at https://www.cambridge.org/core/terms. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009379526