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The evolution of British imperial perceptions in Ireland and India c. 1650 – 1800

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This dissertation is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the relevant Degree Committee.

Acknowledgments

Abbreviations

BC	*Board's collections*
BCJC	*Bengal criminal and judicial consultations*
BRCon.	*Bengal revenue consultations*
BL	British Library, London
BL, Add. MSS	Additional Manuscripts
BL, IOR	India Office Records
BW	*Bengal wills*
CPJ	*Criminal proceedings collections, judicial*
CSPD	*Calendar of state papers, domestic*
CSPI	*Calendar of state papers relating to Ireland*
CUL	Cambridge University Library, Cambridge
EIC	East India Company
EU	Stuart A. Rose manuscript, archives, and rare book library, Emory University
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
HMC, *Ormonde*	*Calendar of the manuscripts of the marquess of Ormonde, preserved at Kilkenny Castle* (New Series)
ML	Archbishop Marsh's Library, Christchurch Cathedral, Dublin
NAI	The National Archives of Ireland, Dublin
NLI	The National Library of Ireland, Dublin
PP HC	*Parliamentary papers session, House of Commons*
RIA	Royal Irish Academy, Dublin
SLNSW	State Library of New South Wales, Sydney
TCD	Trinity College Dublin, Dublin
TNA	The National Archives, London
WBSA	West Bengal State Archives, Kolkata

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Introduction

Focusing on the pivotal early modern period and the eighteenth century, this study draws connections between the different British colonial experiences in Ireland and India, while also exploring different thematic elements of empire to demonstrate that comparable theories and practices were consistently implemented in both places. Though the traditional characterisations of Ireland and India would seem to preclude converging imperial experiences, this connected and comparative study highlights recurring patterns in the relationships between the colonisers and colonised, regardless of geographical or temporal distances. Complicating the distinctions between colonial metropoles and peripheries by adopting a triangular method that moves between England, Ireland, and India, the six chapters adopt a perspective encompassing the histories of emotion, law, politics, economy, and material culture to argue for a more layered and evolutionary development of the British empire in response to colonial challenges.

This dissertation emerged out of a longstanding interest in British colonial practices and, more specifically, in potential points of connectivity linking different experiences within the empire. I am particularly interested in the connections between disparate areas of the empire, and this thesis seeks to complicate the traditional divisions of colonies according to 'types,' whether of trade or settlement, or of first and second empire that used to dominate the historiography of British imperial history.[1] In addition to traditional differentiations between Ireland and India as different types of colonies, they are often cast separately in the historiography because of the different religious conflicts, colonial experiences, and processes of nationalism and decolonisation which ensued in both places throughout the early modern and modern periods. However, concurrently examining the histories of Ireland and India, which routinely have been considered distinct forms of colonial enterprise, allows me to integrate separate traditions of writing about religious encounters, land use and rebellion, as well as forms of colonial power and government. The connected and comparative nature of this study, particularly its longer chronology, provides a greater understanding of the full extent of networks and connections that operated over time across the empire. Moreover, the extended periods of colonisation in each area provided compelling reasons for the choice of

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[1] For a short summary of the first and second empires, see David Armitage, *The ideological origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 2 – 3. Note also the chapter divisions in *The Oxford history of the British Empire*: P.J. Marshall, 'The first British Empire,' in *The Oxford history of the British Empire, Volume V: historiography*, ed. Robin W. Winks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 43 – 53; C.A. Bayly, 'The second British Empire,' in *Ibid.*, 54 – 72.

periodisation. As the first English-occupied foreign territory, and the first of the Atlantic settlements, Ireland has traditionally been described as a colony of the first empire, either through a four nations or Atlantic approach.[2] While India is always classified as a major force and site of the second empire, it is worth stressing that it first became a consideration (albeit initially a limited one) simultaneously with the evolution of the Atlantic settlements.[3] Of additional importance to the Irish dimension, the first English forays into India occurred during the tumultuous century when the English gained a more definitive hold on Ireland following the establishment of the Ulster plantations after the Nine Years War (1594 – 1603), the 1641 Rising, and the ensuing transplantation programmes of the later 1600s.

I.

The comparison of colonies such as Ireland and India is in part inspired by the innovative work carried out by scholars such as Kathleen Wilson. It adds nuance to the distinction between metropole and periphery by focusing on the links between colonial experiences rather than their individual relationships with Britain.[4] This analysis illustrates the similarities and differences that existed between various colonial experiences which, in turn, beg the questions of: (a) why certain practices and techniques worked in some areas and not others; and (b) of those that did work, why in two such different colonies as Ireland and India?[5] By examining discrete examples of cases where the British attempted similar things in both colonies, this study contributes towards a better understanding of events, actions, and reactions taking place at the local – colonial – level, but also simultaneously or structurally across the empire. It also explores the emotions that dominated British colonial administrative decisions, which were predominantly based on fear and anxiety, albeit while acknowledging that the Irish and English of the early modern period would instead have used the term 'passions'.[6] British officials frequently stressed the necessity of accumulating

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[2] Nicholas Canny, 'The origins of empire: an introduction,' in *The Oxford history of the British Empire, Volume I. The origins of empire: British overseas enterprise to the close of the seventeenth century*, ed. Nicholas Canny (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 11 – 12, 25. For examples of the four nations approach, see Steven G. Ellis and Christopher Maginn, *The making of the British Isles: the state of Britain and Ireland, 1450 – 1660* (London: Routledge, 2007); Naomi Lloyd-Jones and Margaret M. Scull (eds.), *Four nations approaches to modern 'British' history: a (dis)united kingdom?* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

[3] For instance, P.J. Marshall, *The making and unmaking of empires: Britain, India, and America c. 1750 – 1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1, 3, 378 – 379.

[4] Kathleen Wilson, *A new imperial history: culture, identity and modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660 – 1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[5] This problematic derives from Philippa Levine's discussion of her own work on eugenics. Philippa Levine, 'Is comparable history possible?' *History and Theory* 53:3 (2014): 345.

[6] Clodagh Tait, '"Whereat his wife tooke great greef & died": dying of sorrow and killing in anger in seventeenth-century Ireland,' in *Popular culture and political agency in early modern England and Ireland:*

knowledge about each of their colonies, which, they believed, would enable them to govern more efficiently.[7] However, there were always gaps in these banks of knowledge. Borrowing from C.A. Bayly's apt characterisation of an 'information panic' to describe, among other elements and events, the rise of thuggee in the early nineteenth century, increased knowledge often served to render these gaps more evident and problematic, causing significant levels of concern among colonial officials.[8] Since these gaps represented potential threats not only to the colonial administration, but to the entire colonial project, it became necessary to manage or avoid them through often reactive countermeasures. Official and individual concerns over the gaps in colonial knowledge represent some of the threads that reoccur within, and link, the different chapters of this thesis. The thematic approach on which the study is based demonstrates recurring patterns concerning the relationships between colonisers and the colonised in Ireland and India, regardless of temporal or geographical distances.

Purely comparative work has garnered a fair share of criticism from many historians, who accuse it of producing exceptionalist interpretations of past events. According to such scholars, comparative studies minimise the effects of continuity, or isolate events, thoughts, or actions from their wider contexts. Moreover, it is also highly problematic when uneven or ahistorical points of comparison are chosen to prioritise an explanation of the developments in only one of the subjects in question. Another contention raised against comparative history on the opposite side of the spectrum from exceptionalist analyses is the practice of seeking to draw parallels where none are truly to be found.[9] Meanwhile, defenders of comparative history argue that its complete absence from historical analyses is equally problematic. Jürgen Kocka demonstrates how comparative history can help historians avoid overly nationalist studies by linking larger geographical and cultural areas. It also prevents the exoticisation of other peoples and cultures through an emphasis both on similarities and differences. Particularly in the Indian context, with its history of imperial orientalist scholarship, this approach can be of great benefit. 'Comparison,' Kocka states, 'allows us to find an acceptable middle ground between global and local, between a false notion of human

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essays in honour of John Walter, eds. Michael J. Braddick and Phil Withington (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2017), 267.

[7] Bernard S. Cohn, Colonialism and its forms of knowledge: the British in India (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 3.

[8] C.A. Bayly, Empire and information: intelligence gathering and social communication in India, 1780 – 1870 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 143, 174.

[9] Jürgen Kocka refers to the prioritisation of one point as an 'a-symmetric comparison'. Levine, 'Is comparable history possible?,' 333 – 335; Jürgen Kocka, 'Comparative history: methodology and ethos,' East Central Europe 36:1 (2009): 17; Marc Bloch, 'Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes (1928),' in Marc Bloch, Histoire et historiens, ed. Étienne Bloch (Paris: Armand Colin, 1995), 107.

homogeneity and equally problematic notion of otherness which exoticizes the other and destroys the ways of mutual understanding and meaningful interaction.'[10] In the estimation of Marc Bloch, one of the twentieth-century's definitive proponents of comparative history, its primary benefit is the ability to carry out 'hypothesis testing' and to invalidate faulty hypotheses which could emerge from restricting areas of inquiry to single focal points. Moreover, it is only through comparison that the genuinely distinct character of individual cases or regions is made truly apparent.[11] Most significantly, according to Bloch, comparative history illustrates the causes of events, as well as what he refers to as 'des courants d'emprunts,' meaning the flows of influences between two or more points.[12]

While this study does adopt the position that comparative history has significant benefits, it does not merely seek to compare two separate entities in order to tease out certain similarities or differences in the colonial experience. The various chapters also examine the connections and links that were fostered between Ireland and India, as well as the circulation of ideas among British officials about perceived proper forms of governance and appropriate reactions to colonial activities or resistance. In doing so, the chapters move beyond grid-like tables of the ways in which early modern and eighteenth-century Ireland and India may or may not have been similar to consider the influence of imperial ideas in different parts of the empire. The study therefore also embraces the connected, or 'entangled', histories approach promoted by Sanjay Subrahmanyam and Eliga Gould.[13] While Kocka contends that comparative history allows historians to transcend nationalist analyses, both Subrahmanyam and Gould caution against the approach's tendency to depict the points of comparison along nationalist lines as often fixed and 'distinct entities'. Instead, they favour works that examine the circulation of ideas rather than the comparison of two separate entities (often, according to Subrahmanyam, merely for differences).[14] Gould and Subrahmanyam are convincing in

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[10] Kocka, 'Comparative history,' 16, and more generally 15 – 16. For brief descriptions of Indian orientalism, see Gyan Prakash, 'Writing post-orientalist histories of the third world: perspectives from Indian historiography,' in *Mapping subaltern studies and the postcolonial*, ed. Vinayak Chaturvedi (London: Verso, 2000), 163 – 190; Carol A. Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer, 'Orientalism and the postcolonial predicament,' in *Orientalism and the postcolonial predicament* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 1 – 19.

[11] William H. Sewell, Jr., 'Marc Bloch and the logic of comparative history,' *History and Theory* 6:2 (1967): 208 – 210, 211; Bloch, 'Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes (1928),' 107.

[12] Bloch, 'Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes (1928),' 101, 104.

[13] Eliga H. Gould, 'Entangled histories, entangled worlds: the English-speaking Atlantic as Spanish periphery,' *The American Historical Review* 112:3 (2007): 764 – 786; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Connected histories: notes towards a reconfiguration of early modern Eurasia,' *Modern Asian Studies* 31:3 (1997): 735 – 762.

[14] Gould, 'Entangled histories, entangled worlds,' 765, and more generally 766, 767; Subrahmanyam, 'Connected histories,' 748, 758, 761.

noting that comparative history can present difficulties, particularly in assuming that comparison is always valid. However, Levine pointedly notes that not all comparative work revolves around the boundaries of the nation and also questions the extent to which entangled and connected histories are not in fact at least partially comparative works. Of Subrahmanyam's position, '[h]is repeated invocation of commonality does not magically get beyond the comparative merely by promoting "connectedness".'[15] Bearing in mind the limitations and benefits of both practices, this study attempts to strike a balance between comparative and connected history, seeking out both points of similarity and divergence, as well as points of connection and influence.

A combination of comparative and connected history allows scholars to historicise events in their appropriate historical context while uncovering patterns that would otherwise not be apparent in traditional forms of history writing. Previous comparative work on nineteenth- and twentieth-century Ireland and India, for instance, usefully illustrates the connections that emerged through causal relations between the two areas. Michael Silvestri's work on violent forms of resistance in the early twentieth century highlights links between radical nationalist groups from the Bengali *bhadralok* middle class and the IRA.[16] While Silvestri's research focuses on a specific and restricted time period, a broader analysis of earlier British colonial activities uncovers a far wider set of antecedents for the evolution of, and the rise of links between, these two groups.[17] Though Irish republicanism was influenced by a variety of factors, the sectarian strife and discrimination that emerged from religious conflicts dating back to the late sixteenth century (two of the greatest examples being the 1641 Rising and the 1798 Rebellion) undoubtedly played a significant role. The Bengali middle class, meanwhile, emerged through the reconfiguration of the Indian agrarian system from the late eighteenth century onward with the fragmentation of the large zamindari estates and the rise of the banking and merchant class. This reconfiguration was the product of prevailing European notions of private property and represented a later and less successful attempt to create a loyal and landed elite similar to the Protestant Ascendancy established in

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[15] Levine, 'Is comparable history possible?,' 333, 336.

[16] Among others, see Michael Silvestri, '"The Sinn Féin of India": Irish nationalism and the policing of revolutionary terrorism in Bengal,' *Journal of British Studies* 39:4 (2000): 454 – 486 and Michael Silvestri, 'The bomb, bhadralok, Bhagavad Gita, and Dan Breen: terrorism in Bengal and its relation to the European experience,' *Terrorism and political violence* 21:1 (2009): 1 – 27.

[17] The idea of connections through causal relations derives from Stephen Conway, *Britain, Ireland, and continental Europe in the eighteenth century: similarities, connections, identities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

Ireland following a series of land confiscations in the previous century.[18] While it is unreasonable to claim that causal relations alone influenced later connections between Ireland and India, comparative history does allow historians to question the evolution of situations and actions that led to later moments of connectivity.

To trace the emergence of such patterns, this study considers the evolution of imperial thoughts and practices in early modern and eighteenth-century Ireland and India while also remaining cognisant of the specificities of each colony. As shown by C.A. Bayly, analysing the regional and global factors that influenced the development of colonial administrations prevents historians from essentialising different colonial spheres. Moreover, it also 'helps indicate how these very territorial and cultural entities were created in historical time'.[19] Each chapter's thematic approach blends multiple historiographies to present a more heuristic investigation of British colonialism. Rather than focusing on one element in both colonies, such as the law, imperial texts, or imperial images, a more varied comparison of different themes provides a better *longue durée* understanding of the ways in which the British empire evolved over time. Bearing this in mind, the dissertation combines early modern historiography with the history of the long eighteenth century, the end of which has often been described as representing a shift towards the 'modern' world.[20] The combination of regional studies with global history allows historians to understand the events occurring in each individual place, which were often driven by specific circumstances and contexts. At the same time, this combination also shows how context-driven events in one place were not only influencing context-driven events in other places either at the same, or a later, time, but were also part of a larger imperial picture. While edited and single-volume works by historians such as Lawrence Stone, Beth Tobin Fowkes, Lauren Benton, and Stephen Conway have begun to unpack the legal, material culture, political, and economic histories of various European empires, most of these studies have, until now, focused on the singular relationship of individual colonies with imperial metropoles or singular themes.[21] This dissertation contributes to earlier research by combining these various historiographies to demonstrate

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[18] On agrarian systems and land ownership, see Chapter IV.

[19] C.A. Bayly, *Imperial meridian: the British Empire and the world 1780 – 1830* (London: Longman, 1989), 15.

[20] C.A. Bayly, *The birth of the modern world, 1780 – 1914: global connections and comparisons* (Malden: Blackwell, 2004), especially 9 – 12.

[21] Among others, see Lawrence Stone (ed.), *An imperial state at war: Britain from 1689 to 1815* (London: Routledge, 1993); Beth Tobin Fowkes, *Picturing imperial power: colonial subjects in eighteenth-century British painting* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); Lauren Benton, *A search for sovereignty: law and geography in European empires, 1400 – 1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) and *Law and colonial cultures: legal regimes in world history, 1400 – 1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Conway, *Britain, Ireland, and continental Europe in the eighteenth century*.

how two disparate colonial sites can be brought together and to reflect more widely on the networks and connections throughout the empire.

While previous work has examined connections between Ireland and India, these studies focused on travellers or the flow of nationalist ideas and influences rather than the shared experiences of empire. Moreover, almost all of them focus on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, where it is possible to identify explicitly voiced connections in the literature. From a nationalist perspective, Julia M. Wright's study examines nineteenth-century Irish and Indian literary nationalist links, while Jennifer Reagan-Lefebvre's work focuses on the activities of the Anglo-Irish MP and President of the Indian National Congress Alfred Webb in the 1880s. More broadly, historians such as Barry Crosbie have investigated the movement of Irish people to India in the nineteenth century, while edited work by Tadgh Foley and Maureen O'Connor looks at similar movements of people, as well as Irish orientalism and twentieth-century nationalist connections. Meanwhile, Scott Cook diverges slightly from this trend by analysing the triangular connections between late nineteenth-century Ireland, India, and Britain, while C.A. Bayly's 'Ireland, India and the empire: 1780 – 1914' provides an overview of similar land settlement and administrative policies, as well as the migration of British officials between both places in the long nineteenth century.[22]

In spite of such comparative studies, the historiographies of early modern Ireland and India have rarely been connected with the notable exception of Craig Bailey's monograph on Irish communities in late eighteenth-century London, as well as Jane Ohlmeyer's recent research on the Irishman Gerald Aungier, who served as Governor of Bombay between 1669 and 1677.[23] However, in spite of this dearth, both Ireland and India saw significant colonial expansion in the century and a half following the 1650s. The Gaelic defeat at the end of the Nine Years War, as well as the establishment of the Ulster plantation in the first decade of the seventeenth century, paved the way for greater English control outside of the Pale (the area

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[22] Julia M. Wright, *Ireland, India and nationalism in nineteenth-century literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Jennifer Reagan-Lefebvre, *Cosmopolitan nationalism in the Victorian Empire: Ireland, India and the politics of Alfred Webb* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Barry Crosbie, *Irish imperial networks: migration social communication and exchange in nineteenth-century India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Tadgh Foley and Maureen O'Connor (eds.), *Ireland and India: colonies, culture, and empire* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2006); Scott Cook, *Imperial affinities: nineteenth-century analogies and exchanges between India and Ireland* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1993); C.A. Bayly, 'Ireland, India and the empire: 1780 – 1914,' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 10 (2000): 377 – 397.
[23] Craig Bailey, *Irish London: middle-class migration in the global eighteenth century* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013); Jane Ohlmeyer, 'Ireland, India and the British empire,' *Studies in People's History* 2:2 (2015): 172.

around Dublin) and also sparked a civilising programme inspired by previous anglicisation policies in Wales to counter the perceived degeneracy of the Gaelic Irish and Old English alike. By the mid-century, English common law had replaced the older Gaelic Brehon laws in the courts, furthering the anglicisation of the country.[24] The uprising that broke out in 1641, which was interpreted as the attempted Catholic extirpation of the Protestant population, had a profound effect on political, economic, and religious issues following the mid-century mark and well into the eighteenth century. The historian John Gibney has even described the symbolism of the uprising as 'one of the most important events in the history of modern Ireland'.[25] Leading to substantial land confiscation schemes and the implementation of anti-Catholic legislation, the rising's outcome paved the way for the rise of the eighteenth-century Protestant ascendancy.[26]

Following the first English embassy to the Mughal court of Jahangir under Sir Thomas Roe, the EIC gradually established a foothold on the seventeenth-century subcontinent through its position as a landowner in the area near Calcutta, and military actions such as the brief war against the Mughal Empire from 1688 to 1691.[27] Though South Asian histories have long debated the nature of early EIC involvement in India, such episodes and actions suggest that their interests were not purely based on trade.[28] The Company Presidencies at Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay also set up their own courts based on the English common law throughout this period, while Mayors's Courts were established in all three settlements as of 1726. The common law did not replace the existing laws of the

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[24] On the civilising mission of the early seventeenth century, see for example Entry 596, the King to Sir Arthur Chichester, 21 December 1612, *CSPI James I, 1611 – 1614*, eds. Rev. C.W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (London: Longman & Co., and Trübner & Co., 1877), 310; John Dymmok, 'A treatise of Ireland (c. 1599 – 1600),' in *Strangers to that land: British perceptions of Ireland from the Reformation to the famine*, eds. Andrew Hadfield and John McVeagh (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1994), 65. On perceptions of the law, see Sir John Davies, 'A discovery,' in *Historical tracts* (London: Imprinted for John Stockdale, 1786), 205 – 246; T.C. Barnard, *Cromwellian Ireland: English government and reform in Ireland 1649 – 1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 249 – 251; Hugh Kearney, *The British Isles: a history of four nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, 2nd edn), 161.
[25] John Gibney, *The shadow of a year: the 1641 Rebellion in Irish history & memory* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2013), 7.
[26] John Cunningham, *Conquest and land in Ireland: the transplantation to Connacht, 1649 – 1680* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2011), 151; Charles Ivar McGrath, 'Securing the Protestant interest: the origins and purpose of the penal laws of 1695,' *Irish Historical Studies* 30:117 (1996): 25 – 26, 28; John Morrill, 'The causes of the Popery laws: paradoxes and inevitabilities,' in *New perspectives on the penal laws. Eighteenth-century Ireland/Iris an dá chultúr*, Special issue no. 1, eds. John Bergin, Eoin Magennis, Lesa Ní Mhunghaile and Patrick Walsh, (Dublin: Eighteenth-Century Ireland Society, 2011), 72 – 73.
[27] Edward Terry, *A voyage to East-India* (London: Printed by T.W. for J. Martin and J. Allestrye, 1655). On the Company as a landholder near Calcutta, see Chapter IV. Philip Lawson, *The East India Company* (London: Longman, 1993), 49 – 50.
[28] Tirthankar Roy and Anand V. Swamy. *Law and the economy in colonial India* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), 11.

Mughal system, as was the case in Ireland. However, the courts' jurisdiction was not restricted to European subjects and therefore represented potential challenges to the Mughal ones.[29] Following the Company's victory at the Battle of Plassey in 1757 and its assumption of the *diwani* of Bengal, British expansion throughout the subcontinent rendered it one of the dominant forces in India by the end of the eighteenth century.

The early modern period and the eighteenth century saw significant British expansionist movements towards both America and Asia. The consolidation of English administrative power over Ireland coincided with the settlement of American colonies, both in the Caribbean after the English Crown's appropriation of the Virginia Company in 1624 and on the North American mainland in areas such as New England, Maryland, and Virginia during the first decades of the seventeenth century.[30] Important trade networks had also been established with areas of Western Africa by the early decades of the 1600s, particularly in areas such as Senegambia, and the English became increasingly involved in the slave trade once sugar plantations were established in the Barbados after 1640.[31] By the end of the seventeenth century, in addition to interests in Ireland and India, the English were engaged in trade networks and settlement projects throughout various different portions of the globe. Moving backwards from the existing work on specific comparisons and connections between Ireland and India in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, I am interested in linking the earlier historiographies of these places and comparing the different facets of empire to a gain a more comprehensive understanding of colonial experiences throughout this period of extensive expansion.

II.

The organisation of the chapters is, in part, based on Bernard S. Cohn's concept of modalities to examine thematic elements of British colonialism in Ireland and India. This approach allows historians to understand how these different elements operate alongside one another in each colony, and across time, rather than in a mere chronological fashion.[32] Each

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[29] Philip Stern, *The company-state: corporate sovereignty and the early modern foundation of the British Empire in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 26 – 29; Robert Travers, *Ideology and empire in eighteenth-century India: the British in Bengal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 182.

[30] Hilary McD. Beckles, 'The "hub of empire": the Caribbean and Britain in the seventeenth century,' in Canny, *The Oxford history of the British Empire, Volume I*, 219 – 220; James Horn, 'Tobacco colonies: the shaping of English society in the seventeent-century Chesapeake,' in *Ibid.*, 170, 175 – 176; Virginia Dejohn Anderson, 'New England in the seventeenth century,' in *Ibid.*, 194 – 195.

[31] P.E.H. Hair, 'The English in Western Africa to 1700,' in *Ibid.*, 250 – 254, 255.

[32] Cohn, *Colonialism and its forms of knowledge*, 5.

chapter represents a different thematic route through which the British attempted to understand – and therefore classify – colonial subjects. At the same time, while Cohn's modalities present a useful tool of analysis, I do not wish to provide the impression of an all-pervasive British colonial power.[33] Although the topics covered in each chapter represent *attempts* to gain complete control over colonial spaces, many of them also show the numerous ways in which British officials were forced to adapt their strategies and negotiate certain levels of authority. In discussing grids of power in early modern England and Ireland, Michael J. Braddick and John Walter argue that states often relied on appearance rather than genuine and enforceable authority. 'The credibility of that image,' they maintain, 'rested less on repression than on the ability to negotiate consent to representations of political power'.[34] Repression still played a significant role in Irish and Indian colonialism throughout the early modern period and the eighteenth century. However, this thesis also draws attention to the cracks that emerged amidst the displays of colonial power, whether through a reliance on indigenous knowledge for mapping projects or Bengali landowners, the allowance of Irish Catholic military recruitment following the Seven Years War, or the posturing which forced British officials to continuously try to justify their repressive measures against colonial violence as attempts to protect the general population. Apart from the last theme, the chapters also identify instances where gaps in British knowledge provoked high degrees of uncertainty and subsequently reactive – and similar – British reactions. As such, they draw and build upon Ann Laura Stoler's work on imperial anxieties in Dutch archives. While colonial officials sought to classify and categorise colonial subjects, Stoler maintains that the archives reveal uncertainty rather than imperial confidence, and that administrative decisions were frequently a 'piecemeal venture at best'.[35] Given this situation, European empires rarely achieved the ideal form of colonial power described by Achille Mbembe as 'l'assurance de sa toute-puissance'. Instead, they were constantly adapted in order to meet local demands and fashioned through interactions with resistance.[36] The chapters in this study reveal the same

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[33] See critiques of Cohn's work in Rosalind O'Hanlon and David Washbrook, 'After orientalism: culture, criticism and politics in the third world,' in Chaturvedi, *Mapping subaltern studies and the postcolonial*, 197; Rosalind O'Hanlon and David Washbrook, 'Histories in transition: approaches to the study of colonialism and culture in India,' *History Workshop* 32 (1992): 116.

[34] Michael J. Braddick and John Walter, 'Introduction. Grids of power: order, hierarchy and subordination in early modern society,' in *Negotiating power in early modern society: order, hierarchy and subordination in Britain and Ireland*, eds. by Michael J. Braddick and John Walter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 13.

[35] Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the archival grain: epistemic anxieties and colonial common sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 14.

[36] 'The assurance of its omnipotence' (my translation). Achille Mbembe, *De la postcolonie: essai sur l'imagination politique dans l'Afrique contemporaine* (Paris: Éditions Karthala, 2000), 56. On the adaptability

piecemeal approach, in which British policies were frequently guided by moments of colonial violence and their own anxieties regarding potential colonial subversion. Finally, the dissertation's long-term periodisation shows both the overarching evolution of imperial thoughts and practices from the early modern period to the turn of the nineteenth century, and the continuity of specific thought patterns.

The first chapter on historical writings demonstrates how religious conflict in colonies such as Ireland influenced negative British views on religious co-existence. Such views, in turn, manifested themselves in India through the continued British opposition of Hindus and Muslims. Building upon Cohn's work, this chapter focuses on the practice of history writing in the early modern period and the eighteenth century and examines how history became an exercise in colonialism through British attempts to appropriate and rewrite indigenous narratives.[37] Upheld as a tool of instruction and moral guidance, the entire premise of the historical account rested on its supposed veracity. In an annotated bibliography of the histories of Ireland published in 1724, for instance, the compiler William Nicholson, Lord Bishop of Derry, fretfully recorded his concerns over the question of whether the sources he quoted were 'real' documents.[38] As such, histories could wield significant influence.[39] The comparison of Irish and Indian colonial historical traditions points to patterns of imperial thought and similar practices in different colonial spheres. Moreover, this comparison generates a particularly fruitful discussion of the role of religion in these historical narratives as well as the ways in which subversive groups were reconfigured as demonised entities. Tales of Catholic atrocities in times of conflict, even of priests leading men into battle, were continuously circulated to highlight their untrustworthiness and the general population's subservience to the clergy. Meanwhile, British-produced histories of India abounded with tales of Mughal despotism.[40] The chapter examines the structure of these narratives to

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of state power, see Ben Golder and Peter Fitzpatrick, *Foucault's law* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 76; Ann Laura Stoler, 'On degrees of imperial sovereignty,' *Public Culture* 18:1 (2006): 135 – 136.

[37] Cohn, *Colonialism and its forms of knowledge*, 5 – 6.

[38] William Nicholson, Bishop of Cashel, Bishop of Derry, Archbishop of Cashel, *The Irish historical library* (Dublin, 1724), ML (Reference withheld at the request of the archive), 27 – 28; Barbara Shapiro, *A culture of fact: England, 1550 – 1720* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 3, 36, 43.

[39] Daniel Woolf, *Reading history in early modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 7.

[40] For example, Patrick Duigenan, *A fair representation of the present political state of Ireland* (Dublin: Printed for J. Milliken, 1800), 85 – 86, 108 – 109; Anonymous, *A prospect of bleeding Irelands miseries presented in a brief recitement to the eyes and hearts of all her commiserating friends in England and Scotland* (London: Printed for J.H., 1647); Gibney, *The shadow of a year*, 26, 44 – 45; Alexander Dow, *The history of Hindostan, from the death of Akbar, to the complete settlement of the empire under Aurungzebe* (London: Printed for T. Becket and P.A. de Hondt, 1768), xi – xii, lxv.

underscore the British practice of inserting themselves into indigenous histories.[41] This tendency suggested a natural transition towards British rule that often glossed over, or dismissed, the violent reality of conquest. The consideration of parallel indigenous accounts of these narratives also provides important alternate perspectives where Irish Gaelic and Persian authors attempted to counter appropriations of their histories and challenged British claims to sovereignty. Finally, the chapter probes the repercussions of the traditional tendency of these accounts towards the commemoration of significant historical events. Invariably tied to religious considerations, the 1641 Irish Rising and the 1756 Black Hole of Calcutta impressed upon Britons' perceptions of Irish Catholic and Islamic 'despotism', as well as the trustworthiness of Irish and Indian colonials. Serving as warnings of potentially disastrous outcomes through an emphasis on past events, British histories of Ireland and India became justifications for greater imperial expansion and authority.

The second and third chapters illustrate the growing power of the colonial state as well as the legal innovations and measures implemented to counter colonial subversion. The second chapter argues that attempts to impose criminal jurisdiction in India, and administrative responses to violence, echoed earlier attempts in Ireland. It is based upon Lauren Benton's and Richard Ross's premise that extraordinary legal measures and colonial violence represented the adaptability, rather than the suspension, of the law against circumstantial forces.[42] Chapter II provides a case study of Irish and Indian forms of highway banditry. These cases represent clear instances of the rejection of colonial attempts to impose acceptance of metropolitan notions of sociability. Irish and Indian forms of banditry were taken as significant threats to colonial sovereign claims, since their 'existence depended on there being substantial territories that were not fully under the control of government and its agencies of law enforcement.'[43] Here too, religion contributed to defining British perceptions of deviancy. Throughout the second half of the 1600s, Irish toryism was linked to Catholic antagonism and political machinations against the central administration. Meanwhile, in the British mind, Indian dacoity was transformed from large groups of ambiguously motivated

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[41] Kate Teltscher, *India inscribed: European and British writing on India 1600 – 1800* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), 151; Kumkum Chatterjee, *The cultures of history in early modern India: Persianization and Mughal culture in Bengal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 191.

[42] See Lauren Benton and Richard J. Ross, 'Empires and legal pluralism: jurisdiction, sovereignty, and political imagination in the early modern world,' in *Legal pluralism and empires, 1500 – 1850*, eds. Lauren Benton and Richard J. Ross (New York: New York University Press, 2013), 1 – 17.

[43] S.J. Connolly, *Religion, law, and power: the making of Protestant Ireland 1660 – 1760* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 210.

thieves to the better-known religiously-guided form of thuggee.[44] Legislative measures imposed to counter the rising threat of banditry, which was often perceived to have potentially explosive political and social implications, were intended as demonstrations of colonial strength and reinforcements to British claims to sovereignty. This chapter also represents an early illustration of episodes in which increased knowledge, deployed in an attempt to bridge colonial gaps in knowledge, could also lead to greater anxiety. In an analysis of British reactions to perceived threats in post-Mutiny India, Kim Wagner argues that knowledge often increased levels of anxiety among colonial officials. 'The colonial information order,' he writes, 'was sustained through a constant reiteration of past experience and the invocation of "expert knowledge". It was, however, the very application of so-called affective knowledge that caused panic and undermined the ability of authorities to respond in a measured manner to threats (real or imagined).'[45] The sudden upsurge of information on dacoits and thugs following the British assumption of the Bengali *diwani*, as well as subsequent severe punitive colonial measures against the supposed thieves, reflects this observation. The increasingly severe recourse to legal measures against bandits both in Ireland and India was indicative of British administrations testing the limits of their jurisdictional authority over colonial subjects. The two periods of bandit activity, separated by almost a century, demonstrate the ways in which the British attempted to manipulate existing laws to meet immediate demands. Moreover, they also show strikingly similar reactions to, and methods of countering, perceived colonial deviancy.

The subsequent legal history chapter (Chapter III) explores the consequences of colonial deviancy through the changing forms of punishment in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Examining shifting attitudes towards appropriate forms of punishment at the end of the early modern period, when punishment's dominant emphasis moved from corporal pain to psychological distress, the chapter focuses on the transportation of convicts overseas, which gained favour both in Ireland and in India. Whereas Chapter II discusses British attempts to define the parameters of their jurisdiction, as well as establish and enforce their colonial sovereignty in the context of the struggles against highway banditry, this section illustrates how individuals who infringed on British jurisdiction were seen to

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[44] Among others, see Éamonn Ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite cause, 1685 – 1766: a fatal attachment* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2004); Kim Wagner, *Thuggee: banditry and the British in early nineteenth-century India* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Tom Lloyd, 'Thuggee, marginality and the state effect in colonial India, circa 1770 – 1840,' *Indian Economic Social History Review* 45:2 (2008): 201 – 237.

[45] Kim Wagner, '"Treading upon fires": the "Mutiny"-motif and colonial anxieties in British India,' *Past & Present* 218:1 (2013): 161.

contravene the rules of sociability. Consequently, they represented a direct challenge to British sovereignty. This challenge not only warranted punishment inflicted on the perpetrator, but his or her removal from society through exceptional punishment or exile, with the aim of deterring others from following in their stead. 'Crimes,' William Paley wrote in 1785, 'are not by any government, nor, in all cases, ought to be punished, in proportion to their guilt, but in proportion to the difficulty and the necessity of preventing them.'[46] Irish and Indian colonial subjects were thus transported to new colonial sites where they were expected to atone for their crimes through hard labour. The second portion of this chapter analyses the experiences of these convicts once transported to the penal colonies, considering the ways in which gender, religion, and ethnic origin influenced their treatment in the Straits Settlements and New South Wales. These convict sites became testing grounds for the punishment and reformation of prisoners, but also influenced the evolution of penal justice and punishment in other settlements. As a result of forced migration, Irish and Indian convicts became participants of imperial expansion and furthered British interests in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, however unwilling in many cases.

The fourth chapter adopts an economic lens to compare the agrarian reconfigurations of late seventeenth-century Ireland and late eighteenth-century India. Though undertaken in vastly different circumstances, similar processes of change regarding administrative land settlement policies occurred in both places by the start of the nineteenth century. This, in turn, suggests that in spite of regional particularities, the British held broader imperial attitudes towards land ownership and sovereignty that shaped their approaches in different geographical and temporal colonial settings. The nature of Irish land ownership was recomposed in the wake of the 1641 Rising, and two waves of land confiscations paved the way for the supremacy of the Protestant ascendancy by the early 1700s.[47] The chapter argues that India's Permanent Settlement in the 1790s represented an attempt to carry out the same type of legal and geographical reformulation by co-opting the loyalty of landowners, albeit with less success – and it should also be noted that in India, these were indigenous landowners, whereas Catholic landownership in Ireland fell drastically following the first wave of transplantation measures in the 1650s. The primary motivations for the Permanent Settlement were admittedly different from those in the seventeenth-century Irish plantation

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[46] William Paley, *The principles of moral and political philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 527.

[47] For a detailed analysis of the first transplantation phase, see Cunningham, *Conquest and land in Ireland*.

and transplantation programmes. While Irish officials sought to make full use of all arable land in the country for taxation purposes and quell any further threat of Catholic power, Company officials sought steady income levels that would allow them to finance further military endeavours in India, counter budgetary deficits, and help pay off the EIC's national debt.[48] Nevertheless, both programmes sought to create a loyal landed elite that would support the British and conform to British notions of land ownership. The comparison of Irish and Indian land settlement policies operates on two levels. First, assessing the Permanent Settlement within the broader context of other colonial agrarian reconfigurations contributes to the growing historiography maintaining that Indian agrarian systems underwent a transformation, rather than traditional dichotomous interpretations of continuity or abrupt change.[49] Second, the chapter applies this more nuanced language of transformation to late eighteenth-century Ireland to demonstrate how similar processes were occurring contemporaneously. The comparison of land settlement policies suggests not only that reconfigurations in Ireland inspired similar efforts in India one century later, but also that British officials' attempts to create familiar environments of property ownership reflected broader imperial attitudes towards property and the conformity of agrarian systems.

From the perspective of material culture, different visual forms of imperial representations were employed to signal to viewers which colonial elements were worthy of notice. These representations of empire rendered the 'unknowable knowable,' while reinforcing stereotypes regarding the classification of colonial subjects. Building on the assertion by Melissa Calaresu, Filippo de Vivo, and Joan-Pau Rubiés that cultural history 'sees the social *imaginaire* as crucial not only to the quality of life experience but also to political action', Chapter V examines the ways in which visual representations of empire rendered (sometimes) remote colonial territories visible to the wider British public.[50] Most importantly, inspired by Bernard Cohn's use of visual modalities, it argues that these representations helped to shape British opinion by selectively depicting only those elements of colonial life, architecture, geography, and landscape deemed to fit with the image

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[48] William T. Lynch, 'Surveying and the Cromwellian reconquest of Ireland,' in *Instrumental in war: science, research, and instruments between knowledge and the world*, ed. Steven A. Walton (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 53; Kabindra Prasad Singh, *Land revenue administration in Bihar 1793 – 1858: some aspects* (Calcutta: Minerva, 1987), 67 – 68; John Albert Rorabacher, *Property, land, revenue, and policy: the East India Company, c. 1757 – 1825* (London: Routledge, 2017), 403 – 404.

[49] On the gulf between the two traditional positions, see David Washbrook, 'South India 1770 – 1840: the colonial transition,' *Modern Asian Studies* 38: 3 (2004): 479, 481.

[50] Original emphasis. Melissa Calaresu, Filippo de Vivo, and Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'Introduction: Peter Burke and the history of cultural history,' in *Exploring cultural history: essays in honour of Peter Burke*, eds. Melissa Calaresu, Filippo de Vivo and Joan-Pau Rubiés (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 6.

promoted of Ireland and India. Irish representations often hinted at a wild, uncontained, and uncontrolled quality, while Indian ones usually highlighted former splendours to further emphasise contemporary decline. For the purpose of analysis, three separate forms of visual representation were chosen: maps, landscape illustrations, and historically commemorative paintings. Combined, these forms represented an alternative medium to convey the political and ideological designs of empire to a wider audience, attempting to achieve 'the control and domination over space as an absolute, objective entity, its transformation into the property of individual or state'.[51] Superficially, maps presented indisputable proof of the growing territorial expansion of empire, lending a deceptive finality to boundaries that were anything but fixed. Frequently commissioned for military and administrative purposes, they reflected the different geopolitical needs of the Irish administration, preoccupied with fears of French invasions and Catholic subversion, and the EIC's efforts to consolidate their authority in Bengal while also keeping a watchful eye on the territories and alliances of regional indigenous rulers. Maps essentially represented imperial boundaries as the British would have liked them to truly be. Referencing this idealisation while discussing early modern maps of Ireland, William Smyth notes that

> [t]he language of the maps is English and the views of Ireland are almost invariably filtered through English cultural lenses and assumptions. Maps are as much an image of the social order as a measurement of the phenomenal world of objects. And some of these maps did provide images of an intended ideal social and spatial order.[52]

At the same time, while many officials strove to present clearly defined geographical territories, gaps in the maps also hinted at the reality of uncertain boundaries.

Offering more personal views of empire, landscape illustrations also presented sanitised versions of Irish and Indian life, while nevertheless offering subtler propagandist messages of race, class hierarchies, and politics. The very fact that these images were sanitised, rarely highlighting the Irish and Indian poverty frequently mentioned in travel accounts, reflects British unease with any colonial elements that challenged administrative claims to colonial success and progress. Finally, commemorative historical paintings generated patriotic pride for British accomplishments, showcasing imperial strength and power against colonial subjects. As exaggerated versions of landscape portraits that shied

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[51] Denis Cosgrove, 'Prospect, perspective and the evolution of the landscape idea,' *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 10:1 (1985): 46.

[52] William J. Smyth, *Map-making, landscape and memory: a geography of colonial and early modern Ireland c. 1530 – 1750* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2006), 25.

away from representing genuine colonial living conditions, commemorative paintings embodied officials' desire to recast the colonies in a specific light for dissemination to the British public. Increasingly as of the eighteenth century, historical portraiture also represented an intriguing example of divergence between the Irish and Indian experience, demonstrating the ways in which different political needs influenced the tone of these representations.

The final chapter marks a point of departure from previous chapters' comparisons of Irish and Indian colonial experiences through the lens of thematic modalities. Instead, it investigates the experiences of Irishmen (rarely women in this period) who travelled to India. Compelled by diverging motivations including political aspirations or financial gain, these individuals moved between different colonial spaces with varying degrees of freedom. For whatever reasons, they embraced the imperial project and profited from it, creating careers out of employment in India. Building on the work of scholars such as Craig Bailey, the chapter focuses on the experiences and networks of the Irish elite and middle-classes on the eighteenth-century subcontinent. In doing so, it demonstrates the active role that Ireland played in British imperial expansion, while also acknowledging that the reasons for this participation were varied. A brief initial examination of Irish wills in the EIC collection reveals the extent of Irish networks throughout the empire, indicating the degree of mobility between different imperial nodes. Significant numbers of Irishmen travelled to India as soldiers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, since the ban against recruiting Irish Catholics into the British military was abandoned during the Seven Years War of 1756 to 1763.[53] One particularly colourful character, the Tipperary-born George Thomas, deserted from the British marine in 1781 or 1782 and spent time among the ranks of the Hyderabad army under the Frenchman François Raymond before rising to prominence in the armies of the Begum Samru of Sardhana and the Mahratta leader Appakandarow.[54] The EIC wills also show that while many continued to foster close ties with family in Europe, others chose to settle more permanently in India, often with interracial families. Moreover, the substantial bequests left to certain illegitimate children suggest that many Irishmen felt a strong sense of responsibility towards their dependents which seems strikingly at odds with the stereotype of

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[53] Thomas Bartlett, 'The Irish soldier in India, 1750 – 1947,' in *Ireland and India: connections, comparisons, contrasts*, eds. Michael Holmes and Denis Holmes (Dublin: Folens, 1997), 13 – 14, 17.
[54] William Francklin, *Military memoirs of Mr. George Thomas* (Calcutta: Printed for the author at the Hurkaru Press, 1803); Shelford Murray, *Swords for hire: European mercenaries in eighteenth-century India* (London: John Murray, 1971), 84 – 87.

the self-interested European nabob carving out his fortune before returning to Europe. The second section of the chapter considers the cases of three members of the Anglo-Irish elite. Both Robert Gregory, private merchant and later EIC director, and Sir George Macartney, Chief Secretary for Ireland and Governor of Madras, used India as career opportunities for financial and political gain. Robert's son William, born in India and later Civil Undersecretary of Ireland, reversed the process by making a career in Ireland. The frequency with which these men defined themselves as British or Irish according to circumstances highlights the fluid nature of colonial and imperial identities, and also demonstrates the ways in which identity could be adapted in pursuit of personal interests.[55]

III.

The early modern period and the eighteenth century represent moments of notable change in the formative evolution of British imperialism. As such, it is worth pausing to consider the use of particular concepts and terminology employed throughout this study. Given the extensive timeframe of the thesis, a word must first be said about the use of 'English' versus 'British'. The origins of a general British consciousness remain the subject of fierce debate among historians. Medievalists such as John Gillingham detect a shared sense of national identity dating back to twelfth-century distinctions drawn by Englishmen in relation to their Celtic neighbours and the language used by authors such as Giraldus Cambrensis when describing the conquest of Ireland.[56] This, however, was a distinctly *English* sense of consciousness. While early modernists and historians of eighteenth-century Britain accept the presence of English, Irish, Welsh, and Scottish identities prior to the 1700s, they reject the notion that a genuine British consciousness existed.[57] Linda Colley's magisterial *Britons: forging the nation 1707 – 1837* traces the rise of 'Britishness' during the eighteenth century following the Act of Union with Scotland in 1707, as well as the factors that contributed to a more general sense of identification – notwithstanding the regional and

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[55] For a detailed analysis of Irish migrants and the evolution of their identity in the early modern European context, see the contributions in Thomas O'Connor and Mary Ann Lyons (eds.), *Irish communities in early modern Europe* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006).

[56] John Gillingham, 'The beginnings of English imperialism,' *Journal of Historical Sociology* 5:4 (1992): 392 – 409.

[57] For example, see Linda Colley, *Britons: forging the nation 1707 – 1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009, rev. edn); Colin Kidd, 'Protestantism, constitutionalism and British identity under the later Stuarts,' in *British consciousness and identity: the making of Britain, 1533 – 1707*, eds. Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 321; Naomi Lloyd-Jones and Margaret M. Scull, 'A new plea for an old subject? Four nations history for the modern period,' in Lloyd-Jones and Scull, *Four nations approaches to modern 'British' history*, 7 – 9.

national identities that continued to exist simultaneously. One of the major factors Colley identifies was ongoing conflict with France, which transformed the Catholic French into a 'hostile Other'. Most importantly, however, Britishness was characterised by a shared Protestantism that 'lay at the core of British national identity'.[58] As such, for the purposes of consistency and clarity, the term 'British' is used throughout this thesis when referring to events that took place after 1707, or which overlapped this period. When referring to early modern Ireland, in comparison, the term 'English' is used throughout.

'Identity' itself is an equally contentious concept in pre-nineteenth-century historiography. Although it should be used with caution, it nonetheless remains a convenient term to convey the sense of the ways in which the English, and later British, thought of their place in the wider world. Discussing the concept of Englishness in the century following 1550, Hilary Larkin uses the word identity to describe a growing early modern belief among Englishmen and women that their brand of Protestantism, as well as the concept of liberty as a defining feature of England, rendered them unique in the European world. In short, their Englishness began to take precedence over pre-existing forms of communal identification such as pre-Reformation pan-European Catholicism.[59] Here, the word identity is used within the context of Larkin's framework to denote a shared sense of commonalities that distinguished communities from other groups of people. In keeping with this, when employing the term British it remains important to emphasise the distinctions that persisted between the English, Scots, and Welsh. While this study adopts Larkin's framework, as well as John and Jean Comaroff's definition of ethnicity as 'some form of communal self-definition,' it also acknowledges the enduring national identities that remained throughout this period.[60] Historians of Scotland such as John MacKenzie and Andrew Mackillop, for example, have previously argued for better distinctions to be drawn between English and Scottish participation in imperial expansion. In the Indian context, Mackillop notably cautions that 'Scottish society used the empire and the role of the Scots within it to re-imagine and reconstruct new forms and variants of Scotland. Empire in this instance became a means of generating the "nation" – but it was not automatically a British nation.'[61] Yet in

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[58] Colley, *Britons*, 5, 369, and more generally on Protestantism 11 – 54.

[59] Hilary Larkin, *The making of Englishmen: debates on national identity, 1550 – 1650* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 1 – 7.

[60] John and Jean Comaroff, *Ethnography and the historical imagination* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 51.

[61] Andrew Mackillop, 'Locality, nation, and empire: Scots and the empire in Asia, c. 1695 – c. 1813,' in *Scotland and the British Empire*, eds. John M. MacKenzie and T.M. Devine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 75; John M. MacKenzie and T.M. Devine, 'Introduction,' in *Ibid.*, 11 – 12.

spite of such enduring local or national affiliations, the Scots and the Welsh were integrated into a broader sense of Britishness in a way that was never carried out in Ireland.

Basing itself on previous work by Irish historians, this study excludes Ireland from the definition of Britishness. To begin with, Ireland's physical separation from the remainder of the British Isles meant that it never endured the military threats that served to foster a shared sense of commonalities in the face of adversity. Additionally, neither the native inhabitants of Ireland, nor the successive waves of settlers from England and Scotland, usually thought of themselves in such terms. Prior to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, social groups in Ireland defined themselves along the ethnic lines of Gaelic Irish, Old English (English Catholic settlers prior to the Reformation), New English (Protestant settlers postdating the Reformation), and Scots. Of these groups, only the Scots occasionally described themselves as 'Britons'. Until the seventeenth century, both the Old and New English identified with a specifically English sense of consciousness. Historians such as Brendan Bradshaw, Jane Ohlmeyer, and Marc Caball all identify Irish Reformation attempts from the late sixteenth century as the catalysts for a more religiously-based sense of identity. The Elizabethan Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity passed in 1560 generated widespread resistance from the majority Catholic Irish population. Having already undergone at least a certain degree of cultural assimilation as well as generations of intermarriage with the Gaelic elites, a 'Catholic counter-culture' arose among the Old English in the latter half of the sixteenth century and a perceptual shift took place whereby distinct Catholic and Protestant identities emerged in Ireland.[62] However, even once this shift took place, Alan Ford stresses that while the Protestant faction sought to distinguish itself from its Catholic neighbours, it never viewed itself as British throughout this period either.[63] This represents a sharp divergence from the Scottish example, where, in spite of cautions from historians such as Mackillop, 'Britishness' did have its place. While comparing the cases of Ireland and Scotland, Jim Smyth notably points to the enduring association of Irish Protestantism with Englishness, rather than Britishness. In contrast, '[t]he Anglo-Scottish union was a self-consciously "British" project. The Scots thought of themselves as Scots or north Britons but

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[62] This argument also arose out of an extended discussion with Professor John Morrill in June 2018. See Brendan Bradshaw, 'The English Reformation and identity formation in Ireland and Wales,' in *British consciousness and identity: the making of Britain, 1533 – 1707*, eds. Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 48 – 50, 52; Marc Caball, 'Faith, culture and sovereignty: Irish nationality and its development, 1558 – 1625,' in *Ibid.*, 125, 132; Jane Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English: the Irish aristocracy in the seventeenth century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 6, 8.

[63] Alan Ford, 'James Ussher and the creation of an Irish protestant identity,' in Bradshaw and Roberts, *British consciousness and identity*, 185.

never, no matter how anglicised as north English.'[64] As a result, Ireland did not have the same reference points as did England, Scotland, and Wales. At the same time, this study does demonstrate the extent to which certain Irish figures, particularly among the Anglo-Irish elite, sought to define themselves more closely with Britishness towards the close of the eighteenth century. One notable example of this tendency was Sir George Macartney, who espoused Britishness through his efforts to further his imperial career. Significantly, however, the frequent references to his Irish origins in the press as a serious point of disparagement during his tenure as Chief Secretary for Ireland indicate the level to which the Irish were still considered to be separate from the remainder of the British Isles throughout this period.[65]

This study engages with the discrete histories of recent theoretical constructs that discuss identity and hybridity, empire and expansion, criminality and deviancy, power relationships, public and private spheres, as well as the emergence of state surveillance. The study of identities, considered above in the context of emerging senses of Englishness and Britishness, represents one avenue to conceive of how people looked at the concept of Britishness, religion, and much later nationality. Imperial expansion, for instance, played a significant role in establishing an English national consciousness and a broader world outlook according to Kathleen Wilson.[66] However, recent historiography has increasingly acknowledged the importance of hybridity in the formation of identities as well. Linda Colley was quick to note the continued existence of more regional loyalties in her work on the rise of Britishness in the eighteenth century. Nor was identity restricted to a sense of national or regional belonging. Many scholars of early modern and eighteenth-century Ireland and India emphasise the significant roles religion and culture in creating units of identification. Colley and Kidd, among others, agree that Protestantism became one of the most important pillars of Britishness, which subsequently influenced the imperial position against Catholicism in Europe and the colonies.[67] Irish historians of the early modern period and the eighteenth century have long argued that religion became a crucial factor in Ireland. Various identities were also common in eighteenth-century India, in spite of British attempts to delineate the population along religious lines. Prior to the Battle of Plassey, Brian Pennington argues that

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[64] Jim Smyth, '"No remedy more proper": Anglo-Irish unionism before 1707,' in *Ibid.*, 307.

[65] 12 – 15 August 1769, *The public register; or, Freeman's journal* 6:100. See also Chapter VI, 10 – 11.

[66] Kathleen Wilson, *The island race: Englishness, empire and gender in the eighteenth century* (London: Routledge, 2003), 3; Kathleen Wilson, *The sense of the people: politics, culture and imperialism in England, 1715 – 1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 23.

[67] Colley, *Britons*, 6, 11 – 54; Colin Kidd, *British identities before nationalism: ethnicity and nationhood in the Atlantic world, 1600 – 1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 140.

Hindus often changed their associations depending on context. 'When the occasion demanded it,' Pennington claims, 'Hindus could portray themselves as a homogenous people, especially vis-à-vis their Muslim "other," or locate alterity in their own midst.' Yet at the same time, certain Persian authors of the late eighteenth century chose to reframe the discussion in terms of the more homogenous inhabitants of Hindostan, who were to be compared to the alien British.[68] Such work tracing the complexities of clearly defining identity highlights British imperial efforts, in contrast, to create and cement such communities for political, religious, cultural, or practical reasons.

The final dimension worth mentioning with respect to identity is that of gender. While few women figure throughout this study, with the exception of Irish female convicts of whom little personal information is known, gender repeatedly surfaces through literary and visual depictions. In an early analysis of gender's use as a category of enquiry in historical studies, Joan Scott defines the term as 'a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes'. Moreover, she adds, 'gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power'.[69] Scott does link gender-driven relationships of power to colonial settings by noting the patriarchal association between kingship and masculinity, as well as the latter's connection to military endeavours and defence. Later scholars such as Philippa Levine and Kathleen Wilson have already noted the imperial practices of dismissing the masculinity of the colonised or creating ethnographic analyses of societies based on their treatment of women.[70] These practices are at the forefront in British-produced histories of Ireland and India, which frequently presented Irishmen as battle-crazed and martial, while depictions of Muslim men alternated between jealousy-driven animalistic lust and effeminate fops spoiled by years in the royal harems.[71] The gendered language of these extremist descriptions had significant repercussions for the power hierarchies in colonial settings. The use of gendered descriptions served to emphasise the traits deemed most unsuitable in the Irish and Indians, furthering British calls to 'civilise' their colonial territories.

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[68] On Ireland, see footnotes 51 and 52. Brian K. Pennington, *Was Hinduism invented?: Britons, Indians, and the colonial construction of religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 3. On the writings of Persian authors, see Chapter I, especially 38 – 39.

[69] Joan W. Scott, 'Gender: a useful category of historical analysis,' *The American Historical Review* 91: 5 (1986): 1067, 1073.

[70] Phillipa Levine, 'Introduction: why gender and empire?,' in *Gender and empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 6; Kathleen Wilson, 'Empire, gender, and modernity in the eighteenth century,' in *Ibid.*, 21.

[71] See Chapter I.

With regards to colonialism more broadly, the word 'colony' remains disputed among early modern Irish historians and scholars of eighteenth-century India. Among Irish historians, the primary contention resides in the matter of whether Ireland was or was not a fully incorporated member of the United Kingdom. Maureen O'Connor and Tadhg Foley argue that both nineteenth-century Ireland and India, 'though not technically defined as colonies, were both treated as such by Britain', while Denis O'Hearn maintains that Ireland should be considered a colony at least until the nineteenth century, given Britain's emphasis on settlement with political and economic purposes.[72] For the early modern period, one of the most succinct summaries of the historiographical debate over the question of colonialism is found in Nicholas Canny's 1988 piece *Kingdom and colony: Ireland in the Atlantic world 1560 – 1800*. Following in the footsteps of D.B. Quinn, historians of the sixteenth century focusing on the circulation of individuals between Ireland, England, and the American continent, as well as connections between Ireland and the American settlements, have traditionally viewed Ireland as a colonial enterprise. Nevertheless, many scholars remain wary of labelling early modern Ireland as a colonial society. Canny notably points to administrative historians of Ireland such as Steven Ellis and Ciarán Brady, who argue that the Irish administration was not treated as a colonial one and, moreover, was modelled on the English one.[73] In keeping with the arguments of the administrative historians, Toby Barnard attributes this reticence to the contradictory descriptions of Ireland found in contemporary British accounts, which alternately described it either as a colony or an integral part of the British Isles. Additionally, Barry Crosbie has also contended that previous nationalist interpretations of Irish history frequently lent an exceptional quality to Ireland's status within the British Isles, as well as to its relationship with Britain, thereby obscuring any colonial associations.[74]

Similar debates have animated the historiography of eighteenth-century India, with many historians adopting extreme positions on rupture or continuity with older regimes. Nicholas Dirks, for example, maintains that British expansion in the second portion of the

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[72] Tadgh Foley and Maureen O'Connor, 'Introduction,' in Foley and O'Connor, *Ireland and India: colonies, culture, and empire*, xiii; Denis O'Hearn, 'Ireland in the Atlantic economy,' in *Was Ireland a colony?: economics, politics and culture in nineteenth-century Ireland*, ed. Terrence McDonough (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005), 3 – 4; Jennifer Regan-Lefebvre, *Cosmopolitan nationalism in the Victorian Empire: Ireland, India and the politics of Alfred Webb* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 5.

[73] As indicated by the title of his work, Canny himself suggests that Ireland was both a kingdom and a colony. Nicholas Canny, *Kingdom and colony: Ireland in the Atlantic world 1560 – 1800* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1988), 6 – 11, 133.

[74] T.C. Barnard, 'Crises of identity among Irish Protestants 1641 – 1685,' *Past & Present* 127 (1990): 40 – 43; Crosbie, *Irish imperial networks*, 3, 4 – 5.

century coincided with the imposition of a clear colonial order. Gauri Viswanathan locates the origins of British imperialism in India to Elihu Yale's term in the East India Company during the 1690s, while Ranajit Guha fixes the beginning of colonialism with the Permanent Settlement of 1793. On the reverse side, scholars such as J.C. van Lewe and Robert Frykenberg minimise the impact of European agency on the continent. Frykenberg in particular denies the possibility of using the term colonialism in this period, claiming that Britain did not possess the strength to create such monumental changes. David Washbrook also expresses reservations about applying the term colonialism to the eighteenth century, drawing attention to the antiquarian work undertaken to demonstrate the common ancestry of Europeans and Indians, as well as the continued usage of Hindu and Muslim laws.[75] While taking these considerations into account, this study adopts the position that early modern Ireland was a colony according to Andrew Fitzmaurice's linkage between empires of the early modern period and the Roman concept of *imperium*, which he defines as 'the possession of territories beyond the sea'.[76] Though Fitzmaurice detects a shift in eighteenth-century thinking away from the military-inspired exploits of Rome, he argues that military conquest was merely replaced by the concept of occupation. This, in turn, eventually led to the commercial sovereignty that dominated much of the nineteenth century.[77] It is through this lens of imperial economic occupation that late eighteenth-century India is considered throughout this study.

The ways in which such social and intellectual/ideological categories were created and understood depended on the nature of, and relationships of, power and the communities of Ireland and India. Power was never a fixed or monolithic entity throughout the duration of the British empire, reflecting instead the constant negotiations, renegotiations, and accommodations made both by administrators and the governed. While theorists such as Achille Mbembe tie sovereignty to a right to command and enforce orders, proponents of Michel Foucault's doctrine instead see governmental power as a force in flux and in continuous adaptation, 'always in the process of ruination and being undermined and re-formed by resistance'.[78] While there is merit to Foucault's definition of power as adaptive,

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[75] Nicholas B. Dirks, *The scandal of empire: India and the creation of imperial Britain* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006), 5; David Washbrook, 'South India 1770 – 1840,' 479, 481 – 483; Ian J. Barrow and Douglas E. Haines, 'The colonial transition: South Asia, 1780 – 1840,' *Modern Asian Studies* 38:3 (2004): 471 – 473.
[76] Andrew Fitzmaurice, *Sovereignty, property and empire, 1500 – 2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 18.
[77] *Ibid.*, 5 – 6.
[78] Mbembe, *De la postcolonie*, 53; Golder and Fitzpatrick, *Foucault's law*, 76.

Michael Braddick and John Walter caution against limiting interpretations of power to resistance. Pointing to the concerted efforts of British officials to enlist the loyalties of local elites in many colonial settings, Braddick and Walter emphasise the central importance of negotiation and routine renegotiation to our understanding of early modern and eighteenth-century manifestations of sovereignty. Recent work on public participation in English politics by Michael Braddick and Phil Withington further points to a greater degree of influence than previously suspected, as well as the relatively broad dissemination of political news and developments through '[r]umour, news and print, as well as official channels of communication such as assize sermons and royal proclamations'.[79] Chapter IV in particular draws attention to British efforts in Ireland and India to secure such elite bases, often through the reconfiguration of land settlement policies, while the various British administrations' propaganda efforts through art discussed in Chapter V illustrate some of the ways that officials attempted to influence perceptions of colonial strength.

Nevertheless, in addition to soliciting the collaboration of local elites, attempts to shape power through surveillance and control remained important in the burgeoning British colonies. Here once again, communities were created in Ireland and India in order to treat, and hopefully reform, deviant colonial subjects. As shown by Anupama Rao and Saurabh Dube, 'in the production of the figure of the criminal, rather than exclusively assessing the "individual", colonial law could categorize an entire community as a "criminal" tribe/caste. In inherently tension-ridden ways, this rendered the community as at once a collective individual and an individuated collectivity'.[80] In this way, groups such as the seventeenth-century Irish tories and the late eighteenth-century Indian dacoits and later thugs were transformed from individual thieves into groups that collectively posed threats against the administration. Authority was also shaped through administrative reactions to colonial crime. The legal theorist Paul Kahn has worked extensively on the relation between violence and sovereignty, highlighting the ideal results desired by British officials through the punishment of colonial subjects. When state-sanctioned, it was hoped that in addition to inflicting pain on the perpetrator, the sentence would 'degrade the immediate victim, [and] also all those who see in the victim's actions an expression of their own political beliefs'. Moreover, he

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[79] Braddick and Walter, 'Introduction. Grids of power,' 31, 38; Michael J. Braddick and Phil Withington, 'Introduction,' in Braddick and Withington, *Popular culture and political agency in early modern England and Ireland*, 2.

[80] Anupama Rao and Saurabh Dube, 'Questions of crime: an introduction,' in *Crime through time*, eds. Saurabh Dube and Anupama Rao (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), xlii.

contends that punishment was also designed to elicit a sense of reverence from the wider audience, what he refers to as 'awe'.[81] The case study of toryism, dacoity, and thuggee in Chapter II of this dissertation addresses the creation of communities which facilitated the classification of colonial subjects and their surveillance. Particularly in the Irish case, the rapid association of toryism with Jacobitism created an even larger community of potential deviants in need of reform. This sense of intractable Catholic antagonism provided yet another justification for a continued English presence in Ireland. When transportation or banishment overseas was adopted as the favoured mode of punishing both English and colonial subjects in the eighteenth century, it was with the intention of sparking a terror about the unknown among convicted felons and any would-be offenders. The focus of transportation in Chapter III reveals the ways in which punishment during the eighteenth century gradually became a combination of physical pain and the hope for reformation through hard labour. While it shows how the illusion did not endure past the first few decades of the nineteenth century, the uncertainties of transportation to far-off and unknown lands were initially thought to perfectly convey the sense of awe identified by Kahn.

The final matter worth discussing is the study's use of the concepts of fear and anxiety as frameworks to examine the different political, administrative, and religious priorities of Irish and Indian colonial administrations. Within the body of work covering the history of emotions, William Reddy argues that high intensity emotions guide societal priorities and, given this fact, also guide administrative decisions. 'Emotions,' he suggests, 'become politically relevant, because they are capable of guiding action long after explicit threats or explicit rules have been forgotten'.[82] The following chapters highlight the uncertainties generated among British officials by gaps in their colonial knowledge and the often emotionally charged ways in which these officials responded to similar threats across the empire. Through broader comparisons among British colonies, familiar patterns emerge regarding the ways in which the rulers treated the ruled, regardless of temporal or geographical distances, in attempts to understand and control colonial spheres.

Building from this, the word 'anxiety' recurs throughout this dissertation. Anxiety is a word that can refer to a significant number of negative emotions such as confusion,

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[81] Paul W. Kahn, *Sacred violence: torture, terror, and sovereignty* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2008), 11, 25.
[82] William M. Reddy, *The navigation of feeling: a framework for the history of emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 119.

uncertainty, consternation, or anger. I am using the term loosely throughout the thesis to cover a spectrum of similar emotions that characterised the correspondence of British officials. The emotions exhibited in this correspondence underline constant efforts to expand officials' knowledge of colonial spaces in areas of known ignorance or social distance despite a perceived inability to ever truly understand colonial subjects. This contributed to a continued sense of unease in which '[t]here was frequently no identifiable reason for colonial disquiet, other than an indeterminate foreboding; a sense that something was about to happen.'[83] Consider, for instance, the analysis of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Ireland by one of its predominant early modern scholars, Nicholas Canny. Even when considering moments of extreme violence such as the 1641 Rising and the 1798 Rebellion, Canny maintains that recent historiography points to 'an ordered and relatively harmonious community which enjoyed a modest prosperity as a generally contented partner within a broader British jurisdiction'. The standard image of unrelenting and harsh poverty throughout the same period is, now, equally contested.[84] Yet in spite of this state of comparative stability, accounts written throughout this period frequently suggested otherwise and betrayed the heightened sense of foreboding described by Robert Peckham. Providing a chilling account of rapparee guerilla warfare in the 1690s, the chaplain of one English regiment wrote of the Irishmen's ability to hide their weapons and transform themselves into 'the poorest humblest Slaves in the World'. Nonetheless, George Story claimed that within an hour they would once again be prepared for battle.[85] Later landowners' correspondence from the eighteenth century indicates a general belief in the collusion of Irish peasants to commit fraud, and many travellers wrote of the appalling poverty of the Irish population. Moreover, distrust of Catholics persisted well beyond the repeal of the penal laws, as evinced by Parliament's refusal to allow Catholic participation at the turn of the nineteenth century.[86]

The same type of pervasive anxiety permeates British accounts of Indian history, which focused extensively on supposed examples of the deviousness, treachery, and duplicity displayed by Indian figures. Of the Indian character in general, the anonymous *A complete*

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[83] Robert Peckham, 'Introduction: panic: reading the signs,' in *Empires of panic: epidemics and colonial anxieties*, ed. Robert Peckham (Hong Kong: The University of Hong Kong, 2015), 1.

[84] Consider, however, Jane Ohlmeyer's contention that violence, particular perpetrated by the state, was a notable feature of the seventeenth century. Nicholas Canny, 'Irish resistance to empire? 1641, 1690 and 1798,' in Stone, *An imperial state at war*, 290; Jane H. Ohlmeyer, 'Conquest, civilization, colonization: Ireland, 1540 – 1660,' in *The Princeton history of modern Ireland*, eds. Richard Bourke and Ian McBride (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 26.

[85] George Story, *An impartial history* (1693), in Hadfield and McVeigh, *Strangers to that land*, 171.

[86] On landowner/peasant relations and descriptions of Irish poverty, see Chapter V. Thomas Bartlett, *The fall and rise of the Irish nation: the Catholic question 1690 – 1830* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1992), 105 – 106.

history of the war in India claimed '[t]here is a natural treachery in these people, which is sufficient to account for their being so rarely steadfast in their agreements.'[87] J.Z. Holwell and Luke Scrafton also strongly emphasised the duplicity of Indian Muslims. While Scrafton dismissed them as individuals governed by their passions and deceitfulness, Holwell more specifically attacked the Mughal rulers. 'The government of *Indostan*,' he claimed, 'is perhaps the only government in the world, where the character of a *spy* is not attended, with reproach and infamy: here it is honourable and dignified.'[88] The aspersion of the Muslim character, as discussed in Chapter I, was part of a larger strategy to justify British intervention on the subcontinent by opposing the Hindu and Muslim populations. However, such descriptions also served to reinforce Indian stereotypes and created an atmosphere of distrust against indigenous men and women.

While there were few discrete and obvious ties between Ireland and India during the early modern period and the eighteenth century, these categories of analysis demonstrate that both sites and centres of colonial and imperial encounter interacted in ways which rendered it possible to readily transfer experiences (if not always people) from one place to the other. This study works in dialogue with the separate and at times disparate literatures on identity, sovereignty and power, crime and deviancy, public and private spaces, as well as gender, to offer insights, and through comparative analysis reveal the inter-connectedness and influences of imperial experiences as a way of better understanding the challenges of identifying and contextualising processes of imperial expansion. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, these themes seek to bridge the space and obvious distance between the Irish and Indian case studies.

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[87] Anonymous, *A complete history of the war in India, from the year 1749, to the taking of Pondicherry in 1761* (London: Printed for M. Cooper, 1761), 52.
[88] J.Z. Holwell, *Interesting historical events, relative to the province of Bengal and the Empire of Hindostan* (3 vols., London: T. Becket and P.A. de Hondt, 1766), I, 62; Letter I, Luke Scrafton, *Reflections on the government of Indostan* (London: Reprinted for G. Kearsley and T. Cadell, 1770), 18.

Chapter I. Histories of Ireland and India

Reinterpreting the history of other peoples represents an important assertion of superiority. One of the central components of the expanding British empire as of the early modern period was the conviction that knowledge would enable them to rule colonial territories more efficiently. For the British, therefore, knowledge became a form of power. In this context, rival forms of knowledge among colonial subjects had the potential to promote dissention. A drive to produce state-sponsored forms of knowledge, forms that corresponded to colonial administrations' agendas, became a crucial element in the management of colonial subversion. This led the Gaelic author Hugh MacCurtin, for instance, to mournfully lament the bias of Irish histories from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Written as a direct rebuttal to the notably anti-Gaelic account by Richard Cox (1689) in the early eighteenth century, MacCurtin claimed that in many earlier accounts 'nothing is treated of, but *Barbarity*, *Murders*, *Feuds*, *Depredations*, &c. as tho' the World was ever free from such horrible transgressions except the Antient *Irish*'.[1] Both in early modern Ireland and eighteenth-century India, histories played a major role in the creation of banks of knowledge on colonial subjects. However, in keeping with MacCurtin's observation, the real value of these accounts lies in the views betrayed by their authors, and not of the subjects described therein. This chapter examines these two traditions to demonstrate how the act of writing history influenced the transformation of imperial thought throughout the period, and forged links between the various geographical and temporal spheres of the expanding empire. This represents a clear example of one way in which Britons sought to construct a common sense of identity that rendered them distinct from – and superior to – their Irish and Indians subjects. Such comparisons point to similar views about different peoples across the empire, stressing the transcolonial reach of many British assumptions regarding definitions of self and other. Moreover, the chapter argues that subversive groups were transformed into comparable and demonised categories of colonial subjects.

Although there are significant differences between the historical treatments of Ireland and India, British-produced histories c. 1650 to 1800 highlight several recurring themes that illustrate how the British believed there existed specific, and common, elements in all their territorial holdings. One of the central components to emerge from these histories was the

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[1] Original emphasis. Hugh MacCurtin, *A brief discourse in vindication of the antiquity of Ireland* (Dublin: Printed by S. Powell, 1717), 144 – 145; Bernadette Cunningham, *The world of Geoffrey Keating: history, myth and religion in seventeenth-century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 212 – 213.

treatment of religion. Catholicism and Islam played crucial roles in the creation of banks of knowledge; as such, religion became an intrinsic element of indigenous 'identity'. This chapter briefly examines the changes undergone by the writing of history throughout this period, before considering the narratives of Ireland and India, as well as the ways in which these diverged from indigenous representations of contemporary events. The final section analyses the increasing role of religion in these accounts, and the ways in which this affected British representations of the Irish and Indians. It also considers the ways in which historical events such as the 1641 Uprising and the 1756 Black Hole of Calcutta were commemorated in the histories both as warnings against future colonial acts of subversion, and as justifications for continued imperial expansion.

I.

History writing practices in Britain underwent a significant transformation between the early modern period and the turn of the nineteenth century, shifting from an illustrative to a more discursive and active medium. Originally viewed as an educational tool designed to provide examples of acceptable and inappropriate forms of conduct, history gradually became seen as a dynamic force that could shape and explain the course of contemporary events.[2] Early modern interpretations of history were also broadly influenced by the belief in a single human ancestry deriving from the framework of the Biblical flood story. Though the Biblical narrative was gradually superseded by the advent of the Scottish Enlightenment stadial theories of evolution from the 1750s onward, the Noachic origins myth influenced the histories of Ireland and India. These stadial theories proved even more influential, since their emphasis on the ranking of societies according to varying levels of civility was extensively used to argue for the inferiority of Irish and Indian society.[3] The persistent early modern obsession with the truthfulness and reliability of historical accounts, deriving from the works

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[2] Anthony Grafton, *What was history? The art of history in early modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 11, 231; Daniel Woolf, *Reading history in early modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 126; Pauline Kewes, 'History and its uses', in *The uses of history in early modern England*, ed. Pauline Kewes (San Marino: Huntington Library, 2006), 13 – 14, 19; Keith Thomas, *The perception of the past in early modern England. The Creighton Trust lecture* (London: University of London, 1983), 1, 2.

[3] On the subject of the origins myth, see Colin Kidd, *British identities before nationalism: ethnicity and nationhood in the Atlantic world, 1600 – 1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 59 – 62; and more generally, Colin Kidd, *The forging of races: race and scripture in the Protestant Atlantic world, 1600 – 2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). For stadial theory, see Michael Dodson, *Orientalism, empire, and national culture: India, 1770 – 1880* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 63 – 64; Luke Gibbons, '"The return of the native": the United Irishmen, culture and colonialism', in *1798: a bicentenary perspective*, eds. Thomas Bartlett et al. (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2003), 55; Jane Rendall, 'Scottish orientalism: from Robertson to James Mill', *The Historical Journal* 25:1 (1982): 43 – 44.

of sixteenth-century jurists such as Jean Bodin, was equally significant. Described by the seventeenth-century author John Temple as '*lux veritatis*' (light of truth) – not, one might add, without some irony given the almost farcical level of vitriol displayed in his infamous account of the 1641 Uprising – contemporary historians stressed the supreme importance of sound documented sources. As a result, the legendary or mythological nature of many indigenous Irish and Indian sources were rejected outright by British historians.[4]

Significant sources of tension in early modern Irish histories were found in individual authors' adherence, or lack thereof, to antiquarianism as well as religious sectarianism. Authors such as the eighteenth-century Sylvester O'Halloran and Hugh MacCurtin viewed antiquarianism – the celebration of ancient Irish history – as a way to bridge the existing Protestant/Catholic divide. MacCurtin proudly boasted, for instance, that the Gaelic language was spoken at the tower of Babel. Of the ancient Irish following the Germanic invasions of Europe, he also glowingly wrote that 'they were questionless the most celebrated for Learning and Civility in all the Western World'.[5] On the other hand, the antiquarians' emphasis on a former golden age of learning prior to the twelfth-century English conquest generated bitter critiques from the Protestant elite, who justified their rule by highlighting the barbaric nature of Gaelic society. It is also worth noting that certain antiquarians, such as Edward Ledwich, used antiquarianism to disprove claims of ancient Irish civility. While he was aware of Irish texts and did cite them, Ledwich dismissed all but select Irish annals as 'fabulous stories' and claimed that the literary fame of early medieval Irish writers could only be attributed to exiled English clergymen. Using a mixture of historical documents and archeology, Ledwich further attempted to dispel Irish claims to ancient civility. While certainly an old race, he categorically dismissed any claims to early Irish civility based on their coin output. Moreover, he also sought to refute the ancient dates attributed to different Irish sites by comparing them to supposedly contemporary events in classical history.[6]

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[4] My translation. Sir John Temple, *The Irish rebellion* (London, 1679, 3rd edn), preface, v; Barbara Shapiro, *A culture of fact: England, 1550 – 1720* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), 36, 41 – 42, 43; Grafton, *What was history?*, 123 – 124.

[5] Part II, MacCurtin, *A brief discourse in vindication*, 287; Clare O'Halloran, *Golden ages and barbarous nations: antiquarian debate and cultural politics in Ireland, c. 1750 – 1800* (Cork: Cork University Press in association with Field Day, 2004), 1.

[6] Edward Ledwich, *Antiquities of Ireland* (Dublin: Printed for Arthur Grueber, 1790), 118, 136, 160; Clare O'Halloran, '"Harping on the past": translating antiquarian learning into popular culture in early nineteenth-century Ireland', in *Exploring cultural history: essays in honour of Peter Burke*, eds. Melissa Calaresu, Filippo de Vivo and Joan-Pau Rubiés (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 328 – 329; O'Halloran, *Golden ages and barbarous nations*, 59.

The question of religious and ethnic associations also remained contentious throughout this period, since they could alternately be viewed as one single entity, or two distinct ones. Irish social categories remained relatively fluid until the 1798 Rebellion, when religious demarcations gained the upper hand. Prior to this, individuals did identify as Protestants or Catholics, but could also identify as Gaelic Irish, Old English (the Catholic English who settled Ireland prior to the Reformation), New English (Protestant English settlers), or British Scots.[7] Historians such as Thomas Bartlett maintain that the second portion of the eighteenth century represented one of growing toleration, at least on the part of the English. Even so, Bernadette Cunningham and Brendan Bradshaw still note that seventeenth-century authors such as Geoffrey Keating and Gaelic poets already strove to create distinctions between the Irish (i.e. Catholics) and the English.[8]

Similarly to the Irish case, native Indian historical accounts were dismissed by eighteenth-century British historians as 'loose, untidy, and irrational narratives' that contrasted sharply with the 'rational, objective knowledge-practice' they themselves favoured. Consequently, British intervention on the subcontinent was upheld as a way to redress the previous negligence of Indian history.[9] J.Z. Holwell claimed that Hindus were misrepresented in contemporary accounts, which did not reflect their standing as 'a people, who from the earliest times have been an ornament to the creation'.[10] Meanwhile, the orientalist Thomas Maurice dismissed much of ancient Indian historical writings as mythology, claiming no reliable sources prior to the first Muslim invasions. Instead, he mourned, between accounts of Alexander the Great's expedition and the first Islamic rulers of the seventh century, 'the path of Indian history is gloomy, churless, treacherous, and unconnected. We are possessed of no authentic documents to guide.'[11] Notwithstanding such outward displays of confidence in superior British abilities, many narratives also hinted at an underlying sense of anxiety. Since British authority in many Indian regions remained tenuous

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[7] S.J. Connolly, *Divided kingdom: Ireland 1630 – 1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 495.

[8] Thomas Bartlett, *The fall and rise of the Irish nation: the Catholic question 1690 – 1830* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1992), 70 – 71, 104 – 106; Cunningham, *The world of Geoffrey Keating*, 192 – 193; Brendan Bradshaw, 'Geoffrey Keating: apologist of Irish Ireland,' in *Representing Ireland: literature and the origins of conflict, 1534 – 1660*, eds. Brendan Bradshaw, Andrew Hadfield and Willy Maley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 167 – 169, 186.

[9] Kumkum Chatterjee, *The cultures of history in early modern India: perzianisation and Mughal culture in Bengal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 4 and 7 for citations; Kumkum Chatterjee, 'History as self-representation: the recasting of a political tradition in late eighteenth-century eastern India', *Modern Asian Studies* 32:4 (1998): 914.

[10] J.Z. Holwell, *Interesting historical events, relative to the province of Bengal and the Empire of Hindostan* (3 vols., London: T. Becket and P.A. de Hondt, 1766, 2nd edn), I, 6.

[11] Thomas Maurice, *The history of Hindostan* (3 vols., London: Printed by W. Bulmer and co., 1795), I, 20.

until the first decades of the nineteenth century, Kate Teltscher highlights how this anxiety continuously recurred in British-produced histories. Throughout these narratives, there always remained a degree of uncertainty over the nature of British authority. As a result, contemporary authors constantly attempted to justify the EIC's presence and made substantial efforts to portray their assumptions of power as a continuation of the previous Mughal administration.[12] Finally, the Indian histories also demonstrate how religion increasingly took on a prominent role in the categorisation of colonial subjects towards the end of the 1700s. It must be acknowledged that religious issues in late eighteenth-century India were not as overtly problematic as the sectarian conflicts that emerged out of the Irish Catholic/Protestant divide. Nevertheless, British representations slowly transformed religion into a significant issue through sustained comparisons between the Hindu and Muslim populations.[13]

British-produced histories of other nations conveyed the British historian's struggle to balance his sense of superiority with an equal sense of anxiety. While Teltscher's point pertains to India, her observations are equally applicable to Ireland – and, indeed, to the rest of the empire. Desperate to solidify their administrative hold on Bengal, the British remained fearful of subversive behaviours among subaltern groups. This anxiety, in turn, coloured late eighteenth-century accounts through 'a fundamental sense of insecurity which can rarely be allowed direct expression, but which keeps surfacing to be repeatedly allayed'.[14] The histories of Ireland and India both reflect this tension. While Indian accounts hinted at British uncertainties *vis à vis* the nature of their position in India following the battle of Plassey in 1757, historical accounts of Ireland were often written in the context of sectarian instability or periods immediately preceding such times. Recurrent fears of a Catholic resurgence dominated many Irish historical narratives. Comparing accounts from such different imperial locales enables historians to highlight these concerns and to make sense of the constant struggle between British feelings of anxiety and superiority.

II.

From the seventeenth century onward, pro-Gaelic accounts of Ireland (usually written by the Gaelic Irish or Old English) stressed the ancient and learned history of the Gaels in an

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[12] Kate Teltscher, *India inscribed: European and British writing on India 1600 – 1800* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), 111 – 112, 113; Chatterjee, 'History as self-representation', 914.
[13] Rosane Rocher, 'British orientalism in the eighteenth century: the dialectics of knowledge and government', in *Orientalism and the postcolonial predicament: perspectives on South Asia*, eds. Carol A. Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 221 – 222.
[14] Teltscher, *India inscribed*, 151.

attempt to counter English accusations of barbarism. Moreover, they were designed to generate a sense of communal Gaelic pride. Universally rejected by British authors because of their widespread use of mythological events and characters, these accounts were dismissed as fabulous and unrepresentative of 'real' history. The eventual Lord Chancellor of Ireland Richard Cox, for instance, savagely attacked Geoffrey Keating's seminal pro-Gaelic account *Foras feasa ar Éirinn/The history of Ireland* (c. 1634), describing it as 'no more than an ill-digested heap of very silly fictions'.[15] Writing more broadly on ancient Irish sources in general, Cox's contemporary Nathanial Crouch (a bookseller and author who went by the initials R.B.) hazarded that certain ancestral Irish claims were likely true. Nevertheless, this admission was prefaced by the stipulation that '[t]he Irish, as we have related, want not many Fabulous inventions to magnifie [sic] the original of their Nation'.[16] While pro-British and pro-Gaelic historians bickered (quite vehemently at times) over the validity of ancient Irish history, early modern accounts primarily focused on the Anglo-Norman conquest and the subsequent plantation schemes of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Keating's *Foras feasa* represents the starting point for all pro-Gaelic accounts of this period. In this version, the conquest was a consequence of the infidelity of Diarmaid Mac Murchadha (Dermot Mac Murough), king of Leinster, and his ensuing conflict with the wronged husband's ally Ruaidhri O Conchubhair (Rory O'Connor), king of Connaught and High King of Ireland. When Mac Murchadha fled to England, he sought refuge with Henry II, who subsequently granted him the right to appeal for aid among his barons. Cunningly, Henry also took the precaution of securing a papal *laudabiliter* (decree) awarding the sovereignty of Ireland to England in return for his promise to reform the Irish Church – a step that rather throws his proclaimed altruism towards Mac Murchadha into doubt. O Conchubhair's decision to 'ma[ke] peace and friendly alliance' with Henry Plantagenet formed a central part of Keating's narrative. By emphasising the notions of allies, Keating was able to present the Irish lords as the English forces' equals. Additionally, he was able to

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[15] Richard Cox, *Hibernia anglicana* (2 vols., London: Printed for Joseph Watts, 1689), I, Address to the reader, i. See also his criticism of Catholic historians, *Hibernia anglicana* (2 vols., London: Printed for Joseph Watts, 1690), II, An apparatus, i – ii.
[16] Nathaniel Crouch [R.B.], *The history of the kingdom of Ireland* (London: Printed for Nath. Crouch, 1692), 33; Robert Mayer, 'Nathaniel Crouch, bookseller and historian: popular historiography and cultural power in late seventeenth-century England,' *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 27:3 (1994): 391 – 393.

reject the contemporary English arguments according to which Ireland was conquered in the twelfth century – and, through this conquest, rendered subservient to England.[17]

The true nature of the Anglo-Norman conquest and the matter of the papal *laudabiliter* were once again taken up in Hugh MacCurtin's *A brief discourse in vindication of the antiquity of Ireland* almost a century later. In this case, the papal decree was given an Hiberno-centric spin, its origins traced back to the sons of the legendary medieval ruler Brian Borovey (more commonly known as Brian Borúma). Following Brian's death, his son Donogh committed fratricide, but was eventually overcome with guilt and undertook a pilgrimage to Rome as penance. Having brought the crown of Ireland in tow, Donogh died at the Abbey of St Stephen where the crown passed into the hands of the Catholic Church. Though MacCurtin accepted that such an event would confer the rights to Irish sovereignty on the Church, he categorically rejected the argument that the Church would have subsequently had the authority to transfer those rights to another.[18] As a result, English claims to Irish sovereignty through receipt of Borovey's crown were illegitimate.

In contrast to the pro-Gaelic histories of Ireland, British narratives tweaked their interpretation of the Anglo-Norman period to present Ireland as an incontestably conquered nation subject to British authority. Before addressing the issue of the conquest, Edmund Borlase appealed to his readers' humanity by describing the depraved nature of the Gaelic Irish, whom he reduced to 'a nation meerly pyrates, barbarous, and inhumane against the laws of nature and nations'.[19] The motif of barbarism was frequently deployed for the dual purpose of dehumanising the Irish and justifying British claims to sovereignty. Many of these authors, including Richard Cox, John Temple, and James Shirley, also wove this theme into their accounts of the Norman invasion, thus not only portraying it as a benevolent act to help the Leinster king, but more importantly as a way of curbing the cruel and violent tendencies of the Irish.[20] *Hibernia anglicana* abounds with horror stories of Irish piracy against the

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[17] Keating pointedly notes that the pope who awarded the *laudabiliter* was English. Geoffrey Keating, *Foras feasa ar Éirinn/The history of Ireland*, transl. Rev. Patrick S. Dineen (3 vols., London: Irish Texts Society, 1908), III, p. 319 – 347.

[18] Part II, MacCurtin, *A brief discourse in vindication*, 261.

[19] Edmund Borlase, *The reduction of Ireland to the crown of England* (London: Printed for Robert Clavel, 1675), fols. 43 – 44.

[20] Two notable exceptions in the pro-British tradition are Thomas Leland and the Editors of the Modern Universal History. Cox, *Hibernia anglicana*, I, 8; Temple, *The Irish rebellion*, 4; James Shirley, *The true and impartial history and wars of the kingdom of Ireland* (London: Printed for Nicholas Boddington, 1692), 4 – 5. For the exceptions, see Thomas Leland, *The history of Ireland from the invasion of Henry II* (3 vols., London: Printed for J. Nourse, T. Longman, G. Robinson and J. Johnson, 1773), I, 4 – 7, 13 – 14; Editors of the Modern

western coast of Britain, and of the enslavement of British men and women. Meanwhile Nathaniel Crouch caustically noted of pre-Norman Ireland, 'it was a proverb formerly, there was nothing venomous in Ireland, but the men and women, which was intended of the savage and brutish manners of the wild *Irish*'.[21] The authors in this tradition unconditionally denied the idea of Keating's 'friendly alliance,' strategically insisting that Henry received the utter submission of the Irish lords. By emphasising the centuries of Irish rebellions following the conquest, George Stacpoole and his contemporaries were able to construct a specifically-tailored image of the Irish: portrayed as stubborn and intransigent, the Irish were also branded as traitors reneging on the oaths of allegiance sworn by their ancestors.[22]

The emphasis on morality and reformation that runs through these histories transformed the British into secondary actors on the Irish stage. Strikingly, a similar pattern emerged in British accounts of the events leading towards the EIC's assumption of administrative control in Bengal following the Battle of Plassey in 1757. In this tradition, historians maintained that Company officials became involved in regional conflicts against their will, as the allies of Indian rulers. Consequently, these accounts described the British as passive players on the subcontinent, acting only in response to external events and forces beyond their control.

Contemporary British historians unanimously claimed that the eighteenth century represented a decisive moment in Indian history when a previously strong and powerful administration began to disintegrate. Feeding into common views of Asian despotism, the EIC officer Alexander Dow, who used his history as a way to critique Company policies, maintained that the Mughal state began to languish following the death of the emperor Aurangzeb in 1707. The emperor's forceful personality and strength were attributed for the administration's decline. According to Dow, Aurangzeb '[broke] the spirit of his subjects,' and left them vulnerable to external attacks.[23] The emperor's passing prompted a prolonged period of instability, in which the Mughal state became enfeebled by a combination of bloody successor wars and inefficient rulers before finally being overshadowed by the rise of rival successor kingdoms. Describing the sack of Delhi by the Persian ruler Nadir Shah in the

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University History (henceforth EMUH), *The history of Ireland from the earliest authentic accounts* (Dublin: Luke White, 1784), 2 – 4.

[21] Original emphasis. Crouch, *The history of the kingdom of Ireland*, 4 – 5; Cox, *Hibernia anglicana*, I, 1 – 2.

[22] George Stacpoole, *Some short historical anecdotes, with remarks relative to Ireland. In four parts: part I* (Corke [sic]: Printed by Eugene Sweney, 1762), 7.

[23] Alexander Dow, *The history of Hindostan, from the death of Akbar, to the complete settlement of the empire under Aurungzebe* (London: Printed for T. Becket and P.A. de Hondt, 1768), lxiv – lxv.

1730s, the EIC official Luke Scrafton wrote of an empire that had been reduced to a shell of its former glory.[24] This sentiment was shared by the Governor General of Bengal Warren Hastings, who echoed Scrafton's arguments in a compilation of personal notes for a history of the Mughal Empire. According to Hastings' notes, the Persian invasion was perpetrated against an incompetent ruler incapable of defending his kingdom. Equally damning was his assessment of the current emperor Shah Alum, whom he nonchalantly dismissed as 'yet living, without power, and deprived of sight'.[25]

Following the same line of argument as previous English authors in Ireland, historians of the later eighteenth century staunchly maintained that the British initially held no administrative designs for India. On the contrary, their involvement was purely in response to regional conflicts and calls for assistance from Indian allies. However, despite these claims, the histories betray a definite imperial attitude belying these assertions. Though never explicitly stated, the anonymous *A complete history of the war in India* portrayed the defeat of Siraj ud-Daula, nawab of Bengal, as an immediate EIC assumption of full sovereignty. Most tellingly, Robert Clive was portrayed as having 'awarded' the nawabship to his ally, Mir Jafar following the victory.[26] Plassey prominently featured in Scrafton's account as well, where the *coup d'état* mounted by the Bengali nobility with the assistance of the EIC, and Siraj ud-Daula's subsequent death, were presented as a form of just retribution. His comments about Mir Jafar, whom he accused of growing overly confident and having 'forgot[ten] the authors of his greatness,' were also informative.[27] These Indian accounts did reflect a subtler approach than previous Irish ones in their explanations of the British assumption of power in Bengal. Whereas earlier historians of Ireland boldly stated that sovereignty passed to the English with the submission of the Gaelic lords in the twelfth century, historians of India frequently exercised more restraint. Nonetheless, accounts such as Scrafton's contradict their authors' claims to disinterest. One need only think of his concluding remarks on Plassey: 'No longer considered as mere merchants, they [EIC] were now thought the umpires of Hindostan.'[28] Statements such as these suggest that the EIC *did* entertain at least some level of imperialistic thought in late eighteenth-century India.

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[24] Luke Scrafton, *Reflections on the government of Indostan* (London: Reprinted for G. Kearsley and T. Cadell, 1770), Letter I, 23, 28, and Letter II, 30.
[25] Warren Hastings, 'A chronological series of princes of the race of Timoor, who reigned in India', in *Supplement volume XXII, papers relating to India*, BL Add. MS 39892, Warren Hastings Papers, fols. 84a, 85b.
[26] Anonymous, *A complete history of the war in India, from the year 1749, to the taking of Pondicherry in 1761* (London: Printed for M. Cooper, 1761), 33.
[27] Letter III, Scrafton, *Reflections*, 99, and more generally 88 – 94.
[28] *Ibid.*, 120.

Although the histories made no overt claims to a formal EIC assumption of power following Plassey, they nonetheless transformed the British into Indian kingmakers. Thus, from 1757 onward, the British – whatever their protestations – began to represent themselves as those responsible for deciding the fate of Bengal, and, increasingly, of India more broadly.

By the end of the eighteenth century, there was a general consensus among British historians that the Mughal Empire's demise was irreversible. Charles Grant's account of India (c. 1790s) neatly encapsulated the official EIC position on its accession to power, while betraying hints of the later shift towards the more overtly religious administrative policies of the nineteenth century. Following the traditional British approach, Grant's EIC acted purely in response to French and Bengali aggression, involuntarily drawn into regional conflicts out of the need to protect itself. For instance, Grant spins the events surrounding the infamous Black Hole of Calcutta (1756) into a tale of Indian misbehaviour. Righteously defending subsequent British expansion in the area, Grant argued that 'instead of being prompted by views of conquest, [EIC officials] were employed solely for the defence of their principle factory, suddenly, when they thought only of peaceable pursuits of commerce'.[29] Following Grant's version of Indian history, increased British involvement in Bengal proved highly beneficial to a province which had previously been torn apart by strife. Military successes elsewhere on the subcontinent also contributed to a growing confidence in the British mandate there. Writing in the last stages of the Third Anglo-Mysore War against Tipu Sultan, Grant confidently asserted that any Indian ruler reckless enough to challenge the British in the future would be dealt with summarily, providing a positive example of British strength for all other indigenous rulers.[30]

In view of this turn towards a militaristic and triumphant tone, contemporary Persian histories provide a useful counterpoint to this narrative of involuntary British military activities. In the Irish histories, pro-Gaelic accounts postdating the 1650s were written by an elite that had suffered great losses during the Cromwellian transplantations and which remained highly hostile to the administration. Furthermore, their primary goals were the rehabilitation of the Gaelic character and the refutation of English claims to Irish sovereignty. Conversely the Persian authors of India focused on the immediate history of the eighteenth

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[29] In contrast to orientalism, this religiously-motivated policy advocated for the moral education of the Indian population. Charles Grant, *Observations on the state of society among the Asiatic subjects to Great Britain* (London[?], 1797[?]), 2 – 3. See also Thomas Trautmann, *Aryans and British India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 99, 101 – 110.

[30] Grant, *Observations*, 16, 27, and footnote 31.

century in an attempt to explain the process of decentralisation in the Mughal Empire and the aftermath of Plassey.

Once the EIC assumed formal administrative control of Bengal, many Persian historians found themselves in the unique position of writing for a British audience while also trying to come to terms with their sense of 'a world changed utterly'.[31] Attempting to explain the rapid changes in the composition of the Bengali political administration, the contemporary historians Karam Ali and Ghulam Hussain Khan Tabatabai presented the series of succession wars in the second half of the 1700s as the root cause for the province's instability. Tabatabai in particular sought to rehabilitate the reputations of earlier Mughal rulers such as Bahadur Shah I and Hussain Ali Khan. While most European historians recounted at length the fratricides and depredations committed by rulers who were viewed as immoral, Tabatabai wrote of Bahadur Shah's overwhelming distress at the death of his brother and the subsequent adoption of his nephew.[32] Likewise, despite the fact that neither Tabatabai nor Ali was particularly favourable towards Siraj ud-Daula, both scholars refused to condemn him outright. Siraj ud-Daula may have been guilty of having questionable morals, they maintained, but his greatest crime was simply that of being too easily manipulated by opportunistic and grasping courtiers. In his account of Plassey, Tabatabai included a lengthy speech from the young nawab in which he apologised to Mir Jafar for his previous mistakes and pleaded for the courtier's assistance. The history's translator Haji Mustafa (referred to as Nota-Manus throughout the text) also included an aside clearly intended to elicit sympathy for Siraj ud-Daula's eventual demise. 'This speech (...),' Haji Mustafa pointedly noted, 'is neither that of an idiot, nor that of a tyrant.'[33]

As a final point, British discourses on despotism in India also gave rise to the creation of character studies focusing on previous Mughal leaders, which reinforced the association between violence, dissipation, and Islam. Attempting to underline the inherent dangers in disregarding the laws of primogeniture, Holwell sweepingly generalised that all Indian Muslims were violent, yet also languid. Particularly antagonistic towards the early

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[31] Michael J. Franklin, 'General introduction and [meta] historical background [re]presenting "the palanquins of state; or, broken leaves in a Mughal garden"', in *Romantic representations of British India*, ed. Michael J. Franklin (London: Routledge, 2006), 5.

[32] Ghulam Hussain Khan Tabatabai, *A translation of the Sëir Mutaqherin*, transl. Nota-Manus (4 vols., Lahore: Sheikh Mubarak Ali, 1975), I, 11.

[33] Tabatabai, *Sëir Mutaqherin*, II, footnote 122, 232. See also II, 188 – 189; Karam Ali, 'Muzaffarnāmah', in *Bengal nawābs: Āzād-āl-Husaini's Naubahār-i-murshid quli khāni, Karam Ali's Muzaffarnāmah, and Yusuf 'Ali's Āhwāl-i-mahābat jang*, transl. Jadu Nath Sarkar (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1952), 47 (fol. 37b), 61 (fol. 51b – 52b).

eighteenth-century emperors Jahandar Shah and Muhammad Shah, Holwell dismissed them as uncontrollable libertines governed by their carnal lust. In the case of Jahandar Shah, he even likened the emperor to the classical character of Marc Anthony, who famously succumbed to the wiles of Cleopatra. The emperor became so enamoured of his mistress, Holwell disapprovingly noted, 'that he neglected every duty which ought to distinguish the man, and the king.' As for Mahommed Shah, once the king had secured his throne, he forgot the art of good governance through his pursuit of women, drinking, and hunting, leaving his nobles to enrich themselves.[34] As in Marc Anthony's case, these men's excessive attachment to women was described as the reason behind their downfall. Through these character studies, the histories offered what authors such as Holwell believed to be proof of the unpredictable nature of Muslim rulers.

Similar descriptions of women's negative influences also surfaced in Dow's and Orme's studies of the earlier emperor Jahangir, who was fiercely condemned for his utter submission to his concubine, and eventual wife, Nur Jahan. *The history of Hindostan* explores the link between femininity, Islam, and irrationality even more explicitly by listing Jahangir's many whims. Most notable is an anecdote claiming that Jahangir forced his noblemen to pierce their ears once he himself had done so, which, according to the history, offered proof of the emperor's excessive effeminacy.[35] This same type of character study was deployed in regional histories of local Indian rulers as well. Sir John Malcolm singled out the ruler Omrah Baz Bahadur as a subject of particular interest in his account of the central kingdom of Malwa, not due to his political, military, or administrative skills, but rather because of his tempestuous love life which led him to commit 'many acts of extravagant folly'.[36] The language in this passage is noteworthy because it indicates that British historians considered Indian Muslim men, petty regional rulers and Mughal emperors alike, to be firmly under the sway of women. As an aside, gender also played a role in Irish histories, though in that context it was usually carried to the other extreme of hyper masculinity. Throughout the early modern period and the eighteenth century, British authors frequently gendered Ireland through visual representations of the country as the feminine Hibernia, or, especially in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, through references to Ireland's 'virginal' state.

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[34] Holwell, *Interesting historical events*, I, 22, 29, 49.

[35] Dow, *The history of Hindostan, from the death of Akbar*, 24 – 30, 44 – 45; Robert Orme, *A history of the military transactions of the British nation in Indostan, from the year 1745* (2 vols., London: Printed for John Nourse, 1778, 3rd edn), I, 18.

[36] John Malcolm, *A memoir of central India, including Malwa, and adjoining provinces* (2 vols., London, 1823), I, 39 – 40.

Conversely, the individual Irish were depicted as irrationally violent and garrulous, exhibiting an unbecoming sense of exaggerated masculinity.[37] The use of such character studies provided readers with an impression of perpetual violence as a societal norm. In the case of India, these accounts demonstrate how British historians believed there to be something fundamentally irrational about these leaders, who were governed by passions rather than logic, and whose natures were fundamentally violent. It is also evident that the British considered the overt attraction professed by these leaders for women of their harem to be profoundly distasteful. The harem itself was also viewed with suspicion: these same leaders were brought up in royal harems themselves, where, according to Alexander Dow, they 'imbibe[d] in early youth little female cunning and prejudices which are improper for public life'.[38] The implication running through these histories was that Indian Muslims felt *everything* too strongly, never with a more becoming moderation.

While this chapter's primary focus is the role of history writing as a tool to shape British perceptions of the Irish and Indians, indigenous authors in both areas responded to these accounts with their own versions of history. It is useful to consider these reactions in more detail since they also draw attention to growing distinctions along religious or ethnic lines in Ireland and in India. As mentioned previously, a religious bias is far more prevalent in the histories of Ireland. At the same time, Irish and Indian authors sought to refute British historical narratives. This forced them to define more clearly how *they* perceived identity and communal belonging, as well as the ways in which *they* perceived the British. From this perspective, one important difference between the Irish and Indian responses was the former's tendency to echo British religious divisions. In contrast, many Indian authors rejected religious divides between Hindus and Muslims.

Early modern and early eighteenth-century pro-British histories of Ireland often represented rigid distinctions between Catholics and Protestants. Cox notably remarked that in his own time (1689), Ireland remained unpacified because 'Protestants are obliged to rule of charity and forms of justice' – the obvious implication being that Catholics were not and that this difference explained the current situation.[39] Confronted by the open hostility of New

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[37] For examples, see 'Sir Arthur Chichester's instructions to Sir James Ley and Sir John Davys, 14 October 1608,' in *CSPI James I, 1608 – 1610*, eds. Rev. C.W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (London: Longman & Co., Trübner & Co., 1874), 57 – 58; Anna Suranyi, 'Virile Turks and maiden Ireland: gender and national identity in early modern English travel literature', *Gender & History* 21:2 (2009): 248. On visual representations of Hibernia, see Chapter V.

[38] Dow, *The history of Hindostan, from the death of Akbar*, 394.

[39] Cox, *Hibernia anglicana*, I, Address to the reader, x.

English and British Scot settlers, Irish Catholics drew more closely together until the boundaries between Gaelic Irish and Old English slowly began to blur. Written in the first half of the seventeenth century, *Foras Feasa* referred to the Old English as *Ṡeanġall* (literally 'old foreigners'), in comparison to the *Gaeḋil* (Gaelic Irish). The use of these terms indicates that Keating (who was himself Old English) still considered the communities to be distinct at that time. Nevertheless, he also employed the word *Éirinneagh* (Irish race) to identify all Irish Catholics, which suggests a budding attempt to bridge these distinctions and foster the sense of a larger unified Catholic community.[40] This growing association is even more evident in the mid-seventeenth-century Gaelic poetry dealing with the Cromwellian transplantation policies of the 1650s. Comparing the fate of the transplanted Irish to the Israelites, the poet Fear Dorcha Ó Mealláin (the dark man Ó Mealláin) urged the Catholic – not exclusively Gaelic – inhabitants of Ireland to resist despair, rousingly stating '[i]f they call you "Papishes" accept it gladly for a title.'[41] Such poems helped transform transplantation into a shared Catholic experience (in spite of the fact that numerous Irish Protestants were also dispossessed of their lands). Following a second series of transplantation policies after William of Orange's victory at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, pro-Gaelic narratives began to express far more overt antagonism towards Protestants. Accusing Protestants of profiting from the seventeenth-century uprisings to acquire large tracts of forfeited lands, the eighteenth-century Jacobite historian Nicholas Plunkett blisteringly referred to the imposition of English law as a tool of oppression, not of civility. 'O unhappy Catholick [sic] of Ireland especially,' he concluded, '(…) whose doom it is to live among these [Protestant] vultures!'[42]

In their attempts to create a bank of knowledge on Indian peoples and customs, deriving from the conviction that 'knowing' India would enable them to govern it with more success, British historians drew the same types of religious distinctions they had previously constructed in early modern Ireland. Charles Hamilton's history of the Rohillas illustrates how the Protestant/Catholic divide was mapped onto the Hindu and Muslim populations of India. Divvying up the country solely along the basis of religion, Hamilton highlighted what he saw as the radical differences between the two religious groups to argue against their

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[40] See the use of all three terms in Keating, *Foras feasa ar Éirinn*, III, 366. On the term *Éirinneagh* as a designator of the Catholic communities of Ireland, see Bradshaw, 'Geoffrey Keating: apologist of Irish Ireland', 169.

[41] Fear Dorcha Ó Mealláin, 'Exodus to Connacht/An díbirt go Connachta', in *An duanaire 1600 – 1900: poems of the dispossessed*, ed. Seán Ó Tuama, transl. Thomas Kinsella (Portlaoise: The Dolem Press, 1981), lines 45 – 46, 107.

[42] Nicholas Plunkett, 'A light to the blind', c. 1720, NLI Mss 476 – 7, fols. 45, 48, 63.

ability to peacefully coexist. In Hamilton's ethnographical conception of Indian peoples, Muslims were a fanatical and highly violent race of invaders who had enslaved the peaceful Hindu kingdoms. In opposition, ancient Hindu society had been a highly advanced and learned one based on the principles of 'benevolence and an abhorrence of blood'. In the same vein, Grant noted how Indian rulers, especially Muslim ones, cared very little for their subjects and demanded blind obedience.[43] On the topic of religious distinctions, it is worth briefly noting that an earlier European travel account by the Frenchman Vincent le Blanc made no reference to Hindus or Muslims in sections on India, but merely to the inhabitants of various Asian countries.[44] Through these descriptions, men such as Hamilton and Grant created a narrative of oppressed Hindus under the subjugation of harsh Muslim rulers. Accordingly, EIC intervention was upheld as the natural solution to liberate this oppressed majority. However, it is worth noting that many contemporary Indian historians did not share this polarised view of religion.

The late eighteenth-century account by Ghulam Hussain Khan Tabatabai provides important insight into the Persian reaction to EIC encroachment, not least because it was written for an English audience as an attempt to refute prior British-produced histories. Within the context of this chapter, one of its greatest values lies in Tabatabai's lack of religious engagement. While he openly admitted that the *Seïr Mutaqherin*'s objective was to disprove British histories of India, he also subtly presented Hindu and Muslim Indians as a united front against the British. In the translator's preface, Haji Mustafa described the British as highly prejudiced against the Indian population. 'The general turn of the English individuals in India,' he asserted, 'seems to be a thorough contempt for the Indians (as a national body). It is taken to be no better than a dead stock, that may be worked upon without much consideration, and at pleasure.' Foreshadowing later events such as the 1857 Uprising, however, Mustafa bluntly cautioned the British against growing overly confident: 'The Indians then have been a more dangerous nation than they seem to be now: they may be in a slumber; but they may awake, and they deserve a more watchful eye than the English Government seems to think.'[45] Furthermore, Tabatabai never made distinctions between religious groups throughout the main body of the text, always comparing the 'Briton' and the

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[43] Charles Hamilton, *An historical relation of the origin, progress, and final dissolution of the gov ernment of the Rohilla Afgans in the northern provinces of Hindostan* (London: Printed for J. Debrett, 1787), 3; Grant, *Observations*, 7.

[44] Vincent le Blanc, *The world surveyed: or, the famous voyages & travailes of Vincent le Blanc, or White, of Marseilles*, trans. F[rancis] B[rooke] (London: Printed for John Starkey, 1660), Chapters 14 – 19 on India.

[45] Translator's preface, Tabatabai, *Seïr Mutaqherin*, I, 6, 14.

inhabitant of 'Hindostan'. Adopting the same tactic as the pro-Gaelic historians of Ireland, he contrasted the entire native population of India with the British, blurring the lines between Hindus and Muslims. Tabatabai instead stressed the incompatibility of eighteenth-century Britons and Indians, criticising what he viewed as the lack of British efforts to ingratiate themselves with the population. '[S]*uch is the aversion which the English openly shew* [sic] *for the natives, and such the disdain which they betray for them, that no love, and no coalition (...) can take root between the conquerors and the conquered.*'[46] While this should not be read to indicate that religious differences or tensions did not existed between the Hindu and Muslim communities of the late 1700s, it remains significant that indigenous authors deliberately minimised such differences and rejected the arbitrary categories of identity imposed on them by the British. Rather, historians such as Tabatabai emphasised cohesion and unity against the foreign British presence – which, incidentally, was exactly what the British sought to avoid by deliberately framing themselves as the successors of the Mughal Empire.

III.

One of the primary ways to compare the histories of Ireland and India is through their emphasis on different temporal spans of British involvement. However, even when considering this difference, the histories' treatment of religion is strikingly similar. In Irish histories, religion featured more prominently as a result of persisting tensions between the Protestant and Catholic communities. Conversely, on the surface it appeared to be of far less importance in the Indian context. Even so, greater analysis indicates that deep religious motivations existed in both historical traditions, which portrayed Catholicism and Islam as comparable forms of despotism. Throughout these accounts, both Catholic Ireland and Mughal India emerged as violent and domineering religions and provided a striking contrast to the standard image of a liberal Protestant Britain. This, in turn, provided much scope for justifications of greater imperial intervention.

Regarding early modern and eighteenth-century discourses on despotism, the term is usually understood in the framework of Louis de Secondat, Baron Montesquieu's doctrine of the 'oriental despot,' which he used to distinguish between European and Asian cultures.[47] However, British descriptions of religion in Ireland and India demonstrate that Catholicism

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[46] Original emphasis. *Ibid.*, III, 161 – 162.
[47] Teltscher, *Inscribing India*, 163; Chatterjee, *The cultures of history*, 193.

and Islam were often described in parallel terms. It is therefore plausible to argue that they can be considered as similar forms of despotism. In both cases, religion was used as a tool to categorise members of society, thereby demarcating communities along distinctly religious lines. In the European context, Linda Colley has argued that eighteenth-century Britons increasingly compared their own brand of Protestantism to French Catholicism as a way to foster a patriotic sense of identity.[48] The same principle occurred in late eighteenth-century India with Islam. The perceived similarities between Catholicism and Islam are most explicitly voiced in a pamphlet rebuttal written by Samuel Barber in 1787. 'It would be a Herculean labour indeed,' he scathingly noted to the archbishop of Cloyne, 'which would probably exceed *even* your eminent abilities, to defend the establishment of mahometanism [sic] in the east; popery, prelacy and presbytery in the west'.[49] As a vocal opponent of the Irish penal laws, Barber's comments initially appear surprising.[50] However, they are representative of the extent to which prejudices against Catholicism remained ingrained in late eighteenth-century British society. Historians such as Thomas Bartlett, among others, have previously argued that this period represented one of increasing tolerance. Conversely, scholars such as Karen Stanbridge question this assumption by examining the extent to which increased toleration in the period may have been motivated more by political considerations than ideology. In a study on British attitudes towards Catholicism in Quebec and Ireland in the 1770s, Stanbridge argues that increased toleration in both places was strongly motivated by growing military demands. Engaged in conflict with France and the former American colonies, Britain needed to increase its forces, even if that included Catholics. As such, the Quebec and Irish Catholic Relief Acts 'were linked to the defense of the empire in such a way that made them more palatable to the king and politicians who still held strong anti-Catholic views'.[51] It is in this context that Barber's enduring prejudice against Catholics becomes more easily understandable. Non-Protestant forms of religion represented a significant point of contention and unease for British historians in the early modern period, as well as an important marker of distinction in colonial spheres. In the Irish and Indian settings, descriptions of Muslim fanaticism and the Catholic clergy as troublemakers served the

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[48] Linda Colley, *Britons: forging the nation, 1707 – 1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009, rev. edn).

[49] Original emphasis. Samuel Barber, *Remarks on a pamphlet entitled the present state of the church of Ireland, by Richard, Lord Bishop of Cloyne* (Dublin: Printed by P. Byrne, 1787), 6.

[50] Rev. Dr. W.D. Bailie, 'The Reverend Samuel Barber 1738 – 1811: National Volunteer and United Irishman', in *Challenge and conflict: essays in Irish Presbyterian history and doctrine* (Antrim: W. & G. Baird, 1981), 72 – 95.

[51] On the growing toleration towards Catholics, see footnote 8. Karen Stanbridge, 'Quebec and the Irish Catholic Relief act of 1778: an institutional approach', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 16:3 (2003): 376, 397, and more generally 375 – 404.

broader purpose of transforming the actual concepts of Catholicism and Islam into the villains of British-produced accounts.

In Ireland, despotism was invariably associated with the governance of the ancient Irish lords prior to the imposition of English rule and law in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and to the Catholic clergy. Most tellingly, the histories stressed how these lords inherited their positions not through primogeniture, but rather through military prowess and authoritarianism. Describing the process of inheritance among the ancient Irish chieftains, Temple claimed that

> they came not in either by hereditary right or lawful election, so their Investiture was solemnized neither by Unction, or Coronation, they (...) had certain kinds of barbarous ceremonies used at their Inauguration, kept up their power with a high hand, and held the people most monstrously enslaved to all the savage customs practised under their Dominion.[52]

Considering the central importance of inheritance and the security of private property in contemporary Britain, the potential instability and uncertainty generated by this form of inheritance represented, in the eyes of the British, a particularly unpardonable sin.[53]

Expanding on the notion of harsh and imperative Irish lords, Crouch depicted the pre-Norman era kings of Ireland as the cruel and merciless equivalents of Asian despots. Stacpoole, meanwhile, claimed Irish peasants lived under the thrall of 'little kings, or petty tyrants'. One late eighteenth-century account even maintained that the degenerate Old English and Irish lords under Edward III were so tyrannical that the peasants begged the English to include them under their jurisdiction in order to avoid persecution.[54] Irish histories written following the Glorious Revolution of 1688 also repeatedly stressed the dangers of a Catholic resurgence in the Irish administration. Using the Lord Deputy Tyrconnell's rise to power under James II as a cautionary tale of Catholic oppression, Leland described the Ireland of the 1680s as a grim and barren land, and most importantly claimed '[t]hat English interest which princes and statesmen had wisely laboured to establish in this country, was (...) threatened with final extirpation.'[55] Such descriptions highlighted the terrible risks of

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[52] Temple, *The Irish rebellion*, 4.
[53] See Chapter IV on matters of property.
[54] Crouch, *The history of the kingdom of Ireland*, 34; Stacpoole, *Some short historical anecdotes*, 6; EMUH, *The history of Ireland from the earliest authentic accounts*, 59.
[55] An interesting subversion of this theme is found in the writings of an individual known only as Hibernicus, who compared the British administration to 'a Moorish despot'. Leland, *The history of Ireland*, III, 510; Hibernicus, *English union, is Ireland's ruin! Or an address to the Irish nation* (Dublin: Printed for James Moore, 1799), 7.

allowing the return of Catholics to office: centuries of British efforts to civilise Ireland would suddenly be lost and all for naught.

Strengthening the nefarious associations with Catholicism, early modern histories increasingly began to depict the Catholic clergy as architects of discord. Historians frequently attributed the entirety of Irish societal problems to the clergy, including the numerous – and bloody – rebellions throughout the centuries. Crouch's opinion on the matter was particularly incendiary, and worth quoting at length.

> (...) Ireland, has for several ages been an aceldama, or field of slaughter, watered with the blood of English men; occasioned by their repeated rebellions, and inveterate aversion to the English nation, in pursuance whereof, they have left no treacheries, murders, or villanies [sic] unattempted [sic], being incouraged [sic] thereto by their ignorant and superstitious priests, to whose dictates, this stupid people entirely submit.[56]

This explicit condemnation of Catholic religious officials strongly reinforced the association between Catholicism and violence, while hinting at the quasi-enslavement of the Irish peasantry. Crouch's wording is also worth considering since it underlines the growing importance of religious distinctions in seventeenth-century Ireland. Even though the specific allusion was to the death of *English* men and the *English* nation, Crouch patently viewed the terms *English* and *Protestant* on the one hand, and *Catholic* and *Irish*, on the other, as synonymous.

The activism of Catholic priests was also singled out as the most influential factor for the 1641 Uprising, when large portions of the Catholic population rose against their Protestant neighbours. Historians such as Cox were quick to argue that the Catholic population was generously treated under James I following the exile of the Gaelic lords of Ulster and the disintegration of the Church's institution in Ireland. For that reason, Catholics had every reason to peacefully accept English rule. That being said, the pernicious influences of continental Catholicism continued to foster unjustified (in Cox's opinion) resentment among Irish Catholics, eventually culminating in an open rebellion described as a longstanding plot to massacre the Protestant inhabitants of Ireland.[57] Returning to the role of the priests, Shirley and Temple emphatically stated that the Irish nobles were unable to convince the peasants to take up arms. Instead, the 'Popish priests' were the only ones able to

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[56] Crouch, *The history of the kingdom of Ireland*, fol. 3.
[57] Cox, *Hibernia anglicana*, II, An apparatus, iii, and 3, 72 – 73.

successfully sway them towards revolt.[58] In the context of paranoid hysteria following the conflict, the gruesome lists of atrocities attributed to Catholics found in accounts such as Temple's were widely disseminated and would have made a strong impression on a frightened Protestant population. Even more worrisome from this viewpoint was the central role once again played by Catholic priests. Temple described in almost gleeful detail how priests had openly advocated for the wholesale murder of Protestants, since 'they were Hereticks [sic], and not to be suffered any longer to live among them; that it was no more sin to kill an *English-man*, than to kill a dog; and that it was a most mortal and unpardonable sin to relieve or protect any of them'.[59] Considering the propaganda surrounding the Irish peasantry's subjugation to the clergy, this statement would have had particular resonance in the decades following 1641. According to these histories, Catholic priests had an unnatural hold on the general population of Ireland, preventing it from integrating with its English brethren. It is no coincidence that in a footnote comparing the state of Scotland and Ireland, Grant noted in the 1790s that whereas the general Scottish population had greatly improved due to the spread of Protestantism, Ireland remained a failed endeavour because of the persistence of Catholicism among the peasants.[60] The continued underdeveloped nature of the Irish people was, in Grant's estimation, a direct result of their faith. The Catholicism found in Irish histories, then, became increasingly and inextricably linked with autocracy.

The motif of the British as saviours also played a prominent role in their justifications for greater expansion on the subcontinent. Contemporary historians insisted that all conflicts in the region were a product of oriental despotism and the domineering nature of the successive Mughal administrations. Most important, however, were the descriptions of Muslim Indian rulers as inherent despots, which pointed to the British conviction that a particular correlation existed between despotism and Islam. It remains telling that the antiquarian William Robertson, known elsewhere for advocating the fair and equal treatment of Indians, described the sixteenth-century Mughal ruler Akbar (famed for religious tolerance) as 'the only' Muslim not blinded by fanaticism. Alexander Dow's stance against Muslim Indians was equally antagonistic. In his history, even the act of conversion itself was couched in quasi violent terms, Mahomed being said to have 'enslaved the mind as well as

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[58] Shirley, *The true impartial history and wars of the kingdom of Ireland*, 21; Temple, *The Irish rebellion*, 115.
[59] Temple, *The Irish rebellion*, 136 – 137.
[60] Grant, *Observations*, 194.

the body [of his followers]'.[61] Meanwhile, Luke Scrafton acidly noted that 'I am sensible I have altogether given the Moors a detestable character; and I am sorry to say it is so universally true, that I never knew above two or three exceptions'.[62] Charles Hamilton, lastly, described Siraj-ud-Daula's actions as the tipping point for British intervention against the disintegrating Mughal Empire. '[I]n the anarchy which increased with the increasing weakness of the Imperial Court,' he wrote on the power vacuum created through a succession of weak rulers, 'the violent and unprincipled factions of contending nobles united to tread all order and subordination under foot'.[63]

As in the case of the Irish priests, violence played a central role in shaping British perceptions of Indian despotism, the series of succession crises of the mid-1700s frequently presented as prime examples. Inheritance laws were also the subject of much censure in India as the Mughals did not follow the laws of primogeniture either: the resulting succession problems of the mid-1700s were universally decried by eighteenth-century British historians for having caused irreparable damage to the empire. In *The history of Hindostan*, Dow devoted considerable attention to the campaigns of Jahangir's sons Chusero and Shah Jahan, as well as the latter's rise to power through fratricide. Through episodes of Mughal history such as these, Dow claimed that perpetual violence had cheapened the value of life so that '[t]he price of blood in India is not the third part of the value of a horse. The innate principles of justice and humanity are weakened by these means.'[64] J.Z. Holwell, a survivor of the Black Hole, likewise criticised the tradition of usurpers (conveniently glossing over the EIC's support of Mir Jafar) and, like Dow, claimed that Aurangzeb's particularly bloody ascension set a singularly harmful precedent for subsequent rulers. In a passage not dissimilar from earlier Irish accounts, Holwell condemned the course of actions that led Aurangzeb to '[the throne] to which he himself did not arrive without wading through a sea of blood, and a continued chain of almost unparallel'd [sic] religious fraud, perfidity [sic] and cruelty (...)'.[65] Islam in general was also constantly compared to Hinduism to reinforce its violent associations as set out in British histories. Whereas Hinduism started to garner criticism in the nineteenth century for practices such as female infanticide and sati, its adherents, prior to

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[61] William Robertson, *An historical disquisition concerning the knowledge that the ancients had of India* (London: Printed for A. Strahan and T. Cadell, and for E. Balfour, 1791), 272; Dow, *The history of Hindostan, from the death of Akbar*, xiii; Sudipta Sen, *Distant sovereignty: national imperialism and the origins of British India* (New York & London: Routledge, 2002), 43.
[62] Letter 1, Scrafton, *Reflections*, 22.
[63] Hamilton, *An historical relation*, 19 – 20, 21.
[64] Dow, *The history of Hindostan, from the death of Akbar*, xv, and more generally 62, 111 – 113.
[65] Holwell, *Interesting historical events*, I, 18 – 19.

this, were depicted as the victims of aggressive Muslim invaders. Mughal rule, therefore, was invariably associated with despotism. The repeated emphasis on the Mughal emperors' often fervent adherence to Islam reinforced this violent link. The emphasis placed on Islam's 'enslavement' of its followers, to borrow Dow's expression, would have been deeply troubling to the British given the implications that this would have had for the empire. In other words, a ruler governed by a violent religion that demanded total subservience. Despite the fact that they were not religious figures per se, Muslim leaders of the eighteenth century can therefore be compared to the controlling figure of the Catholic Church authorities in Ireland.

The Black Hole of Calcutta, just like the 1641 Irish Uprising, became an important addition to the expanding catalogue of colonial events depicted as unjust attacks on defenceless British subjects. As such, it was deployed in Indian histories as a platform for the justification of more aggressive and militaristic British policies, as well as the EIC's eventual assumption of power in Bengal. Closely resembling the almost hagiographical tones of Irish Protestant accounts, retellings of the Black Hole described the attack on Calcutta of Siraj ud-Daula, and the overnight imprisonment of British prisoners, many of whom later perished, as 'a scene of the most cruel distress, which perhaps human nature ever suffered or survived'.[66]

The official EIC historiographer Robert Orme devoted considerable attention to the prisoners' suffering in his account, rendered all the more poignant through his extensive use of creative license in imagining the sequence of events leading up to the attack on Calcutta. Mistakenly believing that the British attempted to fortify their possessions in Calcutta, Orme claims that Siraj ud-Daula attacked the EIC factory; blinded by his hatred for the British, he carried on with the attack once he had realised his error. According to Orme, the nawab murdered 123 Britons out of spite, but not without first having reduced them to a state of despair in which 'all regards of compassion and affection were lost, and no one would recede or give way for the relief of another'.[67] It is worth noting that in this last respect, accounts of the Black Hole distinguished themselves from those of the Irish conflict because of their troubling psychological implications. Taking up Teltscher's contention that fear coloured British accounts of India, Partha Chatterjee's analysis of the event demonstrates that in spite of florid descriptions concerning the Indian officials' cruelty towards the prisoners, the most

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[66] *A complete history of the war in India*, 18.
[67] Orme, *A history of the military transactions of the British nation in Indostan,* II, 76, and more generally 55 – 56, 76 – 77.

important element of Holwell's original account lay in the British response. Orme, among others, claimed that the prisoners forgot their common bonds and eventually turned against one another. Chatterjee rightfully points out that this sort of behaviour would have been considered highly shameful among Europeans, even more so as it was witnessed by Indian guards. 'For Holwell,' Chatterjee maintains, 'it was unforgivable that native eyes should have been allowed to witness the descent of a group of Europeans into a state of natural savagery. All he could do by way of retaliation was to transfer the attribute of "brutality" from his benighted compatriots to the amused Indian prison guards.'[68] The Black Hole essentially broke down the hierarchical boundaries delimited by the British in India which it became imperative for the British to rectify. As a result, while the episode illustrated the physical perils faced by Britons in India, it also showed a far more troubling psychological one: the test of British unity in a foreign land.

The strong association between Catholicism/Islam and fanaticism served the ideological function of portraying British intervention in a benevolent light. Depictions of the oppressive regimes of Gaelic Irish lords and priests enabled early modern English writers to justify the twelfth-century conquest in moral terms: seen in this light, the invasion could be described as a necessary deed to protect an Irish peasantry incapable of freeing itself from despotic overlords. This trend carried on in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries through British depictions of the Catholic clergy as architects of discord. The 1641 Uprising provided the necessary rationalisation for the Cromwellian transplantation policies of the 1650s, when Catholic land ownership shrank from roughly 60 per cent to 20 per cent throughout the country.[69] The same situation arose with the Mughals in India. Comparisons between the meek and passive Hindu population and their minority Muslim rulers served to make a distinctly moral point. The greatest threats to British interests in late eighteenth-century India were Muslim kingdoms and rulers such as the Mughal empire and Tipu Sultan of Mysore. As such, it was in the EIC's interests to justify their expansionist endeavours (which were not always favourably received domestically) along religious lines.

British-produced histories of the early modern period and of the eighteenth century provided a medium through which to convey specific political and ideological points about

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[68] Partha Chatterjee, *The black hole of empire: history of a global practice of power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 23.

[69] Kevin McKenny, 'The restoration land settlement in Ireland: a statistical interpretation', in *Restoration Ireland: always settling and never settled*, ed. Coleman A. Dennehy (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 39.

the nature of Britain and its relationship with Ireland or India. Most significantly, specific events were continually re-invoked throughout these histories to serve as reminders of the British need for caution in colonial settings. Although the vitriol surrounding the 1641 Uprising gradually died down, Temple's call for 'a course taken, such provisions made, (...) [so that] such a wall of separation [be] set up betwixt the *Irish* and the *British*, at [sic] it shall not be in their power to rise up (as now and in all former ages they have done) to destroy and root them out in a moment' still carried weight for many eighteenth-century authors.[70] Additionally, Protestant accounts repeatedly insisted that the decades leading towards the uprising were ones of peace and tranquility – the sudden nature of the uprising thus served as a warning that appearances could be highly misleading, and that Catholics could not be trusted. As a result, Irish Protestants should exert continued vigilance.

In India, events such as the Black Hole and the Battle of Plassey echoed this sentiment, highlighting the fact that external appearances of goodwill were not always true reflections of the genuine Indian character. While all British accounts dwelt extensively on the faults of Siraj ud-Daula, many also revealed a sense of disillusionment with other – initially promising – rulers. For instance, *A complete history of the war in India* underscored the Janus-faced nature of Mir Jafar's character, who initially seemed eminently preferable to the young nawab. Yet, in truth, 'under the mask of a spaniel, he concealed the heart of a tyger [sic]: in a word, he was ambitious, cool, cunning, prying, cruel, and splenetic'.[71] More generally, Orme also cautioned against the untrustworthy nature of Indian rulers by drawing attention to constant instances in which they supposedly reneged on their alliances when faced with difficulties or resistance.[72]

These unflattering depictions of events and individuals in both areas enabled depictions of Britain as a benevolent entity, thereby justifying its expansion programmes. By providing detailed lists of the numerous rebellions that had plagued Ireland since the Norman era, and repeated accounts of Gaelic Irish barbarism and wickedness, authors such as Cox maintained that the indigenous population should, by rights, remain eternally grateful for the civilising effect of an English presence. Instead, according to the histories, the Irish had persisted in maintaining their rebellious nature for centuries and remained remarkably ungrateful for the benefits introduced by English settlers. Cox's argument rendered the

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[70] Temple, *The Irish rebellion*, preface.
[71] *A complete history of the war in India*, 72.
[72] Orme, *A history of the military transactions of the British nation in Indostan*, I, 84.

continued presence of the English in Ireland an absolute imperative, since '*Prosper* had good reason to call *Ireland*, *the barbarous island*; and the Irish have as much reason to thank God and the English, for a more civil and regular government exercised over them'.[73] The same approach can be observed in the histories of India. Marking the transition towards a more missionary-based tone in Indian accounts, Grant extolled the British mandate to 'free' and 'educate' the inhabitants of India in order to help them reach a higher degree of civility. In a passage echoing Cox's earlier discussion of Ireland, he sweepingly stated that all Indians were 'lamentably degenerate and base'. More importantly, like the Irish, they remained 'obstinate in their disregard of what they know to be right'.[74] Increased British intervention therefore became an imperative.

The histories of Ireland and India served as case studies to illustrate proper forms of behaviour: the broader picture that emerged, naturally, being that these proper forms were invariably displayed by the British and customarily disregarded by the Irish and Indians. The accounts enabled British officials to draw increasingly rigid distinctions between the various social groups in colonial spheres, and to neatly oppose these groups with British settlers. Furthermore, one of the key ways in which the British began to distinguish themselves from colonials was through religion. The supposed atrocities committed by the Irish in 1641 hinted at the notion that regardless of the progress potentially achieved since the Elizabethan settlement, the English had ultimately failed to civilise the Gaelic Irish and the lapsed Old English. In addition, the period surrounding 1641 firmly set in motion the gradual transition towards a religiously, not ethnically, divided society in Ireland. It remained possible for individuals to identify as Gaelic Irish, Old English, New English, and even British Scot until the late eighteenth century; but communities began to align far more explicitly along Catholic and Protestant lines as of the 1650s.

This belief in British moral superiority, and the consequent conviction of a mandate to educate its colonial subjects, also permeated historians' depictions of Britain as the 'saviour' of the Hindu nation. Notably epitomised in Grant's explanation for the formal EIC assumption of administrative control in Bengal, this reasoning eventually became integral to the British *raison d'être* in India. 'Our national standard of sentiments and morals,' Grant pontificated, 'undoubtedly gives a comparative elevation to the character of those who are

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[73] Cox, *Hibernia anglicana*, I, An apparatus, vii – viii.
[74] Grant, *Observations*, 71.

reared under it.'[75] As in Ireland, British-produced histories of India began to assign ever greater significance to the perceived *impasse* between Hinduism and Islam, in which Hindus were invariably portrayed as the victims of domineering Mughal rulers. Such rigid religious distinctions render it possible to view Indian Muslims as the counterparts to Irish Catholics: two violent and unpredictable peoples who treacherously preyed on innocent neighbours.

The comparison between writing practices in Ireland and India during the early modern period and the eighteenth century offers an intriguing glimpse into the comparable British approaches to, and interpretations of, the disparate parts of their empire. This does not imply that Catholicism and Islam were considered to be entirely interchangeable. Even so, the similar ways in which these religions were depicted implies that the British drew on past experiences to inform contemporary policies, even when such experiences were geographically and culturally disparate. Following Colin Kidd's argument that eighteenth-century Britons used religion as a focus through which to find not only differences, but, more importantly, similarities between various cultures, this chapter has argued that the domestic religious upheavals produced by the Reformation coloured the British vision of Ireland and India, where Britons sought to map out the same disparities.[76] Britons, consequently, sought out elements in Irish and Indian society which would fit into the world view that they expected to find in both places.

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[75] *Ibid.*, 16.
[76] See Kidd, *British identities before nationalism*, 48 – 59.

Chapter II. Criminal jurisdiction in Ireland and India

Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century histories of Ireland and India provided the British with justifications for their initial expansionist strategies, while also enabling them to create banks of knowledge about their colonised subjects. Another significant tool in the British arsenal to better understand and consequently rule their territories was the law. One of colonial law's key characteristics was its malleability: rather than being uniformly imposed throughout the empire, colonial law was adapted in reaction to different conflicts in widely regional contexts.[1] Moreover, according to Lauren Benton and Richard Ross, moments of violence are useful to examinations of imperial jurisdiction in colonies because the ways in which administrations chose to address these conflicts provide insight into the evolution of jurisdictional patterns in individual areas.[2] The following two legal chapters draw heavily on Benton and Ross's contention, and examine moments of conflict in Ireland and India to highlight how the jurisdictional reach of the law responded to such instances of subversion, how it was molded to fit perceived threats.

Following once again from Benton, early modern governments expressed a strong desire for sovereign power over the peoples of other nations as European empires began to expand. However, the extent to which these nations exerted such power is questionable: usually, it was something projected rather than tangibly experienced. By the eighteenth century, the concept of sovereignty encompassed a whole range of symbolic elements that moved beyond spatial definitions of territory.[3] These two chapters investigate moments in which different British administrations attempted to project such notions of sovereignty in Ireland and India through the use of the law. Their assumption of jurisdiction over colonial subjects by the Irish and EIC courts provided crucial displays of imperial rule. The first legal chapter examines this assumption of power through British responses to forms of highway banditry in early modern Ireland and late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century India,

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[1] John Comaroff calls the use of the law in colonial settings 'lawfare'. Lauren Benton, *A search for sovereignty: law and geography in European empires, 1400 – 1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 28; John Comaroff, 'Colonialism culture, and the law: a foreword,' *Law & Social Inquiry* 26:2 (2001): 306.

[2] Lauren Benton and Richard J. Ross, 'Empires and legal pluralism: jurisdiction, sovereignty, and political imagination in the early modern world,' in *Legal pluralism and empires, 1500 – 1850*, eds. Lauren Benton and Richard J. Ross (New York: New York University Press, 2013), 6.

[3] Benton, *A search for sovereignty*, 4; Lauren Benton and Benjamin Straumann, 'Acquiring empire by law: from Roman doctrine to early modern European practice,' *Law and History Review* 28:1 (2010): 34; Sandria B. Freitag, 'Crime in the social order of colonial north India,' *Modern Asian Studies* 25:2 (1991): 227, 228; Elizabeth Kolsky, *Colonial justice in British India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 30.

while the next chapter will consider British responses to criminality through the punishment of transportation overseas.

Throughout the early modern period and the eighteenth century, the law was upheld by Britons as an indicator of civility. The official discourse that arose over the implementation of the law in colonial settings maintained that British common law could not arbitrarily be imposed on other nations. Instead, Britons had a moral duty to reform existing legal systems to educate and civilise their colonial subjects.[4] Examining moments of violence in the colonies would initially suggest that the British adopted an entirely different and contradictory approach: when faced with subversion, they often flouted, ignored, or directly contravened existing laws. However, these moments do not in fact represent the suspension of legal measures. Benton persuasively argues that the so-called suspension of law in colonial contexts, even the imposition of martial law in periods of acute crisis, never represented a true suspension of law. What these examples actually represent are instances in which colonial administrators attempted to implement new approaches to deal with existing issues, which Benton qualifies as 'novel procedural and doctrinal experiments'.[5] In other words, moments of crisis showcase different ways in which the British attempted to impose and extend their jurisdictional reach over their colonial territories.

Many historians have framed discussions of violence and conflict in terms of borders and the colonial 'state'. Veena Das and Deborah Poole view colonial law as a symbolic boundary determined by the state between legitimate (state-emanating) and illegitimate forms of power and violence. Meanwhile, several scholars of India describe British attempts to impose legal uniformity throughout their territory as similar boundaries delineating the areas both within and outside of their control.[6] While it is possible to view colonial violence as a question of boundaries and state control, these chapters will take the different route of focusing on criminality and jurisdiction in Ireland and India. More specifically, they will focus on British attempts to legislate colonial behaviours, notably through their reaction to

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[4] See, for example, late sixteenth-century commentators on the state of Irish laws. Sir Thomas Smith, *The common-welth of England* (London: Imprinted by John Windet for Gregorie Steton, 1589), Book I, 26; Edmund Spenser, *A view of the state of Ireland*, eds. Andrew Hadfield and Willy Maley (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 135.

[5] Benton, *A search for sovereignty*, 33.

[6] Veena Das and Deborah Poole, 'State and its margins: comparative ethnographies,' *Anthropology in the margins of the state*, eds. Veena Das and Deborah Poole (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 2004), 7, and more generally 3 – 34; Ranajit Guha, 'Not at home in empire,' *Critical Inquiry* 23:3 (1997): 484; Nancy Gardiner Cassels, *Social legislation of the East India Company: public justice versus public instruction* (New Delhi: Sage Publication, 2010), 28.

'delinquents' whose activities were deemed to fall outside of acceptable social norms. This subsection of the population was frequently targeted by numerous legal measures undertaken to counter perceived threats to different British administrations and their claims to sovereign power. Moments of colonial 'delinquency' raise important questions about British abilities to regulate their territorial possessions and enforce their jurisdiction, while simultaneously providing additional incentive for stronger British legal authority.

This first legal chapter considers the ways in which colonial subjects were impacted by British efforts to impose their jurisdictional authority. It briefly outlines the nature of law in early modern and eighteenth-century Ireland and India. Then, it uses a comparative case study of forms of highway robberies – known in Ireland as toryism and rappareeism, and in India as dacoity and thuggee – to demonstrate how banditry represented significant examples of crises that challenged central authority and undermined British claims to sovereignty. The following chapter will consider the fate of those colonial 'delinquents' found to have contravened the law, and who were sentenced to transportation and hard labour in the penal colonies of New South Wales and Southeast Asia.

I.

Prior to the nineteenth-century Act of Union between Ireland and Britain, the two countries' legal systems already bore close resemblances. Remnants of the Gaelic Brehon laws were virtually eradicated by the Cromwellian Settlement in the 1650s, ensuring that the Irish legal system conformed to the English common law. As of the late seventeenth century, the Irish parliament began to assert a level of autonomy from its English equivalent and the number of Irish-born jurists rose visibly throughout the 1700s – though most were probably Protestants, since admittance to the bar required training in England and Catholics were officially barred from the profession following the Glorious Revolution. Moreover, despite these manifestations of semi-independence, final legal authority in Ireland remained with the English crown.[7] However, the most infamous legal measures implemented during this period were the series of penal laws passed against Irish Catholics from the 1690s. The unstable political climate left by the sectarian conflicts of the seventeenth century profoundly affected the Protestant inhabitants of Ireland, who viewed themselves as a beleaguered minority. First

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[7] Michael Brown and Seán Patrick Donlan, 'The laws of Ireland, 1689 – 1850: a brief introduction,' in *The laws and other legalities in Ireland, 1689 – 1850*, eds. Michael Brown and Seán Patrick Donlan (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 5; Neal Garnham, *The courts, crime and the criminal law in Ireland 1692 – 1760* (Blackrock: Irish Academic Press, 1996), 71, 89, 99.

introduced after the Williamite victory against the Catholic forces of James II during the Glorious Revolution, the penal laws were intended to secure Protestant political, administrative, and legal authority over their Catholic counterparts.[8] The oppressive measures undertaken against Irish civilians accused or suspected of being Jacobites throughout this period also led to an atmosphere in which dissident groups had the space to challenge government authority and garnered popular support by depicting themselves 'as self-appointed protectors of defenceless papists'.[9] Although the tories and rapparees already had an established presence in Ireland by the 1690s, it was within the context of these oppressive measures that they proliferated and refashioned themselves into a romanticised image of anti-heroes fighting English supremacy in Ireland.

Basing themselves on the same rhetoric found in British-produced histories of India, the EIC maintained that the law represented one way in which the Indian population could be 'freed' from previous despotic rulers. This emphasis on the 'freeing' of Indian subjects, Elizabeth Kolsky notes, arose from British comparisons drawn between their own administration and previous Mughal governments. Whereas the Mughals were depicted as brutal and oppressive foreign overlords, 'Britons saw their empire as an empire of law and liberty – not an empire of men'.[10] Two parallel justice systems emerged in eighteenth-century India, reflecting the growing reach of British jurisdiction on the subcontinent. The Crown Courts in the EIC Presidency towns of Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta oversaw cases falling under British jurisdiction, whereas the *Mofussil* or Company Courts administered Hindu and Muslim law. As of 1773, the Supreme Court established in Calcutta also provided some measure of government oversight for EIC activities.[11] Until the end of the eighteenth century, the EIC outwardly professed to uphold the indigenous legal systems in the *Mofussil* Courts: under Mughal rule, the courts had dispensed Muslim sharia law. By employing Hindu and Muslim legal scholars in the Company Courts, the British successfully set themselves up as a viable alternative source of juridical power in India, despite their lack of tangible authority throughout most of the 1700s. That being said, legal experts such as Jörg Fisch note the

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[8] See, for example, Chapters I and IV for views against Irish Catholics. John Morrill, 'The causes of the popery laws: paradoxes and inevitabilities,' in *New perspectives on the penal laws. Eighteenth-century Ireland/Irish an dá chultúr*, special issue no. 1, eds. John Bergin, Eoin Magennis, Lesa Ní Mhunghaile and Patrick Walsh (Dublin: Eighteenth-Century Ireland Society, 2011), 72 – 73.

[9] Éamonn Ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite cause, 1685 – 1766: a fatal attachment* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2004), 76.

[10] Kolsky, *Colonial justice in British India*, 2.

[11] Lauren Benton, *Law and colonial cultures: legal regimes in world history, 1400 – 1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 136; Kolsky, *Colonial justice in British India*, 11, 31.

somewhat superficial nature of the British adherence to Hindu and Muslim forms of law. Fisch notably emphasises the 'coexistence,' rather than the cooperation, between British and Muslim law.[12] Even this element of 'coexistence' gradually lost ground in the last decades of the eighteenth century. While the British initially claimed a desire to reform the existing law courts, this was eventually replaced by a conviction that the law should be secular rather than religiously-inspired – unlike Hindu and Muslim law.[13]

II.

One notable legal issue that plagued Ireland until the early eighteenth century was the rise of toryism, groups of bandits who robbed and killed travellers on the highways. Derived from the Irish *tóraithe* (wanted or raider), toryism has variously had political, religious, secular, and agrarian associations. Eventually used to designate Catholics, and especially Jacobites, the increasing political connotation that arose around it during the Williamite wars meant that it was replaced by the word rapparee (from the Irish *ropaire*: half-pike, as a reference to Jacobite forces, or robber).[14] Irish highway banditry developed from gangs that formed in the wake of numerous seventeenth-century conflicts, ranging from the Elizabethan settlement wars to the Cromwellian transplantation policies of the mid-1600s. Initially known as woodkernes, these groups became seen as serious political and physical threats to the plantation system implemented in various parts of Ireland in the later sixteenth century.[15] It is worth stressing this early association of bandits with physical and political violence, since it showcases the very early associations made by the English between the Gaelic Irish, criminality, and armed resistance to English rule.

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[12] Jörg Fisch, *Cheap lives and dear limbs: the British transformation of the Bengal criminal law 1769 – 1817* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1983), 7; Benton, *Law and colonial cultures*, 139.

[13] Fisch, *Cheap lives and dear limbs*, 31 – 32, 65 – 66; Huw Bowen, Elizabeth Mancke and John Reid, 'Introduction: Britain's oceanic empire,' in Huw Bowen, Elizabeth Mancke and John Reid, *Britain's oceanic empire: Atlantic and Indian Ocean worlds, c. 1550 – 1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 5; Elisa Giunchi, 'The reinvention of sharī'a under the British raj: in search of authenticity and certainty,' *The Journal of Asian Studies* 69:4 (2010): 1130.

[14] Ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite cause*, 20; Sean Connolly, *Religion, law, and power: the making of Protestant Ireland 1660 – 1760* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 203 – 204.

[15] The term woodkerne (*ceithearn coilleadh*) was first used by John Derricke in 1581. Éamonn Ó Ciardha, 'Toryism and rappareeism in County Armagh in the late seventeenth century,' in *Armagh history & society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county*, eds. A.J. Hughes and William Nolan (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2001), 383 – 384; Éamonn Ó Ciardha, 'Tories and moss-troopers in Scotland and Ireland in the interregnum: a political dimension,' in *Celtic dimensions of the British civil war: proceedings from the second conference of the research centre in Scottish history, University of Strathclyde*, ed. John Young (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1997), 141 – 142.

The highway bandits known as tories first appeared in the ranks of the confederate and royalist forces during the War of the Three Kingdoms. While historians agree that these groups' motivations were often complex, scholars such as Éamonn Ó Ciardha and Sean Connolly maintain that contemporaries saw a political dimension from their inception.[16] These early groups were mostly comprised of minor aristocrats who had once been courtiers to the leading Gaelic families, but who had been dispossessed under the Cromwell regime. These tories made use of their background as soldiers to wage a guerilla war against the English, taking advantage of the often-rugged terrain to carry out blitz-style attacks on English forces. The nature of these attacks – sudden and unpredictable – had a tremendous psychological impact on English settlements throughout the island, creating a largely unseen threat.[17]

Contemporary accounts of the tories differ dramatically, ranging from romanticised portrayals of the bandits as defenders of the Catholic faith to hardened and brutal thugs who terrorised the local populations. The former tory Edmund Murphy, for instance, provided a blistering denunciation of his former compatriots as cruel and mercilessly opportunistic. It must, however, be noted that this was done in the context of Murphy having renounced his bandit lifestyle and turned witness for the prosecution in the trial of Oliver Plunkett, the Archbishop of Armagh.[18] The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland also complained about the extortion practices of tories in 1675. 'These Lawless people hav: bin so bold,' he reported,

> as 2 send 2 sevrall Gentlemen, requiring them at a certein time 2 furnish them wth sums of meney, or otherwise they would fire their Houses; They hav: done y.. like, also 2 divers litl: Jury in y.. Country, & forc:d them to their dimands, (…); some people: also they hav: murthired.[19]

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[16] Éamonn Ó Ciardha, 'Toryism in Cromwellian Ireland (1650 – 60),' *The Irish Sword: The Journal of the Military History Society of Ireland* 19:78 (1995): 291; Sean Connolly, 'Violence and order in the eighteenth century,' in *Rural Ireland 1600 – 1900: modernisation and change*, eds. Patrick O'Flanagan, Paul Ferguson and Kevin Whelan (Cork: Cork University Press, 1987), 42 – 43.

[17] 'Copy of the commissioners of parliament in Ireland to the council of state, 17 August 1659,' *CSPI Charles I and the Commonwealth, with addenda, 1616 – 1660 (1647 – 1660)*, ed. Robert Pentland Mahaffy (London: HMSO, 1903), 690. For an analysis of early tories' pedigrees, see Louis Cullen, 'Catholic social classes under the penal laws,' in *Endurance and emergence: Catholics in Ireland in the eighteenth century*, eds. Thomas Power and Kevin Whelan (Blackrock: Irish Academic Press, 1990), 63.

[18] Edmund Murphy, 'The present state and condition of Ireland,' Section IV, in L.P. Murray, 'Life and times of Father Edmund Murphy, parish priest of Killeavy and chanter of Armagh,' *Journal of the County Lough Archaeological Society* 7:3 (1931): 348.

[19] 'These lawless people have been so bold, as to send to several gentlemen, requiring them at a certain time to furnish them with sums of money, or otherwise they would [set] fire [to] their houses; they have done the like, also to divers little jur[ies] in the country, and forced them to their demands (…); some people also they have murdered.' Essex to Mr. secretary Coventry, 8 June 1675, Dublin Castle, *Earl of Essex letter-book vol. III, 1675*, BL Stowe MS 215, Essex Papers, fols. 160a – 160b.

Notwithstanding such claims, the oppressive reactionary measures implemented by the administration to address toryism appear instead to have generated a degree of support for the bandits among Irish Catholics, who quickly became targets of the countermeasures. The Protestant Vincent Gookin, who famously sparred with Richard Lawrence in a pamphlet war on the Cromwellian transplantation policies, claimed that many of the Irish were forced into toryism because of starvation and poverty. As far as Gookin was concerned, the law provided little protection for the general population.[20] An early proclamation from 1649 decreed that Protestant victims of tory crimes could demand reparation from the bandits' families and claim their lands, 'cattell [sic] or goods'. Only a few years later, further measures were taken to bolster English authority in the fight against toryism. As of 1655, if an individual living in an area under English jurisdiction was killed by tories or rebels who then evaded justice, local administrations were authorised to arrest four Irish Catholics from the general population 'that did not aid and assist the persons so taken and murthered [sic], nor cause the murtherers [sic] and their accomplices to be taken and apprehended'. These individuals would be held in prison for twenty-eight days after which, if the tories had not surrendered themselves, they would be transported as indentured servants to the North American plantations.[21] Needless to say, such measures would have done little to endear the English administration to the general population.

Toryism became increasingly individualised by the end of the seventeenth century, when band leaders such as Redmond O'Hanlon, Pádraig Fléimionn, and Séamus Mac Mhurchaidh were transformed into heroic resistance fighters against the English. O'Hanlon in particular became firmly established in folklore, one late seventeenth-century elegy comparing him to the heroes of ancient Greece such as Achilles or Hercules, while also lauding him as 'the worthiest of men'.[22] The appellation of hero and the comparison to such giants of classical literature demonstrate the extent to which individual tory figures achieved quasi-mythical status in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Irish popular tradition.

Confronted by adversaries capable of mounting lightning-fast attacks before disappearing into the Irish landscape, as well as a population that harboured at least a certain

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[20] Vincent Gookin, *The great case of transplantation in Ireland discussed* (London: Printed for John Crook, 1655), 23 – 24.

[21] 'A proclamation by the governor of the Castle of Dublin, 2 November 1690,' TCD MS 844, fol. 112b; *Ireland. By the lord deputy and council* (Dublin: Printed by William Bladen, 1655), fol. 1.

[22] Anonymous, *An elegy on the modern heroe, Redmon ô Hanlan, surnamed the tory* ([London]: 1681). See also Ó Ciardha, 'Toryism and rappareeism in county Armagh,' 389 – 390.

degree of sympathy towards these bandits, various English administrations attempted to crush the tory groups through two waves of increasingly harsh laws between the Interregnum and the Glorious Revolution. The earliest-known law against tories was passed in 1648, stipulating that the families, and possibly the entire counties, of tories who evaded justice were liable to face imprisonment. As the tory threat proliferated over the next forty years, English administrators passed measure after measure attempting to contain the threat and cow the local population into cooperation. According to a decree from 1691, any individual who did not report local tories to the authorities and actively assist in their arrest was liable to be considered a collaborator and subject to 'the utmost severity of military execution'. Meanwhile, in a report from the same year discussing future methods of addressing the tory crisis, Dr. Robert George maintained that the only means of countering the threat was through the bribing of the local population, which had successfully worked in the past.[23]

In keeping with Dr. George's report, the primary tactic against toryism adopted by late seventeenth-century English administrations was the fostering of dissent among bandit groups through the encouragement of denunciations. Increasingly, the targets of proclamations against tories were sympathisers or collaborators. The Lord Lieutenant announced in 1675 that too few measures and punishments were in place against collaborators, who accordingly had little incentive to denounce their local tories. In consequence, no tories could be sheltered after the 24th of June under pain of severe retribution. Additionally, individuals who refused to assist law officials in the campaign against tories would henceforth face prosecution.[24] With regards to the tories themselves, betrayal was considered the most viable option. Commenting on a petition he had received concerning the case of an individual tory named Owin [Owen] Carly, the Earl of Essex admitted to being at a loss over the appropriate course of action. According to Essex, Carly was more than likely guilty of murder. However, he was also of the opinion that encouraging tories to kill one another was the only way of successfully stopping the threat. He finally concluded his letter by declaring that he had adopted the principle of only granting pardons to tories who had denounced fellow bandits. Likewise, the Marquess of Ormonde confided to

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[23] 'A proclamation, 28 March 1648,' in John Marshall, *Irish tories, rapparees and robbers* (Dungannon: Tyrone Printing Co., 1927), 12; 'A proclamation by the lords justices and council. Charles Porter, tho: Coningesby, Dublin, 14 May 1691,' *Irish Proclamations of William III, 1690 – 1692*, BL G.5869.(54), fol. 39; 'Dr. Robert George's opinion touching the future management of the Irish war, May 1691,' *CSPD William & Mary (1690 – 1691)*, ed. William John Hardy (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1898), 400.

[24] 'Proclamation by the lord lieutenant and council, Dublin, 10 June 1675,' *CSPD Charles II (1675 – 1676)*, ed. F.H. Blackburne Daniell (London: Mackie and Co., 1907), 160.

the Primate and Lord Chancellor Michael Boyle a few years later that he refused to grant pardons to tories unwilling or unable to name compatriots. '[N]othing can sooner bring quietness to the country,' he wrote, 'or discourage torying more than their betraying one another and this your Grace may be pleased to let the proposers know to be my sense'.[25] Ormonde's belief was enshrined in law the following decade. *An act for the better suppressing tories, and rapparees* ordained that tories guilty of having committed a crime who aided in the capture of, or killed, two or more other tories, would receive full pardons.[26] Sustained measures enacted throughout the second half of the seventeenth century to encourage denunciations among tory gangs suggests that the English administration encountered significant difficulties in securing informants. This, in turn, does provide confirmation that tories enjoyed some certain degree of support from the population. Tories and rapparees remained active throughout Ireland until the 1690s. Smaller groups continued to operate sporadically in Ulster and the South-West, but for the most part the threat was neutralised in the first few decades of the eighteenth century. Sean Connolly has argued that this was the result of changing social norms and greater central administrative control. At the very least, banditry no longer had political or religious associations by the 1700s, as made clear by accounts such as those of the bandit James Freney.[27]

III.

Although the tory bands dwindled over the course of the early 1700s, the British in India were soon confronted by an even more sinister form of highway banditry. In fact, by the turn of the nineteenth century, when judges from the Court of appeal and circuits were questioned over the most frequently committed and serious crimes in the region surrounding Calcutta, they simply listed 'murder and duhoity [dacoity]'.[28] Unlike toryism and rappareeism, definitions of dacoity and thuggee remained remarkably vague in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and could refer to a wide range of different behaviours. Of the two, the definition of dacoity is more straightforward. Deriving from the Hindi *dakee* (robber), it referred to robberies in which acts of violence were committed. The

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[25] Ormonde to primate Boyle, Kilkenny, 13 August 1681, *HMC, Ormonde*, ed. HMC (8 vols., London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1902 – 1920), IV, 126; Essex to the Earl of Orrery, Dublin Castle, 9 February 1674/75, BL Stowe MS 215, fol. 33a.

[26] *An act to supply the defects; and for the better execution of an act passed this present session of Parliament. Entituled, an act for the better suppressing tories and rapparees* (Dublin: Printed by Andrew Crook, 1697), 11.

[27] Connolly, 'Violence and order,' 45, 48; James Freney, *The life and adventures of James Freney, commonly called Captain Freney* (Dublin: S. Powell, 1754).

[28] 'Answers by judges, no. 1, Calcutta division. Court of appeal and circuit, 22 March 1802, question 22,' *PP HC 1812 – 1813, Vol. IX. Papers relating to East India affairs* (London, 1813), 8.

origins of thuggee, on the other hand, are less certain. Historians agree that the different variants of thuggee mean either a cheat or a liar, but the extent to which 'thuggee' refers to an actual pre-colonial practice of ritual strangulation and theft, or is merely a British construct, remains fiercely contested.[29]

Concerns over cases of dacoity were first recorded in the 1770s following an upsurge in banditry after the devastating Bengal famine of 1769 – 1770. This represented a crucial period in the early EIC administration of Bengal, shortly after its formal assumption of power at the Battle of Buxar in 1764. Given the Company's propagandist emphasis on the 'decline' of its predecessors, the Mughals, the EIC was particularly conscious about the need to assert its authority and jurisdiction over its new subjects.[30] As such, the response to reports of dacoity (and, later, thuggee) was swift and decisive. The Company's jurisdiction over dacoit bands was first articulated in the Regulating Act of 1772. Article 35 proposed that the danger posed by these gangs was such that all convicted dacoits should be publicly executed in their villages as a symbol of British authority. These villages were to be fined and their families sold into slavery.[31] According to a committee report from Kishen Nagur in June, it was strongly believed that the successful enforcement of such measures would have a salutary effect on the Indian population. Through their newfound role as slaves, these 'families,' the committee maintained, 'instead of being lost to the community, are made useful members of it, by being adopted into those of the more civilized inhabitants'.[32] This extract raises several noteworthy questions regarding the administration's view of its own jurisdictional authority in Bengal and of the rights of colonial subjects. For example, consider the calls for the punishment of dacoit members' families. Just as the families of tories were liable to face imprisonment in early modern Ireland, so could dacoits' relations be subject to legal

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[29] See, for example, Kim Wagner, *Thuggee: banditry and the British in early nineteenth-century India* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 34; Martine van Woerkens, *Le voyageur étranglé: l'Inde des thugs, le colonialisme et l'imaginaire* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1995), 134 – 135. On debates surrounding the word thuggee, see Wagner, *Thuggee*, 25 – 31; Tom Lloyd, 'Thuggee, marginality and the state effect in colonial India, circa 1770 – 1840,' *Indian Economic Social History Review* 45:2 (2008): 211 – 212; Mark Brown, 'Crime, governance and the company raj: the discovery of thuggee,' *British Journal of Criminology* 42:1 (2002): 86 – 87, 87 – 88.

[30] On the British portrayal of the Mughal Empire as a state in decay, see Chapter I. Lloyd, 'Thuggee,' 203; Cassels, *Social legislation of the East India Company*, 28 – 29.

[31] 'General regulations for the administration of justice, proposed by the committee of circuit, at Cassimbazar, on the 15th August 1772, and made and ordained by the president and council in Bengal, on the 21st August 1772,' James Edward Colebrooke (ed.), *Supplement to the digest of the regulations and laws enacted by the governor general in council* (Calcutta, 1807), 7.

[32] 'Extract of the proceedings of the committee at Kishen Nagur, 28 June 1772,' *PP HC 1828, Vol. XIV. Correspondence on state of slavery in territory under rule of East India Company, and slave trade* (London, 1828), 2.

measures. This reflects the scale of the dacoits' perceived threat against the EIC as well as the prevailing British belief in guilt by association – what Radhika Singha here terms 'collective criminality'.[33] EIC efforts to contain the dacoit threat therefore involved the suppression of individual subjects' rights in an attempt to prioritise the stability of the greater Indian society. It also reflects a growing confidence in the EIC's ability to create, impose, and administer the laws and courts of Bengal. One reason for the severity of dacoit legislation during this period was the administration's belief in the moribund nature of the previous Mughal rulers and the 'squeamishness' of Mughal law officers in dealing with certain legal issues. Governor Hastings expressed serious discontent with the state of the legal system in 1773, notably complaining about the current verdicts against dacoits. Claiming that Muslim law was too lenient in the matter, Hastings called for the administration to disregard the verdicts issued in the Nizamat courts since the religious scholars never awarded death sentences unless murder could conclusively be proven.[34]

General concerns regarding the rise of dacoity gave way to a more specific form of highway banditry in the early 1800s known as thuggee. Under the authority of William H. Sleeman, a department to combat thuggee was established in 1835 with the authority to eliminate the thug threat not only in territories under EIC jurisdiction, but throughout the entire subcontinent.[35] This represented a significant coup in favour of increased British authority in India, representing an extension of the Company's legal jurisdiction to neighbouring princely states. The argument that local Indian rulers were incapable of dealing with the bandit threats was common in contemporary British correspondence. One official neatly summarised British sentiments on the subject in a letter to the secretary of the Governor General by declaring that thugs should never be surrendered to Indian rulers, since these individuals had 'satisfactorily shown their utter incapacity to put them [thugs] down and expose[d] their corrupt practice of releasing thugs for valuable considerations'.[36] British belief in the incompetence of local rulers therefore enabled them to more confidently assert the extent of their jurisdictional powers throughout increasingly large portions of India.

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[33] Radhika Singha, *A despotism of law: crime & justice in early colonial India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 29.

[34] 'Extract of a letter from Warren Hastings, esq. president of the council dated 10th July 1773, recorded on the proceedings of council 3d August 1773,' Colebrooke, *Supplement*, 115. See also Lloyd, 'Thuggee,' 204 – 205.

[35] Lloyd, 'Thuggee,' 216 – 217.

[36] F.C. Smith, agent to the governor general, to H.T. Prinsep, esq., secretary to the governor general in the political department head quarters, Camp Myhir, 19 November 1830, *Selected records collected from the C[entral] P[rovinces] secretariat relating to the suppression of thuggee 1829 – 1832* (Nagpur, 1939), 90.

Initial British measures against the thugs proved to be as ineffective as those undertaken against Irish tories, which resulted in increasingly harsh and arbitrary legislation. Meanwhile, articles such as Dr. R.C. Sherwood's 'Of the murderers called p'hānsīgārs' and acting superintendent of the police for the Western Provinces John Shakespeare's official report 'Regarding badheks and t'hegs,' both of which were published in an 1820 volume of the *Asiatick Researches*, brought thuggee to the wider attention of the British public.[37] Early legislation passed in 1796 mainly targeted the leaders of dacoit bands; individuals deemed to be mere 'accessories' and who provided information leading to the arrest of gang leaders were to be pardoned. In contrast, as of 1836 'whosoever shall be proved to have belonged either before or after the passing of this act to any gang of thugs either within or without the territories of the East India Company, shall be punished with imprisonment for life with hard labour.'[38] One should note, once again, the reference to legislation covering geographical areas outside of the Company's jurisdiction. Historians such as Kim Wagner argue that measures like the 1836 act criminalised any suspected association with banditry. Moreover, Wagner also points out that even as late as 1836, the actual definition of thuggee remained remarkably vague. In 1810, Thomas Perry, the acting magistrate in Agra and Etawah, simply defined thugs as 'professed murderers'. Shortly before the 1836 act, Walter Hamilton outlined the term with even less specificity as '[a] notorious class of public robbers in the upper provinces of Hindostan.'[39] Transformed into 'a legal umbrella-term,' thuggee gradually became indiscriminately applied to an entire spectrum of different subversive individuals.[40]

Whether thuggee did indeed pre-date the colonial era or not, the British crafted a carefully constructed perception of its danger through a series of interviews carried out with prisoners in the 1820s and 1830s: hardened and remorseless killers, these bandits attacked hundreds of travellers on the highways of India. Captain James Paton reported that suspected thugs recounted their crimes with chilling pride during interrogation sessions, decrying 'the

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[37] P'hānsīgārs refers to the South Indian counterparts of thugs. Doctor R.C. Sherwood, 'Of the murderers called p'hānsīgārs,' *Asiatick Researches* (18 vols., Calcutta: 1820), XIII, 250 – 281; John Shakespeare, 'Regarding badheks and t'hegs (30 April 1816),' *Ibid.*, 282 – 292.

[38] 'Observations upon the operations of gangs of thug murderers in the kingdom of Oude,' Captain James Paton, *Collections on thuggee & dacoitie*, BL Add. MS 41300, fol. 213b; 'Section 18, Beng. 1796 R.6. §3,' *A digest of the regulations and laws, enacted by the governor general in council*, ed. James Edward Colebrooke (2 vols., Calcutta: 1807), II, 820.

[39] Perry to George Dowdeswell, secretary to the government in the judicial department, Etawah, 17 May 1810, Thomas Perry, *Letter book of Thomas Perry, acting magistrate of the zillahs of Agra and Etawah, 1810 – 1811*, CUL MS Add. 5375, Perry Papers, fol. 138; Walter Hamilton, *The East-India gazetteer* (2 vols., London: Printed for Parbury, Allen, and Co., 1828, 2nd edn.), II, 732.

[40] Wagner, *Thuggee*, 215; Clare Anderson, *Legible bodies: race, criminality and colonialism in South Asia* (Oxford: Berg, 2004), 5.

relish and pleasure with which they narrate the foulest murders'.[41] In his Indian encyclopedia, Hamilton included a significant detail regarding thug executions which also attested to their supposed character. Whereas English criminals usually displayed 'penitence and contrition' prior to their execution, Hamilton disapprovingly noted that convicted thugs refused to conform to accepted behaviours surrounding rituals of punishment. Thugs, Hamilton claimed, feared transportation overseas far more than execution.[42] These two passages demonstrate the extent to which stereotypical contemporary depictions of thugs proved to have a dehumanising effect. Indeed, what Paton succeeded in achieving throughout his interrogation descriptions was the elimination of his subjects' consciences. This, by extension, suggested that the supposed thugs' crimes placed them beyond the realm of regular social norms and behaviours – though not beyond the scope of British jurisdiction. However, descriptions of thug executions such as the one found in Hamilton suggest a more nuanced reading of British interactions with the supposed bandits. In her analysis of the execution of eleven thugs in 1830 and an anonymous article published shortly afterwards (now attributed to Sleeman), Máire ní Fhlathúin convincingly argues that these executions superficially adhered to the Foucauldian argument of sovereign power but actually made allowance for indigenous agency. The subsequent article's emphasis on the improper behaviour of the condemned men, who were notably said to have chosen their own nooses, 'appears to run counter to the ostensible aim of establishing the dominance of the state and the relative powerlessness of the criminal'.[43] Citing V.A.C. Gatrell's work on crime in England between 1770 and 1868, ní Fhlathúin maintains that prisoners could assume insincere forms of 'bravado' to mask their true feelings. Prisoners were also known to arrange their own nooses in order to ensure that they were properly fitted around their necks. Moreover, Hindu prisoners could have wished to arrange their nooses to preserve their caste.[44] For those reasons, it is possible to detect small ways in which convicted thugs could subvert British authority by refusing to adhere to the expectations place upon them. The series of legal measures adopted throughout the early nineteenth century did reinforce the authority of British jurisdiction against banditry in India. However, this was not without its own complications. Excessive concern over the criminality of thugs, fostered by reports of interviews such as those conducted by Paton, combined with

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[41] Most of the interviews recounted by Paton seem to have taken place in the late 1820s and 1830s. 'Memo,' BL Add. MS 41300, fol. 4b. See also fol. 4a.

[42] Hamilton, *The East-India gazetteer*, I, 197.

[43] Máire ní Fhlathúin. 'Staging criminality and colonial authority: the execution of thug criminals in British India.' *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film* 37:1 (2010): 26, and more generally 25 – 26.

[44] *Ibid.*, 26 – 27.

the lingering legal vagueness surrounding definitions of the terms dacoit and thug, resulted in an ever-expanding category of individuals deemed to be subversive elements. This, in turn, fed into colonial discourse regarding widespread criminality among specific segments of the Indian population.[45]

IV.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, British definitions of sovereignty and authority had a strong legal basis, since state power devolved from the sovereign. This, in turn, led philosophers such as David Hume and William Robertson to maintain that the state should also hold sole control over violence: according to their doctrine, successful states demonstrated their authority through their ability to impose and maintain peace in the territories under their jurisdiction.[46] In more recent times, the link between law and violence has been most clearly articulated by the political theorist Walter Benjamin, who contends that non state-sanctioned violence inevitably represents a direct challenge to the authority of the state, suggesting as it does the state's inability to impose and uphold the law. Thus, Benjamin writes, 'the law's interest in a monopoly of violence vis-à-vis individuals is explained (...) by the intention of preserving the law itself; that violence, when not in the hands of the law, threatens it not by the ends that it may pursue but by its mere existence outside the law'.[47]

The late eighteenth-century dacoit campaign in India provides a telling case in point. At a time in which the EIC was only beginning to assume full administrative control of Bengal, acts of subversion such as dacoity quickly became seen as precursors to the breakdown of British authority in India. Illustrating this point is a letter from the acting magistrate in Behar, which provides details of his attempts to protect the village of Selimpore from such bandits. Selimpore itself does not appear to have held any particular interest for British authorities in Bengal, except, as the magistrate explained, for the fact that it lay near the far more prosperous town of Gya. In comparison to Selimpore, Gya 'was *in short* in the most flourishing state, [and] I deemed it *my* duty as magistrate of this district to take every precaution in my power, to secure the lives and property of its inhabitants, and to quiet their

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[45] Brown, 'Crime, governance and the company raj,' 70, 73.

[46] See Bruce Buchanan, 'Civilisation, sovereignty and war: the Scottish enlightenment and international relations,' *International Relations* 20:2 (2006): 177, 180.

[47] Walter Benjamin, 'Critique of violence,' in *Selected writings, 1913 – 1926*, ed. Walter Benjamin, Marcus Bullock and Michael W. Jennings, transl. Edmund Jephcott (4 vols., Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), IV, 238, 239.

apprehensions of *even* the *smallest* danger of attack'.[48] This letter raises several issues that reflect the wider social problems posed by dacoit gangs at the turn of the century. These groups endangered the economic prospects of towns and cities throughout Bengal and, consequently, the economic trade prospects of the EIC as well. On a symbolic level, the magistrate's excessive use of italics also reveals the emphasis placed by officials on the necessity for an administrative show of authority in curbing local violence. The fact that the magistrate felt required to reassure the citizens of Gya as to the EIC's intentions demonstrates that the latter did not always enjoy the population's confidence in its ability to protect their lives and goods. The EIC's inability to control the dacoit epidemic in Bengal rendered the stability of its administration questionable.

Irish and Indian forms of banditry represented important examples of violent subversion which, if unchecked, could challenge the unity of the administration and its ability to enforce the law within the confines of its jurisdiction. These challenges did, at times, provoke high levels of anxiety among many colonial officials. Indeed, many betray significant levels of uncertainty regarding which courses of action would be most suitable in dealing with the threats. An unidentified source from the Tanderagee garrison in Ireland painted the bleak picture of a general population at the mercy of marauding bands of thieves. This source wrote of 'the miserable condition this poor country is in by the tories so that no man can stir abroad (except he be in league with them) but in danger to be taken or killed'.[49] Similar sentiments were expressed over a century later in Bengal. An 1810 entry in the Bengal Criminal Judiciary was devoted to a discussion of the rising number of murders involving presumed thugs near Cawnpore, charting the growing number of bodies discovered in each as well as the areas known to be frequented by thugs. The report gloomily concluded on the note 'that the police in this district is far from being efficient, and my enquiries have furnished no grounds to hope that crimes will decrease'.[50] These comments show that in both contexts, the administrative structures established to police the state were not only manifestly unable to cope with the scope of organised violence in the regions, but also incapable of guaranteeing the safety of colonial subjects.

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[48] Original emphases. 28 April 1797, no. 10: R. Cunningham, acting magistrate at zilla Behar, to H.St.G. Tucker, sub secretary to government, 22 April 1797, *CPJ vol. 37, 13 March to 28 April 1797*, WBSA, fol. 326.
[49] Anonymous (signature erased) to Oliver Herring, garrison at Tanderagee, 19 December 1679, in Murray, 'Life and times of Father Edmund Murphy,' 376.
[50] 'Entry Fort William, 30 March 1810,' *Bengal proceedings 30 March 1810 – 13 April 1810*, BL IOR P/130/14, fols. 4 – 5.

Irish and Indian officials' ability (or, often, inability) to control the incidents of violence in the territories under their jurisdiction also had social implications. In the Irish context, Sean Connolly argues extensively that banditry transcended the realm of the criminal and became a social issue in instances when the administration attempted to enforce its jurisdiction but was unable to do so because of the tenuous nature of its authority.[51] While confined to Ireland, this observation holds equally true in the Indian context, where the campaign against dacoity and thuggee coincided with the initial phase of the Company's consolidation of administrative power. Precisely because of the fact that the Company's authority was not yet firmly established in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the rising number of banditry cases was viewed with a high degree of anxiety. These apparently uncontrollable bands, it could be argued, 'indicated that unitary, central, exclusive, abstract, state authority had not been properly established in rural locales'.[52]

While there had been an English presence in Ireland since the twelfth century, the administration's ability to enforce its jurisdictional power in rural areas remained questionable until the early modern period. It was only under the Cromwellian regime in the 1650s that official authority was extended over larger portions of the country – and it was the transplantation policies in the very same decade that sparked the rise in tory bands. That being said, in efforts to curb the widespread prevalence of toryism and to better regulate Irish cities and towns, the central administration also began to implement various measures that served to slowly reinforce its authority. One notable example of these measures was a decree from 1652 declaring that henceforth, all townspeople above the age of ten would be required to travel with passport-type documents. These papers were to be remarkably detailed, providing 'their names, places of abode, to what family they belong, their qualities or callings, age, sex, stature, colour of hair etc'; any individual found without such papers on his or her person [most likely tories] was to be arrested and subject to prosecution.[53] It was only after the final Catholic defeat at the Battle of the Boyne during the Glorious Revolution that the Dublin administration secured full control of Ireland – and, as seen previously, the tory threat gradually diminished in the following decades.

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[51] Connolly, 'Violence and order in the eighteenth century,' 43.

[52] One need only consider, for instance, the high degree of uncertainty displayed in contemporary British-produced histories, as discussed in Chapter I. Lloyd, 'Thuggee,' 211. See also Wagner, *Thuggee*, 43.

[53] 'Orders A/82.42 by the commissioners of parliament, Kilkenny, 29 April 1652,' in *Ireland under the commonwealth: being a selection of documents relating to the government of Ireland from 1651 to 1659*, ed. Robert Dunlop (2 vols., Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1913), I, 178.

When it was first awarded the *diwani* of Bengal, the EIC chose to maintain the existing legal system of the Mughal Empire, which was only gradually modified and then overhauled over the next half century. It is also useful, at this point, to note one significant difference regarding the different temporal spans of toryism and thuggee: until at least the mid-point of the eighteenth century, EIC influence in India remained highly limited. However, echoing the situation in mid-seventeenth-century Ireland, numerous scholars maintain that the upsurge in cases of dacoity and the emergence (at least according to the British) of thuggee were partly caused by the upheavals of the 1760s when the EIC first began to assume more formal administrative control of Bengal. Furthermore, Ian Duncanson suggests that the EIC's approach changed over the course of its military campaigns. Increasingly influenced by Thomas Hobbes' definition of sovereignty, Company officials began to think of the EIC's authority as 'absolute and unassailable,' as well as 'all that stands between order and chaos'.[54] This narrative is at odds with the revisionist arguments of historians such as Philip Stern, who trace clear examples of sovereign thought back to the very inception of the Company. This second interpretation of Company ideology renders it more difficult to argue that unknowing officials were suddenly thrust into the administration of Bengal.[55] However, even if one accepts Stern's argument regarding early Company sovereignty, several changes occurred in the 1760s and early 1770s that marked a greater overt British participation in the administration of Bengal – most notably, an acceptance of the province's *diwan* and the major famine that took place between 1769 and 1773. It is within this context that the EIC began to express a greater interest in regulating its Bengali territories.

Indian and Irish forms of banditry were also problematic because of the longstanding British conviction that the thieves received varying levels of support from the general population. Thuggee was not necessarily seen by colonial officials as a manifestation of political subversion, but this had particularly significant repercussions in Ireland given the politically-charged associations with toryism and rappareeism in the late seventeenth century. Initially associated with the Gaelic landlords dispossessed under the transplantation policies

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[54] Ian Duncanson, *Historiography, empire and the rule of law: imagined constitutions, remembered legalities* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), 71, and also 115.

[55] For a short summary of Stern's arguments, see Jennifer Pitts, '"Their dominion, or their depredations": sovereignty, governance, law, and liberalism in recent scholarship on the British Empire in India,' *Radical History Review* 112 (2012): 195 – 196. More generally, see Philip J. Stern. *The company-state: corporate sovereignty and the early modern foundation of the British Empire in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

of the 1650s, toryism was later linked to Jacobitism. Connolly in particular has questioned the extent to which historians should view toryism in a political light, arguing that any analysis must go beyond political and religious aspects.[56] Nonetheless, whether there truly was a political dimension or not, the English *perceived* it to be true and acted accordingly.

The British conviction that tories and thugs were aided and sheltered by local supporters is a recurring theme in the legislative measures passed against the respective forms of banditry, highlighting the severity of colonial officials' concerns. Company officials became convinced that the landholding zamindars of Bengal were close collaborators of dacoits and thugs, offering their protection in exchange for spoils. An entry from the proceedings of the governor and council in April 1774 recorded the large number of complaints that it had received about dacoits throughout Bengal. It pointedly noted, however, the suspicious lack of complaints from zamindars or revenue collectors. '[This] may appear extraordinary,' the entry concluded, 'but that I am assured, that the zemindars themselves too frequently afford them protection, and that the reiats [peasants], who are the principal sufferers by these ravages, dare not complain, it being an established maxim with the decoits to punish with death every information given against them'.[57] This perceived collaboration remained a matter of great concern almost half a century later. A letter to William Sleeman noted in 1834 that '[i]t is painful to observe that wherever the thugs go they are invariably protected by the zumeendars [sic], and the premises of the thakurs or principal landholders are the certain spots to find them in.'[58] Sleeman himself also wrote of the continued protection afforded by zamindars to local thugs two years later. In a letter to the chief secretary of the Secret and Political Department, Sleeman argued that landholders providing shelter should be given the same punishment as convicted thugs. This opinion endured into the early twentieth-century, when R.V. Russell reiterated Sleeman's contention in a survey of Indian tribes and castes. In the case of one particular 'robber' caste, he maintained, '[i]t would have been impossible for the Badhaks to exist and flourish as they did without the protection of the landowners on whose estates they lived; and this they received in full measure in return for a liberal share of their booty.'[59]

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[56] Connolly, 'Violence and order in the eighteenth century,' 43.

[57] 'Extracts from the proceedings of the governor and council, under the date 19th April 1774. Plan for the establishment of fowjdars proposed by the president,' Colebrooke, *Supplement*, 120.

[58] Footnote, Mr. Wilson to Sleeman (3 December 1834), in William H. Sleeman, *Ramaseeana, or a vocabulary of the peculiar language used by the thugs* (Calcutta: G.H. Huttman, Military Orphan Press, 1836), 23.

[59] 'Copy of a dispatch from the general superintendent of thugs to W.H. Macnaghten, esq., 5 June [1836],' *Board's collection, further papers regarding the suppression of thagi, Vol. III*, BL IOR F/4/1567/64218, fols.

This perception provoked an even greater degree of anxiety in Ireland due to the political connotations associated to toryism. If the general population was indeed sheltering these politically-motivated bandits, the situation could then potentially be interpreted as a wider social form of resistance against English rule. Francis Blackwell of the garrison in Queen's County, for instance, excused his recent lack of success against tories in a 1666 letter to Sir George Lane by claiming that they were receiving support from locals.[60] A general belief in popular support for tories was cemented through the numerous proclamations issued prior to 1700, which targeted not only the bandits themselves, but also any accomplices or collaborators. Displaying high levels of anti-Catholic sentiment, a proclamation from 1690 made no allowance for innocent Irish Catholics in the fight against toryism: 'such of them as are not actually rapparees, robbers, or tories, do excite and encourage others to be so, and connive at, and countenance their proceedings, by giving them intelligence, support, and entertainment'.[61] Irish scholars such as Sean Connolly and Éamonn Ó Ciardha still question the extent to which popular support for toryism was genuine, or the extent to which such reports were exaggerated through English fears of subversion. Evidence certainly supports the argument that general support was not always forthcoming to such bandits. In one such instance from 1675, the earl of Essex mentioned large numbers of tories in the north of Ireland who had either been killed or captured by locals who, Essex claimed, 'generally rise upon them'.[62] Regardless of the true extent of popular support, endless depictions of the tories receiving shelter promoted an impression of almost universal support. The language employed in these descriptions is also worth highlighting. Once again displaying high levels of anti-Catholic sentiment, a 1695 act sweepingly condemned Irish 'Papists' by claiming that they chose 'rather to suffer strangers to be robbed and despoiled of their goods, then to apprehend or convict the offenders (...); and countenanced, harboured, and concealed by the inhabitants thereof'.[63] There are two elements from this extract that deserve particular attention. The first is the belief that Irish Catholics could not be trusted to aid in the conviction of fellow countrymen accused of toryism. The second point is that

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148 – 149; R.V. Russell, *The tribes and castes of the Central Provinces of India* (4 vols., Macmillan: London, 1916), I, 55.

[60] Francis Blackwell to Sir George Lane, Ballaghmore, Queen's Co., 8 September 1666, *HMC, Ormonde*, III, 243.

[61] 'A Proclamation by the Lords Justices of Ireland, Sydney, tho: Coningesby, November 1690, Dublin,' BL G.5869.(54), fol. 13a.

[62] Essex to Coventry, 8 June 1675, BL Stowe MS 215, fol. 160b. For modern assessments, see Connolly, 'Violence and order in the eighteenth century,' 44; Ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite cause*, 90.

[63] 'Public general acts, 1695. 7 Gui.III.c.21,' *An act for the better suppressing tories, robbers and rapparees and for the preventing robberies, burglaries, and other hainous crimes* (Dublin, 1695), 1.

Catholic bias against their Protestant compatriots was so strong that these individuals willingly chose to put others at risk instead of cooperating with the recognised authorities. While repeated references to popular support throughout the second half of the seventeenth century do give some credence to these English accusations, Connolly and others are right to urge caution against unreservedly accepting claims of widespread cooperation.[64] It is also possible that these constant accusations are more indicative of colonial anxieties than of actual support. If, as the British claimed, the Irish and Indian populations were complicit in the actions of tories and thugs, it would have represented a serious undermining of their claims to sovereign jurisdiction in both areas. Referring briefly back to the philosophies of Hume and Robertson concerning state power, if they could neither control the bands of thieves that roamed the countryside nor the populations that prevented such thieves from facing the justice, British claims to sovereignty over these territories would be thrown into serious doubt.

The suggestion of a political dimension to banditry, especially with regards to matters of public support, is an intriguing one in both the Irish and Indian cases. In his seminal analysis of banditry, Eric Hobsbawm draws a distinction between social and criminal bandits, arguing that social banditry is characterised by an element of political motivation.[65] Nevertheless, toryism and thuggee complicate this stark dichotomy since they display elements of both types of banditry. At least in the case of the early tories, band members were often composed of the dispossessed gentry, not the 'peasant outlaws' that Hobsbawm associates with social banditry. On the other hand, neither were they part of the 'outcast groups' that were supposed to make up criminal banditry. Similarly, where Hobsbawm explicitly links criminal banditry with India, he falls prey to nineteenth-century British discourse that equated thuggee with the supposedly 'criminal tribes and castes'. Lastly, both toryism and thuggee did, at least to some degree, have the 'local roots of social bandits,' while lacking the 'large, if loose networks of an underworld'.[66] Especially in the case of India, subaltern historians have written extensively on the perceived social elements of banditry. Ranajit Guha explicitly rejects Hobsbawm's suggestion that Indian banditry lacked a political ideology. Primarily focusing on the nineteenth century, Guha examines the group most frequently targeted for violence in the Bombay presidency – moneylenders – to build a

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[64] See footnote 55.
[65] Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985, 2nd edn), 24.
[66] *Ibid.*, 38, 39. On the communal ties of Bengali thieves, see Hamilton, *The East-India gazetteer*, I, 197.

case for 'the beginnings of the peasants' sense of themselves as a social mass defined not only by a common grievance but also by the possibility of obtaining redress through militant and collective action'.[67] Evidence of social banditry such as that defined by Guha in the activities of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century dacoits and thugs is not always clear, although that does not necessarily preclude its existence. Anoma Pieris has argued that colonial records often sought to suppress evidence of political prisoners to avoid the emergence of a cult to martyrs. Rendered anonymous, these men were classified as criminals along with thugs, dacoits, etc. so that 'their treatment as inferior criminal stock, worthy of imprisonment' could be justified.[68] Glimpses of potential social banditry occasionally do surface in court records from the period. Six men were tried in the Nizamat Court for a dacoity committed in July 1807 against a group of merchants the previous September.[69] Following Guha's reasoning, one could interpret the attack on the merchants as a broader sign of peasant agitation against an expanding moneylender middle class potentially linked to the new administration. However, such references are sparse and do not provide sufficient information to make informed judgments. Moreover, these brief court entries also indicate that many dacoities were committed against neighbours in the course of home robberies.[70] Without further knowledge of the thieves' motivations, it is impossible to state with any certainty whether such crimes were committed only for profit, or whether some of them also had political or ideological origins.

From a political perspective, the prospect of tories and thugs seeking shelter with the local population suggested widespread collusion against the central authorities and a complete disregard for their juridical power. While the political dimension of toryism has already been discussed, it is worth analysing the potential political associations to Indian banditry. Many EIC officials remained convinced that dacoits and thugs were protected by local landlords. If true, this represented a significant problem for the British, demonstrating a high degree of complicity between semi-nomadic groups who had repeatedly been portrayed as menaces to civil society and the very people who were meant to be protected by the

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[67] Ranajit Guha, *Elementary aspects of peasant insurgency in colonial India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983), 92 – 93, and also 6.

[68] Anoma Pieris, 'The "other" side of labor reform: accounts of incarceration and resistance in the Straits Settlements penal system, 1825 – 1873,' *Journal of Social History* 45:2 (2011): 455.

[69] 'Vakeel of government, against Kuruk Sein and five others. Charged with highway-robbery and murder, 21 July 1807,' W.H. Macnaghten, *Reports of cases determined in the court of Nizamut Adawlut* (6 vols., Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1827, new edn), I, 153 – 154.

[70] 'Sham Holdar and Ramhurree, against Rama and others. Charged with gang robbery and murder, 11 January 1805,' and 'Chumaroo, against Mahomed Shuffee and six others. Charged with gang robbery and murder, 25 February 1805,' *Ibid.*, I, 3, 10 – 11.

increasing number of legal measures imposed against the bandits. One reason provided was the economic profit that zamindars derived from sheltering dacoits and thugs, in which protection was exchanged for material goods.[71] Another possible interpretation is that the landholders were engaged in a subtle form of political resistance against British jurisdictional authority. Concerns over the notion of settled peoples harbouring nomadic gangs wanted by the administration prompted Edward Thornton to claim that the 'ramifications [of thuggee] are so widely-extended, and reach so far into the very heart of Indian society, that the difficulties of dealing with it are almost inconceivable'.[72] Ten years after Thornton voiced these apprehensions, Sleeman compiled a report detailing the activities of his department in the campaign against banditry. Although he glowingly noted the department's successes in curtailing incidences of banditry, Sleeman also expounded on the dangers to society should the administration ever grow too complacent and spark a resurgence of thuggee. 'The old thug associations,' he wrote to H.M. Elliot,

> which have been now effectually put down in all parts of India, except the Punjab (...), would assuredly rise up again, and flourish under the assurances of religious sanction, and the strong and almost irresistible disposition of the loose characters of the lowest class in India (...); and new ones would be every where [sic] formed, were the strength of the special police, employed in the suppression, hastily reduced, or its vigilance relaxed.[73]

Through such descriptions, Sleeman and his contemporaries transformed thuggee into an India-wide phenomenon that reflected a general trait in the Indian character. Although it was never explicitly voiced in similar ways to political associations made in Ireland, the idea of a political subtext to British interpretations of thug-zamindar connections remains an intriguing one.

By contrast, the politicisation of Irish banditry was never in any doubt given the widespread associations made between toryism and Jacobitism, on the one hand, and Jacobitism and Catholicism on the other. One way in which Irish banditry differed substantially from Indian forms was the process of individualisation undergone by many Irish bandits, who were transformed into folk heroes. In the case of thuggee, the British were never

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[71] See, for example, Edward Thornton, *Illustrations of the history and practices of the thugs* (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1837), 471.

[72] *Ibid.*, 468. See also Wagner's contention that the local networks of thugs were 'later picked up by the British who saw in this an all-Indian conspiracy of criminal communities'. Wagner, *Thuggee*, 120.

[73] Colonel W.H. Sleeman, general superintendent of operations for the suppression of thuggee, to H.W. Elliot, esq., secretary to the government of India, Jhansi, 20 May 1848, in William H. Sleeman, *Report on budhuk alias bagree decoits and other gang robbers by hereditary profession* (Calcutta: J.C. Sherriff, Bengal Military Orphan Press, 1849), 2 – 3.

specifically targeted as victims and individual thugs are known primarily through brief references in legal depositions. This does not necessarily preclude the existence of oral traditions commemorating individual dacoits and thugs, despite the fact that these traditions have not survived in official documents. Indeed, Ranajit Guha has described surviving folkloric material from this period as 'very meagre, to the point of being insignificant, compared to the size of documentation available from elitist sources on almost any agrarian movement'.[74] Nevertheless, official records show that many of these individuals were known to their communities. A brief note by the magistrate of Tipperah (Tripura) in 1794 provides rare insight into the activities of one particular dacoit and suggests that at least in some cases, dacoity was portrayed in a romanticised tone similar to that used for Irish tories. Shubram Dutt, the magistrate claimed, had 'committed several depredations – under pretence of protecting the inhabitants [of Dungapore], or in other words, not robbing them.' When Dutt's family was taken captive in an attempt to draw him out by the authorities, he reportedly robbed three houses and left letters in two of them threatening further violence should his family not be returned to him.[75] The reference to letters is particularly noteworthy. No information regarding Dutt's occupation is provided, but the letters indicate that he was either literate or had access to a scribe. This, in turn, suggests that Dutt did not fit the typical dacoit profile of the poor peasant or labourer usually found in official documentation. Moreover, Dutt was clearly well-known locally, since officials had been able to identify and seize his family. The fact that he was not denounced by the local population does potentially lend credence to the magistrate's comment about Dutt's claim to protect the town's citizens. The fact that Indian and Irish bandits were not routinely denounced suggests one of two possibilities: either locals feared violent reprisals, or they refused to denounce their neighbours as a form of solidarity against the British. Several South Asian historians have argued that dacoity represented an important example of social banditry, often with political connotations. For instance, Ranjit Sen contends that while dacoity was seen as a purely legal issue to the British, in reality Bengali banditry 'satisfied double passions – class hatred and hatred against foreigners'.[76] Describing a close collusion between peasant bandits and local zamindars, Sen claims dacoit activities of the late eighteenth century had a highly organised

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[74] Guha, *Elementary aspects*, 14.
[75] '1 August 1794, no. 1: W. Camac, magistrate of Tipperah, to G.H. Barlow, sub secretary to gov., 22 July,' *BCJC 1 to 29 August 1794*, BL IOR P/128/13, unnumbered.
[76] Ranjit Sen, *Social banditry in Bengal: a study in primary resistance 1757 – 1793* (Calcutta: Ratna Prakashan, 1988), ix, 5.

and motivated quality, and refers to these bandits as 'social terrorists'.[77] Such radical statements assume a far stronger sense of social mobilisation than the majority of primary sources would permit, particularly given that most claims to highly organised bands derived from interviews such as the Paton interrogations. It does, however, remain clear that dacoits and thugs had close ties with their communities – probably more so than tories.

In comparison, many individual tories from the late seventeenth century became known as iconic folk heroes through poems and ballads. The transformation from bandit to folk hero primarily occurred in contexts where these individuals were thought to offer something more to the local population than the central government. According to Nicholas Curott and Alexander Fink, 'dysfunctional and predatory governments' are a necessary condition of such transformations. Accordingly, while banditry did impact the local population, the oppressive government was believed to suffer as well since the bandits represented a challenge to its authority.[78] The political dimension to toryism is particularly strong in this transformation process: specific tories such as Redmond O'Hanlon were immortalised by the Gaelic poets and often shown to have an affinity with the local population. Significantly, the majority of tories who eventually became the subjects of popular culture were inevitably shown to be members of the dispossessed Irish landholding class. Through these poems and songs, such tories were represented as emblematic figures of an overrun Gaelic Ireland.

Banditry represented a significant problem for the emerging colonial states in Ireland and India, since toryism and thuggee highlighted the discrepancy between the theory and reality of the British ability to enforce their legal jurisdiction in both areas. Nonetheless, it is important to underline the fact that the increasingly harsh countermeasures do provide some indication of growing British authority. Simply attempting to define these crimes (although such definitions remained frustratingly vague in the case of thuggee) and to assign specific values to them reflects the growing confidence that British administrators felt in their ability to understand and categorise colonial subjects. Both toryism and thuggee also represent distinct instances in which the British chose to adopt novel approaches in dealing with banditry. Returning to Benton's arguments regarding the suspension of law – or lack thereof – in colonial settings with which this chapter opened, British countermeasures against

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[77] *Ibid.*, 40.

[78] Nicholas Curott and Alexander Fink, 'Bandit heroes: social, mythical, or rational,' *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 71:2 (2012): 471, 482.

toryism and thuggee represented trials of new methods of dealing with threats to central authority. When traditional legal means proved insufficient, administrations remodelled the law in order to meet their requirements. In an alternative interpretation of British reactions to banditry, historians such as Sandria Freitag have described this process in the Indian context against thuggee as a reaction to what they viewed as an 'extraordinary crime' – the implication of that being that extraordinary measures were required to counter the issue. In Freitag's estimation, the classification of thuggee as an 'extraordinary crime' pushed the British into bending the laws of the country and adopting an increasingly despotic behaviour. Instead of using the law as a way to protect their subjects, the administration's actions were intended purely as a 'demonstration of the strength of British power and authority'.[79] While this sort of analysis is prevalent among historians who adhere more closely to the argument of borders and the colonial 'state,' it is also possible to view British reactions to banditry along the lines argued by Benton, as innovation rather than the suspension of 'ordinary' or 'regular' law. Intriguingly, in certain Irish cases this even meant adopting indigenous Gaelic practices in order to more clearly enforce English jurisdiction.

Since previous proclamations requiring the collaboration of locals proved ineffective in stopping the ebb of toryism in the 1690s, new measures were passed awarding greater jurisdictional powers to local administrations. As of 1695, individuals publicly named as tories or rapparees who failed to surrender to the authorities would be 'convict[ed] of high-treason and suffer accordingly'. Two years later, a second proclamation was issued stating that henceforth, simply naming suspected bandits in future proclamations would 'be admitted as evidence against them'.[80] Additionally, throughout this period and up until the 1740s, proclamations continued to stipulate that any individual harbouring suspected thieves would be condemned as a felon.[81] Most noteworthy, however, was the practice of offering rewards to those who brought individual tories and rapparees to justice, or merely killed them outright. Remarkably, the British quickly adopted the ancient Irish practice of headhunting. An anecdotal story from 1668 describes the killing of a famous tory by an Irish ferryman, who delivered the bandit's severed head to the authorities. In accordance with a recent decree

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[79] Sandria B. Freitag, 'Collective crime and authority in north India,' in *Crime and criminality in British India*. Ed. Anand A. Yang (Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, 1985), 147.
[80] 'Public general acts, 1695. 7 Gui.III.c.21,' *An act for the better suppressing tories*, 6; J. Vernon to lord ambassador Williamson Whitehall, 7 September 1697, *CSPD William III (1697 – 1697)*, ed. William John Hardy (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1927), 354.
[81] *A proclamation by the lords justices and council of Ireland. Hu. Armach. Tho. Wyndham C. Wm. Conolly* (Dublin, 1740), fol. 3.

from the local lord, this act entitled the ferryman to a reward of £5. Similarly, in a proclamation from June 1670 providing a list of suspected tories in Ulster and Connaught, these individuals were given until the 30th of the month to surrender. If they had not done so by this date, they were to be declared rebels and a reward of £20 was offered to any person who brought the tory, or his severed head, to the local authorities.[82] Certain individuals even gained fame as tory hunters and head-hunters: John Marshall notably cites the example of Caonan na gCeann (Keenan of the heads), chief executioner of the famous tory hunter John Johnson.[83] The notion of English-sanctioned head-hunting in seventeenth-century Ireland is striking and does not appear to have an equivalent in the Indian context. The sanctioning of such a practice is all the more relevant given its associations with Gaelic culture. Analysing literary depictions of severed heads in early modern Ireland, Patricia Palmer emphasises the early sixteenth-century English conviction that 'the severed head [was] a peculiarly Irish depravity'.[84] The significance of this observation is particularly strong in the second portion of the seventeenth century, when the term tory was still widely understood in the context of the Cromwellian transplantation policies. In an attempt to find novel ways of dealing with individuals who were perceived as the disgruntled remnants of the dispossessed Gaelic gentry, the English turned to an inherently Gaelic custom. By sanctioning violent practices such as head-hunting through official proclamations, the English did not suspend the laws of Ireland, but merely extended their jurisdictional powers to local authorities and enterprising subjects.

The official policy of the EIC in the decades following their victory at the Battle of Plassey was the maintenance of existing legal structures and a gradual introduction of elements of common law, which was formalized by legislation under Lord North (1773) and William Pitt (1984). Nonetheless, attempts were already underway to adapt the law by the first decades of the nineteenth century to address the issue of thuggee. The struggle between contemporary British administrative officials and judges over the extent of British, versus Indian, forms of jurisdiction reveals the ways in which the law was clearly considered to be malleable in times of crisis. As of 1810, the magistrate of Etawah district, Thomas Perry,

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[82] Sir Peter Pett to Joseph Williamson, 28 May 1668, *CSPI (1666 – 1669)*, ed. Robert Pentland Mahaffy (London: Mackie and Co., 1908), 605; 'Proclamation by the lord lieutenant and council, Dublin, 1 June 1670,' *CSPI Charles II, with addenda 1625 – 70 (1669 – 1670)*, ed. Robert Pentland Mahaffy (London: The Heresford Times, 1910), 144 – 145.

[83] Marshall, *Irish tories*, 59 – 60. There is at least one mention of a similar practice of 'dacoit hunters' in India, but no reference is made to head hunting. W. Camac to G.H. Barlow, BL IOR P/128/13, [unnumbered].

[84] Patricia Palmer, *The severed head and the grafted tongue: literature, translation and violence in early modern Ireland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 14.

sought to arrest and detain suspected thugs without proof of guilt. However, in an intriguing attempt to undermine the authority of the Nizamat courts – still the official legal courts of the time – many British judges refused to convict thugs in cases where Muslim scholars had pronounced *fatwas* against the suspects. Given the widespread British distrust of Indian Muslims in this period, British judges sought to deny the legal jurisdiction of indigenous law courts by refusing to adhere to their legal verdicts.[85]

The dominant emotion generated by Irish and Indian forms of banditry in British sources was a strong sense of anxiety. Fears of collusion with the local populations, in turn, though difficult to accurately ascertain in either case, played out to the advantage of contemporary British administrations. Jon Wilson and Ian Duncanson both note that all European empires exhibited an ever-present sense of uncertainty; self-conscious states continually searched for external or internal threats to their authority.[86] Yet the extent to which such fears were genuine in the context of Irish and Indian banditry, or to which they were exaggerated to bolster various administrations' claims to jurisdictional power in each region, remains debatable. This does not suggest that individual British officials did not truly fear the threats of toryism and thuggee. At the same time, both contexts represent key moments in Irish and Indian history during which the British attempted to find different ways of extending the scope of their jurisdiction more uniformly throughout these territories. An inability to control or reduce the frequency of tory and thug incidents threw British claims to complete jurisdictional authority into doubt, tarnishing the image that they wished to project about their empire.

Particularly unsettling in both cases was the bandits' elusive quality, meaning their ability to hide themselves from official view: in Ireland, the tories were often said to disappear into the wilderness after each attack, while dacoits and thugs quietly merged with the local populations. Irish reports abounded with references to the tories' knowledge of, and ability to navigate, Irish bogs and marshes, which allowed them to easily avoid their pursuers. Describing the state of the tory problem in Kilkenny, a report from 1652 highlighted the fact that a large proportion of the entire country was made up of bogs through which horses could only pass with great difficulty.[87] Similar difficulties arose in India, where dacoits also made

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[85] Wagner, *Thuggee*, 62 – 63, 64 – 65.

[86] Jon Wilson, *The domination of strangers: modern governance in eastern India, 1780 – 1835* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 8; Duncanson, *Historiography*, 2.

[87] The commissioners to the council of state, 'Some particulars offered in order to the breaking of the enemy's strength, Kilkenny, 7 January 1652,' Dunlop, *Ireland under the Commonwealth*, I, 119.

use of their greater knowledge of the natural surroundings when evading the authorities. 'In case of alarm,' Frederick Currie, soon to be magistrate of Goruckpoor wrote in 1827, 'they retreat to the depths of the forest, which are all perfectly well known to them, but almost impervious to aught else save the beasts of prey which they so resemble'.[88] The language in this letter is particularly striking, since it completely dehumanises the dacoits and reduces them to an animalistic and savage state. The fear generated by banditry, and the effect of such descriptions, was most noticeable in Ireland, where officials used these fears as a justification for the implementation of additional legal measures strengthening English authority. One example from the 1650s demonstrates how toryism was used in the context of the transplantation policies. According to a general order from August 1655, all Irishmen and women not subject to land forfeiture and transplantation and living in rural areas were nonetheless to be relocated into regulated settlements adhering to specific English conditions. Among these conditions, the settlements had to be in areas removed from known tory activity. The justification provided for such a measure stipulated that peasants living in remote areas were unable to fight off tory bands and, instead, most likely offered them support.[89] As a result, even those individuals who had escaped dispossession were further brought under stronger English control. Legislation was employed to relocate individuals to areas deemed more suitable (and, one suspects, more easily placed under surveillance), under the guise of general collaboration between the Irish and tories.

With regards to thuggee, continued reluctance to clearly define the actual meaning of the term represented in itself a highly successful way of generating widespread insecurity. Consequently, this heightened anxiety permitted British officials to adopt increasingly larger measures of control over the population. One notable element that emerges from transcripts of depositions taken in 1810 among the Perry papers is the magistrate's choice of language. In his early correspondence, Perry rarely uses the word thug, though sustained references to various 'crimes' committed in Etawah clearly refer to cases of thuggee. The first few times the word appears in the transcripts of prisoner interrogations, it is in fact always placed in brackets, as though Perry were distancing himself from the term. It is almost as thought to suggest that Perry was merely transcribing an Indian word used by the prisoners

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[88] Frederick Currie, magistrate of Goruckpoor district, to the resident at Lucknow, Zillah Goruckpoor, 25 May 1827, in Sleeman, *Report*, 40.

[89] 'General orders, 16 August 1655,' Dunlop, *Ireland under the Commonwealth*, II, 537.

themselves.[90] Perry also indicated in his correspondence that he had petitioned the central authorities for the power to evict suspected thugs from EIC lands. While Perry's petition was not granted, Thornton's thug account from the late 1830s reveals the extent of British attempts to expand the scope of their legal jurisdiction in the campaign against thuggee. Most telling is his observation that after 1829, government 'exertions were properly extended to those native states whom we have by treaty, a right to controul [sic]'.[91] Such examples demonstrate that in Ireland and India, British officials used the anxiety provoked by toryism and thuggee to enact legislative measures that strengthened the authority of the administration, often in areas where their control had previously been weak.

V.

Although neither appears to have been motivated primarily by religion, religious factors were attributed to both toryism and thuggee. The vast majority of tories and rapparees, it is true, were Catholic; the accusation that they exclusively targeted Protestants, on the other hand, was not.[92] Nonetheless, the belief in a continued correspondence between 'Catholic mob violence' and Jacobitism (often reduced to toryism) proved remarkably resilient and Protestants continued to fear a second armed conflict such as the 1641 Uprising. When Robert Clark wrote to the earl of Mountrath in 1660 on the tory threat, claiming that 'talk of deliverance, from the English yoke, puts us in fear for the loss of our lives and of such enjoyments as the Lord has given us,' he was merely repeating wider and long lasting fears of a Catholic resurgence.[93] If one considers the anti-Catholic propaganda of the later seventeenth century, toryism remained a viable and dangerous threat to Protestant interests. This association between the Jacobite cause and banditry promoted the idea that toryism was linked to the general Irish Catholic population. This, in turn, created an atmosphere of repressive measures: increasingly, reprisals against tory activities were carried out against civilians. Even the penitent tory Edmund Murphy, who took great pains elsewhere to distance himself from his former compatriots, accused English soldiers of attacking innocent civilians in their pursuit of the tory leader Art MacKardle.[94] The English insistence on the exclusively

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[90] Perry to Dowdeswell, Etawah, 17 April 1810, and transcripts included in a letter from Perry to Dowdeswell, 24 April 1810, Etawah, CUL MS Add.5375, for example fols. 115b, 123b, 126b.
[91] Thornton, *Illustrations*, 334; Perry to Dowdeswell, Agra, 29 May 1809, CUL MS Add.5375, fol. 53b.
[92] Connolly, *Religion, law, and power*, 207 – 208.
[93] Robert Clark to the earl of Mountrath, Kilkenny, 8 December 1660, *CSPI Charles II (1660 – 1662)*, ed. Robert Pentland Mahaffy (London: Mackie & Co., 1905), 122. For the expression 'Catholic mob violence,' see Ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite cause*, 114 – 115.
[94] Murphy, 'The present state and condition of Ireland,' Section V, 349. See also John Childs, 'The laws of war in seventeenth-century Europe and their application during the Jacobite war in Ireland, 1688 – 91,' in *Age of*

Catholic nature of tories further reinforced the sense of disconnect between the minority Protestant elite and the majority Catholic population of Ireland. While toryism did not constitute the sole cause of this disconnect, such elements contributed to a religious dichotomy that had a lasting impact on Protestant and Catholic relations. As shown by Pádraig Lenihan, Protestant elites 'were a "Protestant settlement" rather than an Irish nation, (...) who were colonials in the sense that they saw themselves as "settlers" from a mother land surrounded by a sullenly hostile population'.[95]

No connections were drawn between religion and dacoity, nor did religion figure in the earliest accounts of thuggee. Although absent from the first thug confessions, the religious element became an essential characteristic of nineteenth-century thug stereotypes and depictions. Scholars such as Martine van Woerkens contend that there were religiously-motivated groups in India which eventually emerged in the colonial record as thugs. Kim Wagner, on the other hand, argues that a religious component to highway banditry was a later addition by officials like Sleeman in efforts 'to build a coherent argument concerning a pan-Indian murderous society'.[96] Religion first featured as a characteristic of Indian banditry in an article on the southern bandits known as Phansigars published in an 1816 edition of *Asiatick Researches* by Dr. Sherwood. Although these thieves were Muslim, Dr. Sherwood alleged that they had adopted the Hindu gods as their patrons. The association grew more explicit over the next two decades: Henry Harpur Spry of the Bengal Medical Service and Sleeman both argued that thuggee was introduced to India through Muslim invasions. Sleeman even attempted to trace the thugs' origins back to Persian groups described in Herodotus, conveniently disregarding the fact that the Persians of Herodotus's time would have been Zoroastrians.[97] This supposed Persian origin would initially appear to contradict one of Sleeman's earlier claims: '[t]here is not among them one who doubts *the divine origins of the system of thuggee* – not one who doubts, that he and all who have followed the trade of murder with the prescribed rites and observances, were acting under the immediate orders and auspices of the goddess Devee, Durga, Kalee, or Bhawanee.'[98] Not so, however, for Sleeman's various statements regarding the thugs served a specific purpose. Sleeman was

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atrocity: violence and political conflict in early modern Ireland, eds. David Edwards, Pádraig Lenihan and Clodagh Tait (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), 298.
[95] Pádraig Lenihan, *Consolidating conquest: Ireland 1603 – 1727* (Harlow: Longman, 2008), 220.
[96] Wagner, *Thuggee*, 20, and more generally 19 – 20.
[97] Sherwood, 'Of the murderers called p'hānsīgārs,' 260; Henry Harpur Spry, Bengal medical service, 'Some account of the gang-murderers of central India, commonly called thugs: accompanying the skulls of seven of them,' *The Phrenological Journal and Miscellany* 8 (1832 – 1834): 512; Sleeman, *Ramaseeana*, 9 – 10.
[98] Sleeman, *Ramaseeana*, 7.

essentially describing a Muslim practice imported into India, which subsequently merged with the more barbarous elements of Hinduism to create a 'uniquely Indian' form of banditry.[99] The enduring association between thuggee and Islam in British sources is noteworthy because it corroborated the claims of Islamic corruption and despotism found in British-produced histories of the period. The fact that British officials continuously emphasised thuggee's roots in Islam is highly significant, especially considering the fact that thug confessions always mentioned Hindu gods – and the acknowledged fact that thugs could be either Hindu or Muslim.[100] These discrepancies demonstrate that the true extent of the link between thuggee and religion, just as in the case of toryism and Jacobitism and Catholicism, was less important than the perception of such a link. More importantly, thuggee became viewed as an amalgam of the worst features of both Islam and Hinduism. This perception was key in aiding the administration to consolidate its authority. 'En s'attaquant aux pratiques religieuses les plus visiblement iniques,' Martine van Woerkens notes, l'action gouvernementale revêt de l'aspect mythique de croisades et conforte l'illusion que chacun peut apporter à l'Inde son remède'.[101]

The campaigns against Irish and Indian banditry are important ways in which the British sought to delineate the parameters of their colonial jurisdiction. Both forms of banditry represented significant moments of crisis in colonial settings, their proponents labelled as 'delinquents'. When regular means of containment failed, new and novel ways of conducting the law were adopted in order to counter the threats. Toryism and thuggee, as well as the repeated failure of British officials to contain them, challenged British claims to full jurisdictional power and therefore generated high levels of anxiety. At the same time, British attempts to more properly define and legislate against them demonstrated their growing confidence in British power and the authority of the state.

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[99] The expression is borrowed from Daniel Grey, 'Creating the "Hindu problem": *sati*, thuggee and female infanticide in India, 1800 – 60,' *Gender & History* 25:3 (2013): 499.

[100] BL Add. MS 41300, fol. 14b. See also Sanjay Nigam, 'Disciplining and policing the "criminals by birth," part I: the making of a colonial stereotype – the criminal tribes and castes of north India,' *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 27:2 (1990): 134; Grey, 'Creating the "Hindu problem",' 505 – 506.

[101] 'In choosing to target the most visibly iniquitous religious practices, the administration took on the mythical element of a crusade and added substance to the illusion that each individual could provide a cure to an India in decline,' (my translation). Woerkens, *Le voyageur étranglé*, 62.

Chapter III. Punishment and transportation overseas

The previous chapter explored the extent of British colonial legal jurisdiction through the case studies of Irish and Indian forms of highway banditry. This second chapter, which also concentrates on legal history, examines the repercussions for those who transgressed the social norms established by colonial jurisdiction, focusing on the punishment of penal transportation. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were significant periods in the respective histories of Irish and Indian colonialism, representing a discrete period during which the British formalised or formally assumed administrative control of these territories. Moreover, it was during this period that Britons were repeatedly confronted with high levels of subversive colonial behaviours including, among others, highway banditry. Such episodes of violence, especially when first manifested, were misunderstood and contributed to the vague, but enduring, thread of anxiety that permeated and guided the behaviour of the British authorities. The persistent British emphasis on banks of colonial knowledge which were used as a stepping stone towards colonial control rendered them painfully sensitive to perceived gaps in knowledge, which were consequently seen as potential threats to be managed. Both in Ireland and India, the fear generated by the subversive activities of colonial subjects was constantly kept alive through acts such as highway banditry, leading to highly reactive countermeasures. Contributing to these concerns, eighteenth-century Britons gradually began to perceive crime as offences against the community, rather than individuals.[1] Perpetrators, therefore, threatened the fabric of society and the sense of colonial control.

Embracing Thomas Hobbes's philosophy that 'absolute and unassailable sovereignty is all that stands between order and chaos,'[2] the administrations in Ireland and India struggled to implement their jurisdictional authority over sometimes recalcitrant subjects; any activities that challenged the 'unassailable' nature of their governments cast doubts on their claims to sovereign authority. Heavily suppressive measures were enacted against colonial populations in attempts to quell any appearance of imperial weakness. Moreover, legislation was extensively used to bolster British jurisdictional claims through the introduction of oftentimes severe forms of punishment. The evolution of Irish and Indian punitive measures throughout the course of this period reflects changing colonial perceptions of crime and their

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[1] V.A.C. Gatrell attributes this shift to the period between 1780 and 1800, whereas Alan Atkinson situates it in the mid-eighteenth century. Alan Atkinson, 'The free-born Englishman transported: convict rights as a measure of eighteenth-century empire,' *Past & Present* 144 (1994): 92; Gwenda Morgan and Peter Rushton, *Banishment in the early Atlantic world: convicts, rebels and slaves* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 235.

[2] Ian Duncanson, *Historiography, empire and the rule of law: imagined constitutions, remembered legalities* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012), 71.

implications for the wider society. Yet the comparison demonstrates that this evolution was not merely linear: transportation existed long before the transition from the corporal to the psychological punishment noted by scholars such as Michel Foucault. Nevertheless, a psychological component became increasingly prevalent by the turn of the 1800s.[3]

This chapter focuses on the punishment of colonial subjects deemed most guilty of generating fear and potential threats: vagrants and those labelled delinquents. Using penal transportation as its primary case study, it examines the ways in which this method of punishment became a powerful assertion of British colonial jurisdiction in the late eighteenth century. Building on larger legal themes, it explores how corporal forms of punishment were gradually replaced by the physical removal and displacement of transgressive colonials as a manifestation of British jurisdictional power. Briefly analysing the reasons behind this evolution in punitive thought, the chapter then considers the use of transportation both in Ireland and India during the last decades of the 1700s. The final section looks at the individual experiences of Irish convicts in New South Wales, focusing on the themes of distance and separation, as well as the relationship between various colonial administrations, punishment, and displacement. Information on Indian convicts is limited due to source availability and language barriers. According to Anoma Pieris, this is partly the result of a racial element to views of Indian convicts, who 'were identified racially as collectives and were deemed to lack individuality and intelligence'.[4] Conversely, a number of independent accounts survive describing the conditions of Irish prisoners in New South Wales. From these records, it is possible to reconstruct an impression of their personal experiences in the first decades of the Australian colony. The comparison of Irish and Indian transportation experiences in the late eighteenth century is useful in considering the religious and racial views of the empire, since it hints at different forms of punishment (segregation, the physical confinement of movement through chains, limits on the observance of faith, etc.) for different colonial subjects. Transportation was adopted in both colonies using the same logic, but the practical implementation of sentences and treatment once in penal colonies varied.

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[3] For example, Pieter Spierenburg, *The prison experience: disciplinary institutions and their inmates in early modern Europe* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991), 10; Ashis Nandy, *The intimate enemy: loss of self under colonialism* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009, 2nd edn), 3.

[4] Anoma Pieris, 'The "other" side of labor reform: accounts of incarceration and resistance in the Straits Settlements penal system, 1825 – 1873,' *Journal of social history* 45:2 (2011): 457.

I.

Throughout the early modern period, the favoured non-capital form of punishment was one which combined corporal and public components. Physical pain was thought to produce contrition, but the public nature of punishment was also designed to infuse the experience with a strong emotional sense of shame. However, in his interpretation of prisons and punishment, Michel Foucault argues that a shift occurred in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: although corporal punishment endured, it increasingly became codified and regulated by specific guidelines. Additionally, punishment slowly became separated from the physical body of the condemned man or woman. In other words, punishment was no longer inextricably tied to the corporal.[5] In this context, penal transportation gained favour as an attractive alternative. Whereas the attached sentences of hard labour in the penal colonies were viewed as deterrents to crime, relatively long sentences (standard ones were seven years, fourteen years, or life) meant that transportation represented a longer-term measure than traditional corporal sentences. In addition to the geographically distant locations of these penal colonies, which isolated convicts from their known networks, administrators hoped that hard labour would motivate convicts to strive towards redemption.[6] Sydney's first governor Arthur Phillip, for example, optimistically wrote that transportation could potentially reform convicts' characters by 'correcting their moral depravity, inducing habits of industry, and arming them in future against the temptations by which they have been once ensnared'.[7]

An emphasis on convict reformation gained favour towards the end of the eighteenth century, deriving from contemporary views on the link between poverty, vagrancy, and dissolution. The medieval value placed on mendicancy and charitable acts was slowly superseded as of the sixteenth century by a growing distinction between the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor, the latter regarded as idle and therefore threatening.[8] This distinction had

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[5] Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir: naissance de la prison* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975), 17; Paul Craven and Douglas Hay, 'The criminalization of "free" labour: master and servant in comparative perspective,' *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 15:2 (1994): 83.

[6] See Alan Shaw, *Convicts and the colonies: a study of penal transportation from Great Britain and Ireland to Australia and other parts of the British Empire* (London: Faber, 1966), 17; Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, 'Convict transportation from Britain and Ireland 1615 – 1870,' *History Compass* 8:11 (2010): 1223. On the theme of distance, see Anoma Pieris, *Hidden hands and divided landscapes: a penal history of Singapore's plural society* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2009), 16.

[7] 'The voyage of Governor Philip [sic] to Botany Bay (London, 1789),' in *Convicts and colonial society 1788 – 1868*, eds. Lloyd Evans and Paul Nicholls (South Melbourne: Macmillan, 1984, 2nd edn), 8.

[8] Spierenburg, *The prison experience*, 18 – 19. On evolving perceptions of poverty and vagrancy, see Paul Slack, *Poverty and policy in Tudor and Stuart England* (Longman: Harlow, 1988), especially 22 – 25; more generally, A.L. Beier, *Social thought in England 1480 – 1730: from body social to worldly wealth* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

particular implications for colonial settings such as Ireland and India, where colonial officials were continuously on the lookout for threats to the administration's authority. The British, according to Radhika Singha, were wary of 'situations which allowed colonial subjects to conceal or misrepresent their "true" identity'.[9] The perceived ability of subjects to disguise their identities completely negated British officials' attempts to create banks of colonial knowledge. This, in turn, jeopardised their efforts to govern more efficiently. As felons or vagabonds, convicts were generally regarded as morally dubious, idle, and dissolute. However, sentences of transportation, which offered the hope of redemption through hard labour, represented a departure from earlier forms of corporal punishment where the body was the central focus. Instead, Foucault describes how punishment gained a significant psychological dimension by the end of the eighteenth century. '[S]i on intervient sur lui en l'enfermant, ou en le faisant travailler,' he argues, 'c'est pour priver l'individu d'une liberté considérée à la fois comme un droit et un bien. (…) Le châtiment est passé d'un art des sensations insupportables à une économie des droits suspendus.'[10] In Britain, the emerging literature on alternative forms of punishment was significantly influenced by the writings of Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu on the importance of shame in punishment, and, more importantly, Cesare Beccaria's *On crimes and punishments* (1764). According to Beccaria, individuals were required to be active participants in society's greater good and to obey specific social rules that would prevent a descent into chaos. The consequences of not attending to the greater good were dire: this social contract's 'violation, even by one person, open[ed] the door to anarchy'. At the same time, Beccaria found corporal punishment distasteful since 'the purpose of punishment is not to torment and afflict a sentient being'.[11] It was the state's obligation to swiftly – but justly – punish individuals who breached the social contract.

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[9] Radhika Singha, 'Settle, mobilize, verify: identification practices in colonial India,' *Studies in History* 16:2 (2000): 152. See also David Hitchcock, *Vagrancy in English culture and society, 1650 – 1750* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).

[10] 'If one intervenes against the body by confining it, or by putting it to work, it is with the intention of depriving an individual of a freedom at once considered a right and a commodity. (…) Punishment transitioned from the art of insupportable sensations to an economy of suspended rights' (My translation). Foucault, *Surveiller et punir*, 16 – 17.

[11] It is worth noting that Beccaria did not consider transportation an effective deterrent to crime and therefore did not support it. Cesare Beccaria, *On crimes and punishments*, trans. and ed. David Young (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1986), citations on pages 18 and 23, see also 55. Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois* (5 vols., Paris: de l'imprimerie et de la fonderie stéréotype de Pierre Didot l'aîné et de Firmin Didot, 1803), I, 196 – 197, 201.

The philosophical writings of authors such as Montesquieu and Beccaria left a deep impression on later eighteenth-century commentators. William Godwin embraced the concept of transportation to remote locations as an ideal alternative to corporal punishment that also offered the possibility of the convicts' redemption. '[N]ew situations,' Godwin confidently claimed, 'makes new minds'.[12] Sir Joseph Banks's personal specimen collector George Caley expressed similar sentiments in a report on New South Wales c. 1803. 'It does not appear to me,' he noted, 'that they are transported here merely for punishment for if that was the case I should be silent.' Instead, the convicts' obligation to contribute towards their 'maintenance' was intended to achieve some measure of reform since it presumably taught them the benefits of honest labour.[13] Even the opponents of transportation, such as Godwin's contemporary Jeremy Bentham, agreed on the necessity to eliminate corporal punishment. Bentham himself advocated for a panopticon, which essentially translates into the modern prison system, wherein prisoners were confined and kept under constant surveillance. While he did not necessarily accept transportation as a suitable deterrent to crime, Bentham also supported the reformation of prisoners through punishment – hence an emphasis on labour, rather than the torture favoured in earlier centuries.[14] Finally, for many Britons transportation had the additional incentive of physically removing offenders from society. It also relieved the domestic economic pressures of maintaining prisoners in inadequate jails, and of ridding the colonies of political prisoners. Roger Ekirch's study of British transportation prior to the American Revolution notably demonstrates that the practice was already in use for English prisoners from the early 1700s and that the idea of separation had become a central feature of the entire penal enterprise by the mid-eighteenth century.[15]

II.

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[12] William Godwin, *Enquiry concerning political justice, and its influence on morals and happiness* (2 vols., London: Printed for G.G. and J. Robinson, 1796, 2nd edn), II, 386, and more generally 317, 374, 384.

[13] Series 18.045: Report written by George Caley titled 'A short account, relative to the proceedings in New South Wales, from the year 1800 to 1803, with hints and critical remarks,' (ca. May 1803), SLNW SAFE/Banks Papers/Series18.045, fols. 19 – 20. On Caley, see Anne Secord, 'Caley, George (1770 – 1829),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (https://libsta28.lib.cam.ac.uk:2090/10.1093/ref:odnb:52518).

[14] Letters I (1787), VI and VIII, 'Panopticon; or, the inspection house (Dublin, 1791),' in Jeremy Bentham, *The works of Jeremy Bentham*, ed. John Bowring (22 vols., Edinburgh: William Tait, 1843), IV, 40, 45, 47. For Bentham's opposition to transportation, see 'Panopticon versus New South Wales: or, the panopticon and the penal colonization system, compared. In a letter addressed to the right honourable Lord Pelham, 2 November 1802,' in *Ibid.*, 173 – 174.

[15] A. Roger Ekirch, *Bound for America: the transportation of British convicts to the colonies, 1718 – 1775* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2011), 19.

In the Irish context, transportation was implemented as early as the first decades of the seventeenth century to counter the threat of woodkernes. Furthermore, transportation to the Barbados was sanctioned as an official punishment under the Cromwellian regime of the 1650s as an alternative to the forced transplantation of Catholics and political prisoners to Connaught.[16] Following the slow demise of the Jacobite threat by the early decades of the eighteenth century, Irish transportation legislation began to primarily target vagabonds and felons, who were classified as criminals in two acts passed in 1703 and 1707. Throughout the remainder of the century, these groups remained the primary targets of transportation. Moreover, the two acts also allowed for the commutation of death sentences to transportation overseas, though anyone caught returning to the British Isles prior to the end of their sentence would be executed nonetheless.[17]

Measures against vagrancy were a key component of early modern and eighteenth-century Irish transportation laws. Considered 'social undesirables', vagrants were perceived as a significant social disorder and garnered equal attention from proponents of transportation. Cromwell, for instance, referred to the transportation of vagabonds along with felons in a letter dated 1654.[18] Given the destruction of historical material during the civil war in the 1920s, information on Irish transportation records of the early eighteenth century is sparse. However, one surviving House of Commons report for the years 1737 to 1743 indicates that half of the individuals whose crimes were noted out of a total of 1,890 transportees were indicted for vagrancy.[19] The pervasive fear of vagrancy throughout this

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[16] For contemporary examples, see Aubrey Gwynn, 'Documents relating to the Irish in the West Indies,' *Analecta Hibernica* 4 (1932): 139 – 286; James Kelly, 'Transportation from Ireland to North America, 1703 – 1789,' in *Refiguring Ireland: essay in honour of L.M. Cullen*, eds. David Dickson and Cormac Ó Gráda (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2003), 112 – 113. On the repercussions of land dispossession from the 1650s onward, see Chapter IV.

[17] For a late eighteenth-century example, see 30 George III, c. 32 (1790) 'For rendering the transportation of felons and vagabonds more easy,' in Breandán Mac Giolla Choille (ed.), *Transportation Ireland – Australia 1798 – 1848: state papers* (Dublin: State Paper Office, 1983), 13. On the significance of death sentence commutations, see the discussion on mercy in Douglas Hay, 'Property, authority and the criminal law,' in *Abion's fatal tree: crime and society in eighteenth-century England*, eds. Douglas Hay et al. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975), 43 – 48.

[18] Oliver Cromwell to Charles Fleetwood, 30 January 1654, Whitehall, in Robert Dunlop (ed.), *Ireland under the commonwealth: being a selection of documents relating to the government of Ireland from 1651 to 1659* (2 vols., Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1913), II, 400 – 401. See also Laurence Geary, '"The whole country was in motion": mendicacy and vagrancy in pre-famine Ireland,' in *Luxury & austerity: historical studies XXI, papers read before the 23rd Irish conference of historians held at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, 16 – 18 May 1997*, eds. Jacqueline Hill and Colm Lennox (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 1999), 121, 123.

[19] 'Appendix 1743, Report from the committee,' *The journals of the House of Commons of the kingdom of Ireland* (19 vols., Dublin, 1796), IV, cciii – ccxlv; Simon Devereaux, 'Irish convict transportation and the reach of the state in late Hanoverian Britain,' *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 8:1 (1997): 63.

period was linked to European prejudices against the perceived evils of idleness. This explains the continued attempts of British administrations in Ireland to uncover 'sturdy' beggars through a badging system, meaning those who were physically able to work and consequently not deemed worthy of charity. 'Beggary,' a 1774 pamphlet proclaimed, 'is the natural offspring of laziness' and should be dealt with through incarceration.[20] Defying easy social classifications, vagrants could often straddle different social categories. Dealing efficiently with the vagrant issue presented several problems for colonial officials. There were notably fewer Houses of Correction in Ireland than in England, where individuals were held prior to trials. Additionally, Dublin's sole workhouse accepted only children as of 1730, leaving few resources available to the growing body of the poor.[21] They were thus considered a threat which had to be removed from society.

Following a period of uncertainty after the loss of the American colonies, Irish transportation resumed with the establishment of the penal colony in New South Wales after 1788. The total proportion of Irish convicts in the new settlement was substantial: by 1800, the Irish made up 13 per cent of convicts and represented one third of all convicts sent to Australia until the 1860s. New South Wales was a particularly attractive location, according to historians such as Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, because of its sheer distance from the British Isles. Given this geographical distance, 'banishment there, even for those on a seven-year sentence, would for all intents and purposes be for life'.[22]

Recent historiography indicates that the conditions of early convict life in New South Wales were more nuanced than the traditional image of a wild, difficult, and remote settlement. Convicts were only incarcerated as of 1819, with the erection of buildings such as Hyde Park Barracks, and were initially responsible for securing their own lodgings – often in the Sydney neighbourhood known as 'The Rocks'. Moreover, the tasks system of the first

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[20] *An account of the proceedings, and state of the fund of the corporation instituted for the relief of the poor, and for punishing vagabonds and sturdy beggars in the county of the city of Dublin, March 22nd 1774* (Dublin, 1774), 8, 12, 14. For early champions of 'badging,' see Part II, Arthur Dobbs, *An essay on the trade and improvement of Ireland* (Dublin: Printed by A. Rhames, for J. Smith and W. Bruce, 1729), 45 – 64 and William Fownes, *Methods proposed, for regulating the poor, supporting of some, and employing of others: according to their several capacities* (Dublin: Printed for G. Grierson, 1724), 2 – 6.
[21] Patrick Fitzgerald, 'Poverty and vagrancy in early modern Ireland 1540 – 1770,' unpublished PhD thesis (Belfast: Queen's University Belfast, 1994), 120; Mary Carter, 'Swift and the scheme for badging beggars in Dublin, 1726 – 1737,' *Eighteenth-Century Life* 37: 1 (2013): 100.
[22] Maxwell-Stewart, 'Convict transportation from Britain and Ireland 1615 – 1870,' 1228; Alan Atkinson, *The Europeans in Australia. A history: the beginning* (2 vols., Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1997), I, 248; Keith Johnson and Michael Flynn, 'Convicts of the *Queen*,' in *Exiles from Erin: convict lives in Ireland and Australia*, ed. Bob Reece (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), 10.

few decades meant that the unbound convicts were able to negotiate the terms of their labour to some degree.[23] Although this does not diminish the experiences of early New South Wales convicts, such descriptions tend to corroborate Foucault's argument that the distance entailed by transportation was only partially intended to affect convicts. A significant component of the punishment was, in fact, to frighten those who remained in Europe with nebulous and half-formed ideas of far-off places.[24]

Even in a population almost exclusively made up of convicts, prejudice against the Irish was high and they were frequently singled out by officials and settlers. In *The account of New South Wales*, Anglo-Irish officer David Collins revealed a deep antagonism towards his Irish countrymen and constantly compared them to other convicts. Supposedly possessed of 'natural vicious propensities', Collins repeatedly insisted that Irish convicts were openly rebellious and politically seditious, often refusing to carry out their assigned work without significant measures taken against them.[25] An unsigned letter in the papers of the New South Wales colonial secretary written shortly after the arrival of the convict ship *Tellicherry* (1806) expressed concern at the arrival of the infamous Wicklow bandit Michael Dwyer and four of his companions. '[W]ell knowing the disposition of the Irish character,' the author worried that these men would represent a bad influence on the remainder of the convict population.[26] Two decades later, a report on the female factory (presumably in Sydney) noted significant overcrowding due to a large and recent influx of women from the British Isles. The report provided the general recommendation that no women be admitted to the colony for the next 12 months, but also explicitly singled out Irish women since 'the Inhabitants app[ear] to have a strong objection to receiving them'.[27] In a letter to an unknown Irish recipient, the Dublin native convict Andrew Doyle maintained that the treatment of Irishmen and women in the colonies was similar to that of all other convicts. The insurgents from the failed rising at Castle Hill, he claimed, 'expiate[d] their offence English as Irish'. Moreover,

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[23] Grace Karskens, *The colony: a history of early Sydney* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2009), 9, 11, 74; James Boyce, *Van Diemen's Land* (Melbourne: Black Inc., 2008), 9; Peter Bridges, *Foundations of identity: building early Sydney 1788 – 1822* (Sydney: Hale & Iremonger, 1995), 25; Tour of Hyde Park Barracks, 29 March 2018.
[24] See Foucault, *Surveiller et punir*, 97, 98.
[25] David Collins, *An account of the English colony in New South Wales* (2 vols., London: Printed for T. Cadell jun. and W. Davies, 1798), II, 75, and more generally I, 311 – 312, and II, 22, 286 – 287, 292.
[26] [Rev. Samuel] Marsden[?] to colonial secretary, unsigned and undated, *New South Wales colonial secretary. Miscellaneous records relating to convicts and criminals and legal matters. Special bundle: convicts, 1801 – 24*, SLNSW AO Fiche 3289 (5/3822.2A), fol. 1.
[27] No. 19, 'Transmitting copy of the recent report of management of the female factory for the half year ending 31st of December 1828,' Darling to [William?] Huskisson, 18 February 1829, *Despatches from the governor of NSW – transcripts of originals in Public Record Office, London, 1823 – 32*, SLNSW ML A 1267/4 (CY Reel 902), fol. 298, and more generally fols. 295 – 299.

he also pointed to the number of Irish individuals who had received appointments in the colony: a head constable, the provost martial, and the general surgeon at the time of writing were all Irish. Yet even Doyle was critical of *certain* Irish convicts. Mentioning the unusual situation that six individuals were to be hung in the colony on that day, he made a passing reference to the unrest that had prevailed 'since the arrival of the first united ships – they may be indeed literally compared with the Deamons banished from happiness'.[28] The United Irishmen, those convicted in the 1798 Rebellion, also garnered criticism from the free settler George Caley. According to Caley, these Irish convicts had caused great unrest since their arrival and it was widely rumoured that they were preparing yet another rebellion. In the end, this threat proved imaginary. Nevertheless, rumours alone were sufficient to motivate the creation of a militia to counter any future threat.[29]

Read together, the varying reports of Irish convicts in New South Wales reveal occasionally conflicting conclusions. As shown by Doyle's account, the colony did offer numerous opportunities for Irish individuals. Nonetheless, Irish convicts were repeatedly singled out in administrative and private correspondence, and often dismissed as being possessed of inferior reliability, industry, and loyalty. For the most part, Irish convicts in the first years of the nineteenth century were segregated from fellow convicts. Numerous references indicate that the Irish were frequently sent away from Sydney to the plantation settlement at Toongabbie.[30] The Vice Admiral John Hunter wrote to Joseph Banks in March 1798 about the disturbances to the colony wrought by the large number of Irish convicts recently sent out, claiming that these convicts had undone all of his efforts to render other convicts amenable. The Irish, he concluded, 'are in general so very turbulent a set of transports, and such infamous characters in other respects, that you really Sir cannot imagine the mischief they do'.[31] Even stricter segregation was enforced under Governor King when upwards of 200 Irish convicts were sent to Castle Hill under the (mistaken) belief that it could prevent further rebellious activities. As seen above, fears of Irish-devised plots against the administration proliferated under King's tenure and were exacerbated following the arrival of the first group of convicts sentenced for their roles in the 1798 Rebellion.[32] 'If any more of

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[28] Andrew Doyle letter, 1804, SLNSW ML MSS 5323, fols. 3 (for both citations), 6.

[29] SAFE/Banks Papers/Series18.045, fol. 33.

[30] Karskens, *The colony*, 86 – 87.

[31] Series 38.09: Letter received by Banks from John Hunter, 12 March 1798, 25 July 1798, SLNSW SAFE/Banks Papers/Series 38.09, fols. 1 – 2.

[32] Lieutenant governor King, Sydney, 10 March 1801 (enclosure 13, letter to the duke of Portland, 28 September 1800); Lieutenant governor King, Sydney, 29 April 1800; and Lieutenant governor Foveaux, Norfolk Island, 18 September 1801, in *Precis of letters to secretary of state New South Wales 1800 – 1802*, London, TNA CO

the Irish Republicans are sent out here,' King ominously concluded in one letter from March 1801, 'I do not know what will be the consequences.'[33]

The 1798 Rebellion taxed an already disorganised system and sparked a series of courts martial that extended beyond the regular jurisdictional boundaries of the Irish administration. The TCD collection of documents on the trials held in Wexford illustrate the arbitrary nature of many convictions. The charge was almost always two-fold: though many were accused of murder or possessing weapons, they were also tried under the mere suspicion of having participated in United Irishmen groups; moreover, none of the accused had lawyers and had to conduct their own cross-examinations. John Bryan, whose brother James had previously been tried by court martial, was initially sentenced to death for the murder of Nathaniel Croshee and for his supposed rank in the United Irishmen army. However, the case rested on the changing testimony of a child and was later commuted to transportation. Though Michael Weldon was eventually found not guilty of making pike handles for the rebel army, he was still sentenced to transportation for life for being a United Irishman.[34] In a general court martial organised at Slane in July 1798, fifteen men were tried 'with waging war against our sovereign lord the King and his leige [sic] subjects, with an intent to overturn our happy constitution'. Only three of these men were acquitted and of these, Philip Carney was released on the condition of being bound for good behaviour for three years with two sureties.[35] Providing further details concerning the disarray caused by many of the 1798 Rebellion courts martial, a letter published in the New South Wales *Courier Newspaper* on 9 March 1799 pointedly noted that 'many [of the recently arrived Irish rebel leaders] had had no trial and no sentence'. As such, colonial officials received no guidelines regarding the duration of the convicts' sentences.[36] The administration's reaction to events such as the 1798 Rebellion reflects the ways in which colonial jurisdiction was often manipulate in times of

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202/2, fols. 23, 34, 62; 'Insurrection, Sunday, 11 March 1804,' *Sydney Gazette, and New South Wales advertiser vol. 1, March 5th, 1803 – February 26th, 1804* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1899), section 11:54.

[33] Acting gov. King to Under Secretary King, Sydney, 10 March 1801, in Frederick Watson (ed.), *Historical records of Australia, Series I. Governors' despatches to and from England: 1801 – 1802* (26 vols., Sydney: Library Committee of the Commonwealth Parliament, 1914 – 1925), III, 74.

[34] No. 811 of TCD MS 1471, 'Documents relating to the transportation of John Bryan, sentence to transportation for 7 years in 1800,' *Trinity College Library collections held by Trinity College Dublin relating to Irish rebels and transportees, 1636 – 1847*, SLNSW M 854, fols. 1a – 25b (pages are not numbered properly, as the first page is unnumbered); Item 872[?] of TCD MS 872, 'Proceedings of a general court martial held at Drogheda June the 2nd 1798, by order of Lieut. Gen. Craig,' SLNSW M 854, fols. 1a – 3a.

[35] 'Proceedings of a general court martial assemble at Slane on Wednesday the 18th July,' *Ibid.*, fol. 11b, and fols. 19b, 20b.

[36] Letter in the Courier Newspaper, 9 March 1799, cited in *Typescript copy of a lecture, entitled 'The men of '98: the tracks of Irish exiles in Australia,' given to Eamon de Valera while in that country*, [signed note 1955], NLI Ms. 7324, 7.

crisis. Individuals such as John Bryan and Michael Weldon were perceived as traitors to the Crown, even when evidence of actual crimes was purely circumstantial.

Felons, vagabonds, and political activists alike were deemed a threat to society. Consequently, the punishment for subversion was severe. By the time of the first Irish convict ship in 1791, official guidelines were already in place as outlined in the *Parliamentary Papers* S*ession* of 1812. Among other things, transportation was reserved for felons with fourteen-year or life sentences, and for only the most severe of the seven-year cases. Convict age limits were also imposed: no older than fifty years of age for men and forty-five for women. In the same year, however, the Inspector General of Irish prisons admitted that most convicts sent to New South Wales had only received seven-year sentences. Of the 155 prisoners on board the *Queen* in 1791, only 40 per cent had received life or commuted death sentences. Both the youngest and oldest convicts, an eleven-year old from Dublin and sixty-four-year old from Limerick, had seven-year sentences.[37]

One primary reason for the transportation of such large numbers despite official regulations was the severe overcrowding of Irish gaols, which was exacerbated by long delays between sentencing and actual transportation. Edward Hay, a Catholic accused of participating in the 1798 Rebellion and briefly sentenced to transportation before being pardoned, wrote that many convicts were lodged in sloops or hulks for want of appropriate accommodation.[38] New South Wales musters corroborate the Inspector General's deposition that transport ships were only sent infrequently every few years. Using the *Marquis Cornwallis* as an example, sentencing dates ranged from June 1793 to March 1795. The ship sailed in 1796. Conditions once on board convict ships could also be severe. Governor Hunter expressed concern about Irish transport ship conditions following the *Marquis Cornwallis*'s

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[37] 'Appendix no. 77' and 'Appendix no. 38: answers and queries, for the information of the committee on transportation. Forster Archer, inspector general of prisons in Ireland, 8 July 1812,' *PP HC 1812, Vol. II. Report from the select committee on transportation*, 9 – 10 and 116 – 117. For the *Queen* convicts, see 'Appendix VI: list of prisoners under sentence or order of Transportation as received from the different parts of the country and transported from Cork in the Queen transport April 1791,' in Bob Reece, *The origins of Irish convict transportation to New South Wales* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 296 – 303; Johnson and Flynn, 'Convicts of the *Queen*,' 11 – 12.

[38] Edward Hay, *History of the Irish insurrection of 1798* (Dublin: Published by James Duffy, 1842), 12. See also Charles Bateson, *The convict ships, 1787 – 1868* (Glasgow: Brown, Son & Ferguson, 1985, 2nd edn), 59.

arrival, while conditions on board the next ship from Ireland, the *Britannia* (1797), resulted in the deaths of several convicts from punishments inflicted by the captain.[39]

While Indian convicts were primarily transported for murder or forms of violent theft, Irish convicts could be sent to New South Wales for a wide array of felonies that varied in terms of severity. Michael Connor, James Smith, and John Casey were convicted of highway robbery and assault between 1793 and 1794. The three men received death sentences later commuted to transportation for life. John Higgins received a similar commuted death sentence in 1792 for house burglary. Meanwhile, John Healy and Patrick McInherney were sentenced to seven years for shop theft valued at 4 shillings and 9 pence.[40] The amount of information available for individual Irish convicts is limited. Although this is partially due to the destruction of many records during the conflicts of the early 1920s, it also reflects administrative prejudice. The latter is particularly evident in convict transportation lists that included both English and Irish prisoners. For instance, the transport list for the *Kitty* (1792) provides specific details of the names, ages, professions, locations and dates of sentencing, as well as terms of transportation for all the English women on board. Conversely, the Irish prisoners from Dublin were identified only by their name and age.[41] The paucity of information on incoming Irish prisoners eventually prompted the colonial administration to request a register of all Irish prisoners in 1798, seven years after the arrival of the first Irish convicts. Nor did this represent a turning point in the organisation of Irish convict transport. Another list signed by Governor Macquarie in April 1820, which indicated that the names and sentences had never previously been forwarded to New South Wales, demonstrates that little had changed several decades later. All individuals on the list had been sentenced to seven years; two were deceased at the time the list was drawn up; one was working in

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[39] Governor Hunter to the duke of Portland, 3 March 1796, Sydney and 'Enclosure no. 1, the case of the convict vessel the *Britannia*,' in F.M. Bladen (ed.), *Historical records of New South Wales: Hunter, 1796 – 1799* (7 vols., Mona Vale, NSW, 1978), III, 32, 238 – 277.

[40] Online Ireland-Australia transportation database, *Prisoners' petitions and cases, 1788 – 1836*, NAI PPC 40, PPC 34, PPC 39, PPC 43; 'Conviction and sentence of transportation of John Healy and Patrick McInherney, Limerick, Ireland 31 July 1790,' *Transportation documents 1790 – 1812*, SLNSW ML DOC 3138 (Reel CY 2860).

[41] 'Item no. 3, list of convicts on board the ship Kitty, describing their age, profession, where and when sentenced, and terms of transportation,' Harpur Street to Alexander Davidson, 6 February 1792, *New South Wales Despatches Commission and Instructions 1787 – 1801*, TNA CO 202/5, fols. 89 – 89b.

Liverpool; finally, one of the convicts was not even positively identified, his name listed as either Alexander or Angus.[42]

III.

The adoption of transportation as a form of punishment in late eighteenth-century India had wide-reaching effects on the development of imperial colonies in Southeast Asia. Whereas Irish convicts were consistently regarded with suspicion and accused of fomenting revolts against colonial officials, Indian convicts sent to the Straits Settlements chose to depict themselves as '*Company servants* or *kumpanee ke naukur*'.[43] Indeed, the entire penal enterprise in Asia suggested a more practical outlook of punishment through convict labour. The primary task of prisoners sent to the Andaman Islands in 1793 was described as 'clearing lands for cultivation or on public & buildings or works'.[44] This represents a subtly different perception of transportation from the Australian enterprise, where governors such as Arthur Phillip described it through the prism of moral reformation. However, in spite of this practical outlook, British officials saw Indian transportation in a far stronger ideological way than the Irish system because of the necessity to travel across the ocean and their orientalist beliefs regarding the breaking of caste. To late eighteenth-century Britons, according to Clare Anderson, caste was increasingly viewed 'as one of the most important determinants of Indian social economic life'.[45] While the vagueness of transportation was supposed to deter would-be Irish criminals, as far as the British were concerned orientalist views of Hindu beliefs regarding *kala pani* (the crossing of the ocean) rendered transportation an even greater punishment in the Indian context. In Edward Hay's case, transportation was presented as a 'boon' granted to him instead of death.[46] This differs vastly from the religious dimension to transportation in the Indian context. In March 1802, the Court of appeal and circuit heard from judges in the Calcutta sector that transportation was often feared more than the death penalty by Indians. 'The sentence of transportation' they reported two months later, 'is held

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[42] Portland to Governor Hunter, Whitehall, 18 September 1798, TNA CO 202/5, fol. 190b; 'Item 2b, part 01: List of convicts sent out from Ireland in 1800. Transcribed 20 August 1822,' *New South Wales probable archival estrays, colonial secretary, miscellaneous papers, 1822 – 1879*, SLNSW ML MSS 509, item 2b.
[43] Original emphasis. 'The following third additional minute by the president, respecting the present condition and treatment of felons and other offenders, transported to this settlement, with proposed amendments therein, Fort Cornwallis, 15 April 1824,' *Straits Settlements Vol. 94, 1824*, BL IOR G/34/94, fol. 383.
[44] 'No. 9, Board observations,' G.H. Barlow to Ed. Hay, secretary to government, Fort William, 20 December 1793, *BCJC 1 November to 27 December 1793*, BL IOR P/128/7, fol. 407.
[45] Clare Anderson, 'The politics of convict space: Indian penal settlements in Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean and the Andaman Islands,' in *Isolation: places and practices of exclusion*, eds. Carolyn Strange and Alison Bashford (London: Routledge, 2003), 38.
[46] Hay, *History of the Irish insurrection*, 22.

in such terror, that it is to be lamented it has not been extended in its operation.'[47] Ironically, Anderson's work demonstrates that caste views did not materially affect Indian perceptions of transportation. In fact, many of the early convicts either did not take caste signifiers too rigidly or were not Hindus. Due to this, many of these (primarily) men would not have viewed the crossing of the Indian Ocean with the dread anticipated by British officials. Moreover, transportation lists from the *Bengal criminal and judicial consultations* render it clear that the British were aware that many convicts were not Hindus. Despatches from the 1790s consistently requested prisoner lists which included the convicts' religious identification as Hindu or Muslim.[48] The insistence on *kala pani*, in spite of the full knowledge of convicts' religious identification, reveals the extent to which modes of classification often overshadowed nuances in the colonies. Here, Hindus and Muslims were conflated together to create one specific colonial group targeted by transportation.

Given its adoption against the backdrop of the rise of abolitionism, historians such as Clare Anderson and Andrea Major have noted the possible connections between transportation and indentured labour, with their sentences of forced labour, and slavery in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Indian Ocean. Slavery itself, however, was ill-defined in late eighteenth-century India. Since it was primarily of a domestic nature, slavery there was frequently dismissed when compared to the Atlantic trade.[49] Indeed, contemporary Europeans widely believed that house slaves had better living standards than most Indian peasants. '[H]ere slaves are treated as the children of the families to which they belong,' a committee at Kishen Nagur concluded in 1772, 'and often acquire a much happier state by their slavery than they could have hoped for by the enjoyment of liberty'.[50] Meanwhile, the famed orientalist and judge William Jones dismissively noted 'I consider slaves as servants under

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[47] 'Answers by judges, no. 1, Calcutta division, Zillah Hooghly, 3 May 1802, question 37' and 'Answers by judges, no. 1, Calcutta division. Court of appeal and circuit, 22 March 1802, question 37,' *PP HC 1812 – 1813, Vol. IX. Papers relating to East India affairs* (London, 1813), 9 and 45.

[48] Anderson, 'The politics of convict space,' 42. For examples of such prisoner list requests, see 'Nos. 1 (10 March)' and '3 (11 March) resolutions,' Fort William, 13 March 1797, *BCJC 6 January to 28 April 1797*, BL IOR P/128/32, fols. 365 and 367.

[49] Clare Anderson, 'Colonization, kidnap and confinement in the Andamans penal colony, 1771 – 1864, *Journal of Historical Geography* 37 (2011): 71; Andrea Major, '"Hill coolies": Indian indentured labour and the colonial imagination, 1836 – 38,' *South Asian Studies* 33:1 (2017): 23 – 36 (doi.org/10.1080/02666030.2017.1300374). On definitions of slavery see, for example, Indrani Chatterjee, *Gender, slavery and law in colonial India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 4, 6 – 7.

[50] 'Extract of the proceedings of the committee at Kishen Nagur, 28 June 1772,' *PP HC 1828, Vol. XIV. Correspondence on state of slavery in territories under rule of East India Company, and slave trade* (London, 1828), 2.

contract.'[51] The British belief in the ties between Indian slavery and Islam or Hinduism also meant that most measures undertaken to curtail the slave trade prior to its abolition in 1807 were politically motivated and intended to foil competing European interests on the subcontinent rather than attempts to change current practices.[52]

In contrast to Ireland, where transportation emerged from the combination of Tudor poor laws and the political upheavals of the seventeenth century, Indian transportation only gained prominence between 1787 and 1790 following Cornwallis's reforms. Increasingly, and despite an official policy of non-interference with indigenous law systems, EIC courts began to look for alternative forms of punishment to previously favoured Islamic forms deemed barbaric such as mutilation. Nevertheless, Company officials required severe forms of punishment for subversive groups such as dacoits. Sentences of mutilation or imprisonment for more than seven years were changed in the 1790s to transportation overseas and ten years of hard labour in penal colonies.[53] Definitions of the crimes and types of convicts liable for transportation remained vague throughout the period, though in comparison to Ireland, these crimes were usually of a violent nature. While David Smyth's *Abridgment of the penal regulations* indicates that the punishment was first implemented against dacoits in the late 1780s, acts constituted of 'robbery by open violence' were only defined in 1803. Mimicking existing Irish guidelines, Company officials also decreed that only convicts receiving life sentences were henceforth to be transported to the penal colonies.[54] As in the Irish case, guidelines were frequently disregarded and convicted prisoners could be detained for years before their actual transport date. Sentenced to seven years on Prince of Wales Island for killing his brother, Emaum Buksh was tried a second time in June 1812 for returning to Bengal prior to the end of his original sentence. Though liable to

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[51] 'Extract from the charge delivered by Sir William Jones, a judge of the supreme court at Calcutta, to the grand jury, June 1785,' *Ibid.*, 9 – 10.

[52] One exception was legislation passed by Cornwallis in the late 1780s. John Harington, *An elementary analysis of the laws and regulations enacted by the governor general in council, at Fort William in Bengal, for the civil government of the British territories under that presidency* (3 vols., Calcutta: Printed at the Honourable Company's Press, 1817), III, 743; M. Day, collector, to William Cowper, acting president, and committee of Revenue, Dacca, 2 March 1785, *BRCon. 24 August to 9 September 1785*, BL IOR P/50/60, enclosed letter 311; Amal Chattopadhyay, *Slavery in the Bengal presidency 1772 – 1843* (London: Golden Eagle, 1977), 83 – 85, 157; Chatterjee, *Gender, slavery, and law*, 177 – 178.

[53] N. Majumdar, *Justice and police in Bengal 1765 – 1793: a study of the Nizamat in decline* (Calcutta: K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1960, 1st edn), 236; Kernial Sandhu, *Indians in Malaya: some aspects of their immigration and settlement (1786 – 1957)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 132 – 133.

[54] 'Regulation LIII of 1803' and 'Penal regulations no. 129, 131 and 134' (Regulation 53 of 1803, sections 3 and 4), David Smyth, *An abridgment of the penal regulations, enacted for the government of the territories under the presidency of Fort William, in Bengal* (Calcutta, 1828, 2nd edn), 7, 15 – 16; 'Regulation LIII of 1803, section VIII,' *Regulations passed by the governor general in council of Bengal, with an index and glossary: 1796 – 1803* (3 vols., London, 1828), II, 745.

suffer death under the 1803 regulation, the court eventually ruled in favour of 39 lashes and renewed transportation to Penang.[55] Convict lists also reveal the considerable time lapses between sentencing and transportation dates, which were frequently even worse than those in Ireland. One such list prepared in 1797 detailing prisoners held in the jail of the Twenty-Four Parganas and awaiting transportation mentioned conviction dates ranging from August 1790 to January 1796. Later lists of Europeans in India sentenced to transportation to New South Wales indicate similar time spans. In this case, part of the problem lay in the lack of ships travelling between India and the settlement in Australia. A letter from the Fort St George secretary in 1815 proposed to send five convicts to Bengal where they could then board ships to the penal colony, since there was a greater likelihood of obtaining passage from there.[56] Given such difficulties in obtaining ships, two of the women on the *Canada* (February 1817) had been sentenced in October and November of 1815. Meanwhile, the master roll of prisoners destined for the *Candry* in January 1826 listed one convict tried in February 1822.[57]

Between 1787 and 1858, approximately 30,000 Indian convicts were transported to settlements at Bencoolen (Sumatra), Penang (Prince of Wales Island, later Malaysia), Malacca, the Amboyna Islands, Java, and the Andaman Islands.[58] Penang, which later became part of the larger Straits Settlements conglomerate with Singapore and Malacca, soon emerged as the primary penal colony in Asia as well as a large centre for trade. Tomotaka Kawamura's work on Penang demonstrates that the city saw a significant influx of migrants from the 1780s to the early 1800s, the largest groups comprised of Malays, the Chinese, and Chulias (Indians from the Coromandel Coast).[59] Documents pertaining to early Penang transportation cases indicate that in contrast to Irish convicts, or even the 200 men briefly

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[55] 'Vakeel of government, against Emaum Buksh. Charged with returning to Bengal, under sentence of transportation, 29 June 1812,' W.H. Macnaghten, *Reports of cases determined in the court of Nizamut Adawlut* (6 vols., Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1827, new edn), I, 231.

[56] 'No. 50: 9 August 1815, D. Hill, Fort St George secretary, to A. Trotter esq., secretary to government,' in 30 August 1815 entry, *BCJC 30 August to 13 September 1815*, BL IOR P/132/7, [unnumbered].

[57] 'No. 3: List of convicts sentenced to transportation, and now confined in the jail of the twenty four pergunnahs,' Fort William, 24 February 1797, BL IOR P/128/32, fols. 308 – 335; 'List of convicts embarked on board the *Canada*, John Gregg Master, for New South Wales – Feb 1817,' fol. 99 and 'Master roll of prisoners by the [illegible] ship *Candry* January 1826,' fols. 126 – 127, *State records of New South Wales Convict ships musters and other papers 1810 – 36*, SLNSW Reel 2419 (2/8250).

[58] Clare Anderson, 'Convict passages in the Indian Ocean, c. 1790 – 1860,' in *Many middle passages: forced migration and the making of the modern world*, eds. Emma Christopher, Cassandra Pybus and Marcus Rediker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 129 – 130.

[59] Tomotaka Kawamura, 'Maritime Asian trade and colonization of Penang, c. 1786 – 1830,' in *Hinterlands and commodities: place, space, time and the political economic development of Asia over the long eighteenth century*, eds. Tsukasa Mizushima, George Bryan Souza and Dennis O. Flynn (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 154 – 156. On the history of the Straits Settlements, see Constance Turnbull, *The Straits Settlements 1826 – 67: Indian presidency to crown colony* (London: Athlone Press, 1972), 1, 47.

sent to the Andaman Islands in 1793, the original Indian transportation system was piecemeal and involved the commission of merchant or trading vessels to convey small numbers of convicts from India. A series of letters between Lord Cornwallis and the superintendent of Prince of Wales Island illustrates this point by tracing the movements of seven convicts between March and July 1790. In the early Indian context, Cornwallis's letters suggest that many convicts were individually sent to the penal settlements.[60]

With few exceptions, Indian convict lists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were noticeably more detailed than those submitted with Irish transport ships. Since the prisoners' transgressions were almost always included, these lists provide valuable insight into the British Indian administration's greatest concerns at the turn of the century. Invariably, Indian convicts sentenced to transportation had been found guilty of violent deeds such as murder or armed highway robbery. One relatively late list from Allipore in 1823 listed, among possible crimes, gang robberies; highway robberies which included murder; and dacoit accomplices.[61] Again, such lists were characterised by vague definitions that reinforced British anxieties about the nature of the Indian character. A particularly long list from 1793 providing varying degrees of information on 232 men noted that 160 of them had been convicted for dacoity. Of the remaining entries where crimes were listed, these included murder, theft, and highway robberies.[62] However, as seen in the previous chapter, the line between dacoity, thuggee, and highway banditry was often unclear. Convict lists from this period demonstrate that officials frequently singled out robberies, particularly those carried out by large groups, as a particularly heinous crime. At the same time, officials never seemed clear as to whether these constituted acts of dacoity, highway banditry, or mere theft. Of the sixty-four convicts for whom information was provided in a similar list from February 1797, only fourteen were convicted of dacoity. Nevertheless, the remaining fifty were indicted for

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[60] See messages from Cornwallis to Captain Francis Light, superintendent of Prince of Wales Island, 'No. 3: 11 March 1790,' 'No. 5: 2 May 1790,' 'No. 7: 10 May 1790,' 'No. 9: 19 May 1790,' and 'No. 2: Captain Light, 21 July 1790,' in 27 August 1790 entry, *Straits Settlements Vol. IV, 1790 – 91*, BL IOR G/34/4, fols. 263 – 264, 265 – 266, 269 – 270 and 271 – 272. For the early convicts of the Andaman Islands, see M.V. Portman, *A history of our relations with the Andamese* (2 vols., Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Print., 1899), I, 56, 91.

[61] 'No. 29, enclosed letter 18 March 1823: List of convicts sentenced to transportation for life who were confined in the jail at Allipore and now embarked for Penang on board the ship *Thames*[?],' Captain W. Haviside, Fort William, 20 March 1823, *Bengal criminal judicial, lower provinces. 27 February to 20 March 1823*, BL IOR P/135/50, [unnumbered]. More generally, see entries throughout in Macnaghten, *Reports of cases determined in the court of Nizamut Adawlut*.

[62] It is worth noting that none of the lists in this footnote and the next contain the names of individuals sentenced for thuggee. 'Appendix A: list of prisoners sentenced to be confined Adawlat,' *BCJC 1 November to 27 December 1793*, BL IOR P/128/7, fols. 415 – 445.

offences that ranged from murder and theft to 'gang robbery,' which sounds suspiciously like many of the cases of dacoity.[63]

Bearing this in mind, the British do not appear to have developed the concept of distinct socially subversive groups in India by the end of the 1700s. While they increasingly noted the presence of dacoit and thug gangs, these were never explicitly defined as political or military enemies in the same way as the earlier Irish tories. Instead, dacoity and thuggee became models or catchphrases for a variety of violent crimes that usually had some connection to theft. Vagrancy, on the other hand, was not perceived similarly in India and punishments were light in comparison to Ireland. As of 1793, vagrants were to be detained until 'satisfactorily disposed of,' whereas Regulation XXXV of 1803 ordered the arrest of all vagrants. Should they be deemed 'disorderly or ill disposed people,' they would be required to carry out improvement works until their conduct was deemed suitable for release or they were taken in charge by an overseer.[64]

The type of information recorded in Indian convict transportation lists sheds valuable light on contemporary British perceptions of Indian criminality. Despite a general belief in the overwhelming impact of *kala pani* on Indian convicts, officials consistently sought to distinguish between Hindu and Muslim prisoners. The inconsistency between Muslim participation and supposed Hindu beliefs was previously addressed in the discourse surrounding thuggee found in Chapter II. That section argued that this contradiction reflected what the British believed to be the merging of 'malevolent' Hindu and Muslim practices on the subcontinent. It is possible to suggest a similar situation in this context: after centuries of cohabitation, the British assumed that Muslim Indians had adopted Hindu spiritual beliefs such as those regarding *kala pani*. There is, therefore, a tension between officials' consistent efforts to distinguish between Hindus and Muslims, and their assumption that both Hindus and Muslims would equally consider *kala pani* to be a psychological blow.

A final and unusual aspect of Indian transportation was the practice of branding or tattooing certain convicts. When Francis Smith received instructions from the Governor

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[63] 24 February 1797 entry, no. 1: Cha. Rd. Blunt, acting director reg, to G.H. Barlow, Sec. to Gov, Fort William, 16 February 1797, and also including J.B. Smith, magistrate, to James Stuart, act. reg. Nizamat Adawlat, Zillah 24 Perghs, 14 February 1797 and enclosed letter no. 2 [mislabelled as no. 20], *CPJ vol. 36, 6 January to 24 February 1797*, WBSA, fols. 217a – 233a.

[64] 'Penal regulation no. 51, from Reg: 22 of 1793,' Section 10, Smyth, *An abridgment of the penal regulations*, 7; 'Regulation XXXV of 1803,' Section X, *Regulations passed by the governor general in council of Bengal*, 591.

General's secretary in 1831 to henceforth brand convicts with the word 'thug' in Persian and Hindi, the practice was already common.[65] Although branding had long been abandoned in Europe, and Company officials were openly critical of the previous Islamic punishment of mutilation, scholars Clare Anderson and Radhika Singha argue that the British adopted the practice of *godna* in India because it was a manifestation of state power over individual colonised subjects. Physically marking prisoners represented a way to objectify them while also ensuring their easy identification should they ever escape – Anderson in particular believes that branding was an important step in the creation of so-called 'criminal' social groups.[66] Lists of convicts from the jail at Alipore provide a stark illustration of this objectifying trend, as well as broader patterns of *godna* in India. Among the first 130 prisoners from the list produced in September 1815 for those on board the *Lady Barlow*, only fifty-seven did not already bear the marks of *godna*. Among those who had not been marked was prisoner number thirteen, who was described as having escaped from jail and being 'of a desperate character'. This suggests that officials had not yet standardised regulations concerning which convicts should receive the mark. In most cases, however, the mark of *godna* served as the defining descriptive feature for these men.[67] As a general rule, a later list from 1823 suggests that the convicts held in Alipore from Etawah did not bear the marks of branding, while many from Cuttach (possibly Cuttack, in Odisha) bore them on their backs rather than their foreheads. Most entries, however, note the physical characteristic of *godna* on the forehead and often 'marks of punishment on [their] shoulders'. Prisoner eighteen even bore two marks of *godna*, one on his forehead and one between his eyebrows.[68] Through such lists, the Indian convicts were transformed into mere numbers, the marks of *godna* having become visual signs of identification as impersonal as height or hair colour.

Unlike New South Wales, where convicts were meant to earn redemption through labour, the early Indian penal settlements were containment sites for troublesome and hardened criminals – not sites of reform. Attempting to obtain authorisation for the

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[65] G. Swinton, chief secretary to the government, to Francis Smith, agent to the governor general in the Saugor & Nerbudda territories, Fort William, 2 April 1831, *Selected records collected from the central provinces and Berar secretariat relating to the suppression of thuggee 1829 – 1832* (Nagpur, 1939), fol. 109.

[66] Clare Anderson, *Legible bodies: race, criminality and colonialism in South Asia* (Oxford: Berg, 2004), 4, 18; Singha, 'Settle, mobilize, verify,' 167.

[67] 'Enclosed no. 29: list of convicts sentenced to transportation who were confined in the jail at Allypore &c. now embarked for the Mauritius on board the ship Lady Barlow Captain Benson and prisoners intended for the Helen but transferred to the Lady Barlow in consequence of the orders of government,' Fort William, 13 September 1815, *BCJC 30 August to 13 September 1815*, BL IOR P/132/7, [unnumbered].

[68] 'No. 29 (enclosed in letter 18 March 1823),' Fort William, 20 March 1823, BL IOR P/135/50. Anderson also notes that the *godna* was not inflicted in the Bombay Presidency. Anderson, *Legible bodies*, 39 – 40.

transportation of a particularly difficult group of convicts in May 1799, one magistrate praised their knowledge of agriculture as a potential incentive. But his final, and strongest, point revolved around repression. '[A] resolution of this kind, he wrote, 'will be [an] essential utility and [will] check their depredations which have now increased to such a degree that unless some rigid measures are adopted it will be impossible to check them'.[69] The primary purpose of the penal settlements was the physical removal of social undesirables and their subsequent psychological separation from loved ones. Through this physical segregation, the British attempted to remove visible signs of subversive activity from India and thereby gave the impression of swift and decisive action. Transportation also had the added incentive of providing colonial officials with the substantial and unpaid workforce that eventually enabled them to gain a foothold in several Asian territories.[70]

IV.

The comparison of late eighteenth-century Irish and Indian transportation experiences reveals one example of a colonial modality in which there were both notable similarities and differences. This, in turn, suggests that while the British did have transcolonial ideologies, transportation was also influenced by other factors such as race, religion, site, and geography. Was transportation a shared experience among colonial subjects? At least in some respects, it would seem not. In the context of this chapter, David Collins's account of New South Wales is of primary interest due to his observations regarding Irish convicts. However, it also provides evidence of an attempt to link the Irish and Indian transportation experiences. As mentioned previously, Indian convicts distinguished themselves by self-references as EIC employees. While Irish convicts (whether merited or not) earned a reputation as rebellious and politically seditious, the expression 'employee' had far more positive connotations. This association with the British evidently made an impression on administrators such as Collins, leading to discussions over the question of potentially sending Indian convicts to New South Wales. In 1799, the EIC drafted a formal request to the governor of New South Wales. Collins had evidently heard of this proposed scheme and strongly endorsed it. '[S]uch a description of people,' he wrote, 'might be very usefully employed there, and would be far

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[69] 'File no. 2, enclosed letter: S. Middleton, magistrate, to J.H. Harrington [sic], 8 May 1799, Zillah B. Gungee,' *CPJ vol. 52, 31 May to 11 July 1799*, WBSA, fols. 91 – 92.

[70] Anand Yang, 'Indian convict workers in Southeast Asia in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries,' *Journal of World History* 14:2 (2003): 182.

more manageable than the convicts from England or Ireland'.[71] One need only compare this sentiment to the description of Irish convicts by Governor John Hunter. 'Those whom we have latterly receiv'd,' he complained, 'have poisoned the minds of the other convicts, whom I was gradually bringing back to a state of order & obedience'.[72]

The EIC's proposal to transport Indian convicts to New South Wales was not accepted. Historians such as Hamish Maxwell-Stuart and Emma Christopher maintain that strict segregation was kept between European and Indian convicts. Meanwhile, Clare Anderson argues that convicts were never directly sent to New South Wales from South Asia, though they were occasionally re-transported between Mauritius and New South Wales in a later period.[73] Nevertheless, legislation passed between 1815 and 1828 hints at instances where this segregation may not have been respected. Legislators responsible for drafting the 1828 *An act for improving the administration of criminal justice in the East-Indies* felt it necessary to include stipulations preventing the transportation of non-European convicts to the penal colony or any surrounding islands, hinting that this may have previously been attempted.[74] While it does not offer sufficient evidence to make the claim that the segregation of Indians and Europeans in penal colonies was not respected, it is worth noting that the New South Wales muster from 1811 lists a Richard Mahammed, described simply as an 'East Indian'. No other information is provided, and it is unclear whether Mahammed was a free settler or not. Moreover, he does not appear in the musters of 1806 or 1822, which renders his movements difficult to track. However, it does indicate that there was at least one Indian person living (however briefly) in New South Wales in the first decades of the nineteenth century.[75]

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[71] '17 June 1799, nos. 1 and 3: J.H. Haringon to G.H. Barlow, Fort William, 23 May 1799,' and 'Resolution on the transportation of Indian convicts to Botany Bay,' *CPJ vol. 52, 31 May to 11 July 1799*, WBSA, fols. 89 – 90, 92 – 93; Collins, *An account of the English colony in New South Wales*, II, 294.

[72] SLNSW SAFE/Banks Papers/Series 38.09, fol. 1.

[73] On the unsuccessful bid to transport Indian convicts to New South Wales, see Section 11, 'Extract judicial letter to Bengal, 30 June 1802' (letter from 5 September 1800 as enclosed document), *BC vol. 142, 1803 – 1804*, BL IOR F/4/142, fols. 26 – 27. Hamish Maxwell-Stewart and Emma Christopher, 'Convict transportation in global context, c. 1700 – 88,' in *The Cambridge history of Australia: indigenous and colonial Australia*, eds. Alison Bashford and Stuart Macintyre (2 vols., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), I, 80; Clare Anderson, *Subaltern lives: biographies of colonialism in the Indian Ocean world, 1790 – 1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 75 – 76.

[74] 9 George IV, Cap. 74, 'An act for improving the administration of criminal justice in the East-Indies, 25 July 1828,' *The law relating to India, and the East India Company* (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1840), 325

[75] 'Richard Mahammed', *New South Wales and Tasmania, Australia convict musters 1806 – 1849 (1811)*, PRO HO 10/5, fol. 175, from the Ancestry database in the State Library of New South Wales.

Though the mingling of European and Indian convicts was forbidden, the colony in New South Wales nevertheless provided inspiration for the running of Asian convict settlements. An 1824 'Minute by the president' on the general situation at the Prince of Wales colony in the Straits Settlements provides a connection with New South Wales and indicates that broader ideas of punishment and reform were beginning to spread through the empire. Governor William Edward Phillips's comments reveal an important distinction between the emphases of the two penal colonies, but also reflect the slightly delayed influences of theorists such as Bentham and Beccaria. Consequently, the minute illustrates the ways in which the British developed general attitudes towards punishment that shaped policies throughout the empire. Significantly, Phillips attributed his proposed innovations to material that he had read on reformations carried out in New South Wales. The Straits Settlements, he argued, should conform to regulations established elsewhere in the empire; at present, he complained, there existed no guidelines on the appropriate treatment of convicts. Citing several statutes passed for New South Wales, he proposed that reformations should be carried out which were modelled on those ones and that governors should be awarded discretionary powers enabling them to grant convict pardons (convicts in the Straits Settlements could not obtain tickets of leave or pardon at this point).[76] Comments such as these suggest that penal governors were not only keeping abreast of changes taking place elsewhere, but also sought more universal forms of convict regulations.

Conversely, Phillips's minute also illustrates important aspects in which Indian and Irish convict treatment differed in penal colonies. Irish convicts were frequently distrusted and segregated, accused of intransigence and seditious practices. Conditions on board convict ships, and once in New South Wales, were frequently difficult, especially in the early years of the colony. The Irish-born captain of the convict ship *Marquis Cornwallis*, Michael Hogan, reported that the vessel was infested with rodents after a scheduled stop in Deptford to pick up the ship's guards. Unexpectedly forced to accept a surplus of convicts upon his arrival in Cork, Hogan wrote that the ship was terribly overcrowded, the hatches often left open too long because of 'the slop made by dirty women and filthy men'.[77]

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[76] 'The following third additional minute by the president,' BL IOR G/34/94, fols. 370, 385 – 386, 387.

[77] Copy of letter from Michael Hogan to James Duncan, Cove of Cork, 9 August 1795; Copy of letter from Michael Hogan, to the honorable commissioners for victualing his majesty's navy, London, between 18 and 26 August 1797, *Michael Hogan family papers, 1791 – 1908, privately held*, SLNSW ML MSS 7359 (01), 59, 75.

Convict letters also indicate that religion was an issue in the colony. For instance, Michael Hayes's letters to his family in Ireland contain numerous references to the lack of Catholic priests. In a letter to his brother Richard, Hayes revealed that he had attempted to obtain permission in 1816 for the dispatch of one or two priests to the colony, without success. Such a priest, he confided to his brother, would be assured of a comfortable living since there were more than 5,000 Irish Catholics out of a total 17,000 inhabitants in the colony. Two years later, he wrote to his mother of the continued absence of priests and of the petition for religious tolerance signed by 400 Protestants and Catholics intended for the British Government.[78] Even in the 1820s, the lack of Catholic priests remained apparent. Voicing contemporary stereotypes regarding the Irish clergy's unnatural control over its followers, Thomas Brisbane begged the government in 1824 to send out a priest to govern the increasingly uncontrollable Catholics.[79] Considering that three priests were transported in the wake of the 1798 Rebellion, it appears likely that Catholic religious practices were limited by the administration.[80] The general orders and regulations published in the *Sydney Gazette* support the interpretation that Catholics were closely monitored in the early nineteenth century. In April 1803, all Catholics were required to register with the authorities. A regulation issued one week later stipulated that Catholics were free to worship without fear of discrimination, provided 'they will manifest their gratitude and allegiance, by exercing [sic] themselves in detecting and reporting any improprie[t]y, of that or any other nature, that may fall under their observation'.[81] Thus, the primary forms of discrimination against Irish convicts were physical isolation and restraints on religious practices. Nevertheless, one should note that even the highly antagonistic Governor Philip King often acknowledged their proper conduct and, on several occasions, proposed pardons for Irish convicts.[82]

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[78] See Michael Hayes to Patrick Hayes, 20 May 1814; Michael Hayes to Richard Hayes, 23 December 1816; and Michael Hayes to his mother, 16 May 1818, *Letters of Michael Hayes and F. Girard, 1799 – 1833*, SLNSW A 3586, fols. 5b, 6a, 12.

[79] 'Dispatch no. 10, Thomas Brisbane to earl Bathurst K.G., Government House Sydney, 28 October 1824,' SLNSW ML A 1267/4 (CY Reel 902), 25.

[80] Reverend Harold Perkins, 'Father Harold: the story of a convict priest,' *Journal of Australian Catholic Historical Society* 3:3 (1971): 1, in *Prof. Bryan Gandevia medical research papers, 1786 – 2000*, SLNSW ML MSS 9986, box 15(24).

[81] 'General orders, Sunday, 17 April 1803,' *Sydney Gazette, and New South Wales advertiser. Volume I, March 5th, 1803 – February 26th, 1804* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1899), 1:7; 'Regulations, Sunday, 24 April 1803,' *Sydney Gazette* 1:8. Also see reference in Series 35.23: 'Memorandum concerning supplies and conditions in the colony of New South Wales, 31 December 1801,' SAFE/Banks Papers/Series 35.23.

[82] See Governor King, News South Wales, 21 August 1801; Governor King, New South Wales, 14 November 1801, TNA CO 202/2, fols. 48, 65.

Once granted pardons or freedom, the fate of Irish convicts was also mixed. Although given a free pardon in 1812 after eleven years and granted 120 acres of land along the Nepean River, Michael Hayes wrote to his brother that he had abandoned any prospect of returning to Ireland because of financial constraints and outstanding debts, though he expressed the hope of eventually being able to send his eldest child back.[83] At the same time, several Irishmen undeniably prospered in New South Wales. In a letter to his brother Patrick, Hayes described the will of the recently deceased Mr. Reddington, who had left his considerable fortune to two brothers still residing in Ireland. Apart from £700 intended for his female companion, Reddington's property was said to include 2,700 acres of land with a rented farmhouse, 210 head of cattle, 150 acres of cleared land near Windsor, and three houses in Sydney. Following the discharge of outstanding debts, Reddington's entire fortune was estimated at £3,600 to £4,000.[84] Meanwhile, the renowned Wicklow bandit Michael Dwyer, whose arrival in the colony inspired such dread, served as the high constable of Sydney for eleven years.[85] Finally, letters written by men such as Hayes reveal the tight-knit nature of Irish society in the penal colonies. Hayes himself corresponded with various family members over the course of twenty odd years and numerous references in his own letters indicate that the correspondence was mutual. Throughout his letters, however, he also frequently asked the recipient to pass along messages to friends and neighbours whose husbands, sons, or fathers had also been transported. In an early letter to his sister Mary, Hayes wished to let a Mrs. Butler know that her husband was in good health and had obtained employment with the colonial government. In November 1812, he requested that his brother Richard inform Mrs. Hughes of the death of her husband. Two years later, Patrick Hayes was asked to let Ian Butler's wife know that he was currently unable to send her any money, but that he would forward twenty pounds when able to do so.[86] Predating the rebellion of Castle Hill in 1804, the *Sydney Gazette* reported on 5 March 1803 that fifteen men had escaped from the Castle Hill Agricultural Settlement, robbing homes in the area and assaulting settlers. These men, the newspaper pointedly noted, were all Irish convicts who had been transported together on the ships *Hercules* and *Atlas*.[87] While it is well documented that Irish convicts

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[83] Michael Hayes to Patrick Hayes, 25 November 1812, SLNSW A 3586, fol. 4.

[84] Michael Hayes to Patrick Hayes, 4 April 1817; Michael Hayes to Patrick Hayes, 8 December 1817, SLNSW A 3586, fols. 7a – 7b and 9.

[85] See footnote 24 on reaction to Dwyer's arrival. *Michael Dwyer, 1771 – 1826, part of the Bonwick transcripts*, SLNSW A 2000/2 (Reel CY 679), fols. 409 – 410.

[86] Michael Hayes to Mary Hayes, 2 November 1802; Michael Hayes to Richard Hayes, 25 November 1812; Michael Hayes to Patrick Hayes, 20 May 1814, SLNSW A 3586, fols. 2a, 3b, 5b.

[87] 'Fugitives, 5 March 1803,' *Sydney Gazette* 1:1.

were often segregated in more remote plantations such as Castle Hill, this article does suggest that they often chose to associate together, even once established in the colony.

Such detailed information on the lives of Indian convicts is difficult to obtain as a result of source limitation. Most documents pertaining to Indian transportation in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century were produced by Company officials; invariably biased, they often obscure the personal experiences of individual convicts. Anoma Pieris notes that officials displayed little interest in following convicts after their release, although they often wrote of these very men's successful reintegration into the local society of modern-day Singapore. Whereas convict history has become a popular subject of study in Australia, Pieris argues, contemporary racialist views, an enduring stigma regarding Singapore's penal history, and modern perceptions of crime have resulted in a dearth of studies on freed convicts.[88] However, documents such as Phillips's minute can still reveal certain details of convict experiences. In contrast to Irish convicts, the majority of Indian ones were transported for violent crimes such as dacoity. The answers provided in dacoit and thug interviews from the early 1800s often display some form of dissociation from terms such as dacoity, intimating that such concepts were not necessarily prevalent among the local populations. When asked whether or not he was a thug, the first prisoner in a case brought to the court in 1812 responded that '[p]eople say, you are a person of that description. If they say so, it must be so.' At the same time, even when prisoners did confess to professions such as thuggee, it is not always clear what that term meant to them. For example, Thomas Perry provided a translated transcription of a thug examination in an 1810 letter to George Dowdeswell, in which the prisoner was reported to have said 'the Thannadhor[?] of Shekoabad questioned me and asked me if I were a thug, I answered that I was a Thug'.[89] Without any context regarding the definition of the word at this early stage in the British campaign against thuggee, it is difficult to interpret what this may have meant to the prisoner (provided the answer was even obtained without coercion).

Once in the penal colonies, Phillips's minute provides the greatest insight into the treatment of convicts. Though he supported the implementation of reforms, Phillips nevertheless displayed an orientalist perspective according to which Indian convicts should

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[88] Pieris, 'The "other" side of labor reform,' 456 – 459.

[89] 'Vakeel of government, against Tuhowar Khan and 2 others. Charged with thuggee 21 July 1812,' Macnaghten, *Reports of cases determined in the court of Nizamut Adawlut*, 239 – 240; Thomas Perry to George Dowdeswell, Zillah Etawah, 19 March 1810, Thomas Perry, *Letter book of Thomas Perry, acting magistrate of the zillahs of Agra and Etawah, 1810 – 1811*, CUL MS Add. 5375, Perry Papers, fols. 106b – 107a.

receive different treatment. He opens the minute by declaring that 'some definite and settled rules and principles' had to be established, given that most convicts were from Bengal.[90] Evidently, while Phillips may have wished for a universal convict labour system, he nevertheless believed that treatment should in part be predicated on the prisoners' places of origin. In contrast to the early decades in Sydney, where convicts were not chained and lived in The Rocks neighbourhood, early nineteenth-century Indian convicts in the Straits Settlements were kept under continuous surveillance. Mirroring Bentham's panopticon, these convicts were housed in purposefully-built jails, in solitary confinement, or placed in the care of the private individuals or public departments who supervised them.[91] It is true, however, that by the time Phillips wrote his minute, public opinion had hardened against convicts in New South Wales, who were also placed under increasing surveillance.[92]

The housing of Indian convicts in panopticon-like institutions by the 1820s did indeed reflect a general trend throughout the empire towards greater surveillance. Yet, it also remains significant that Indian convicts had never been given the same freedom of movement as European-born convicts sent to New South Wales. Like Irish convicts, the harshest measures taken against Indian convicts in the penal settlements were some sort of physical containment and religious restrictions. Where Phillips deferred notably in the treatment of convicts was his desire to create a hierarchy of prisoners according to an eight-tier class system. The different tiers would receive different provisions and stipulations concerning labour, accommodation, food, and clothing. Moreover, the lower classes would always work while restrained by chains – one of Phillips' greatest complaints was the inconsistency of guidelines regarding the restraint of prisoners, which meant that certain convicts worked in chains while others, for no apparent reason, laboured freely. Most significantly, the lower classes of convicts were to be barred from celebrating religious festivals.[93] Irish convicts were frequently segregated from other prisoners, though not necessarily kept in chains. At the same time, while the means to practice their religion were not always readily available, they were never outright barred from worship. Once again, religion became a key component of punishment in the Indian context. The Irish frequently suffered discrimination for their faith, and in some cases (especially in the earlier years of the tory threat) were transported due to

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[90] 'The following third additional minute by the president,' BL IOR G/34/94, fol. 371.
[91] *Ibid.*, fols. 380 – 381.
[92] Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, 'Convict labour extraction and transportation from Britain and Ireland, 1615 – 1870,' in *Global convict labour*, eds. Christian Giuseppe De Vito and Alex Lichtenstein (Brill: Leiden, 2015), 183 – 184.
[93] *Ibid.*, fols. 377 – 378, 379, 388 – 389.

religious prejudice. This does not appear to have been the case in India. The British were keen to distinguish between Hindu and Muslim convicts, but the convicts' faith itself does not seem to have influenced any court decisions. However, religious beliefs were assimilated into ideas of punishment and used as further ways to inflict psychological distress on prisoners through refusals to allow the celebration of religious festivals.

The clearest case in Phillips's minute for the transferral of ideas between colonial spheres was his insistence on the value of the convicts' moral reformation, which was central to his broader argument for the reorganisation of the colony. While the primary intention of transportation was the physical removal of 'deviant' individuals from society, in New South Wales it was also viewed as an opportunity for the redemption of felons. Though George Caley clearly mistrusted convicts, he also voiced the opinion that transportation forced them to contribute towards their 'maintenance' in a way that would hopefully reform their character. The notably anti-Irish Governor King, meanwhile, occasionally referred to their good behaviour in correspondence and suggested that 'the most deserving' should be offered pardons. Early nineteenth-century musters testify to this spirit of reformation, indicating that significant numbers of Irish convicts transported for life were pardoned.[94] Phillips, on the other hand, complained of the lack of emphasis on reformation in the Straits Settlements, where the prisoners carried out their sentences without 'any view to the great object of all such punishment, the reformation of the offenders'.[95] To rectify this deficiency, Phillips proposed to implement a system to monitor the character of convicts, who would be reported to the central administration for good behaviour and eventually rendered eligible to apply for pardons if not in receipt of a life sentence. The convicts' children should also be educated, he insisted, as the best solution to prevent further crime. Finally, the higher tiers of convicts could benefit from lessons enabling them to learn different trades.[96] According to Phillips, the most effective way of maximising labour and achieving convict reformation was through a system of rewards and pardons similar to that used in New South Wales. The education of convict children would ensure that they received sound principles from a young age and did

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[94] SLNSW SAFE/Banks Papers/Series 18.045, fol. 20; Governor King, New South Wales, 14 November 1801, TNA CO 202/2, fol. 65. For the musters, see *A nominal alphabetical return of male convicts in New South Wales from 1786 up to December 1819*, TNA HO 10/1; Carol J. Baxter (ed.), *General muster of New South Wales, 1814* (Sydney: ABGR, 1987).

[95] 'The following third additional minute by the president,' BL IOR G/34/94, fol. 394.

[96] *Ibid.*, fols. 398 – 399.

not follow the same criminal path as their parents, while prisoners would be able to develop transferrable skills or trades through incentive workshops.

V.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the value of distance became increasingly important to imperial perceptions of punishment. Described as 'spaces of disjuncture' by Clare Anderson, penal colonies were chosen in part for their geographical distance.[97] In George Caley's opinion, New South Wales represented a perfect choice for transportation because of its isolated nature. Its food stores needed to be replenished from afar by ships and the terrain also made it remarkably difficult for convicts to escape the settlements. Meanwhile, Company officials expressed concern over the Bombay administration's predisposition towards banishment (as opposed to transportation overseas) as an insufficient form of punishment. Mere banishment, they argued, did not provide adequate isolation since offenders were able to maintain contact with their families and associates.[98]

Commentators increasingly grew disenchanted with transportation in the first half of the nineteenth century, believing it to have failed in reaching its original goals.[99] Sent to evaluate the situation in New South Wales, the lawyer John Thomas Bigge reported in 1819 that 'Sydney had become familiar rather than strange, a place of opportunity rather than terror'.[100] The Governor of the Straits Settlements pointedly noted that convicts were rarely required to undertake hard labour by the 1820s and that many lived more comfortably than in their previous Indian lives. By 1832, the Committee on Secondary Punishment acknowledged that transportation no longer inspired the same degree of fear. Consequently, greater punitive measures would have to be implemented to dissuade criminals.[101]

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[97] Anderson, *Legible bodies*, 2.

[98] SAFE/Banks Papers/Series 18.045, fol. 21; '7 December 1796, no. 30: Thomas Wilkinson, Alexander Dow, and R. Richard to Jonathan Duncan, President and governor in council of Bombay,' *CPJ vol. 36, 6 January to 24 February 1797*, WBSA, fols. 172a – 172b.

[99] Approximately 15,000 Indian convicts were sent to the Straits Settlements between 1790 and 1860, whereas almost 30,000 Irishmen and 9,000 Irishwomen were transported to New South Wales. Kawamura, 'Maritime Asian trade and colonization of Penang,' 158 – 159; Shaw, *Convicts and the colonies*, 166.

[100] Karskens, *The colony*, 227.

[101] 'The following third additional minute by the president,' BL IOR G/34/94, fol. 383; 'Appendix no. 1: report of the committee of the House of Commons (1832) on secondary punishments,' Richard Whately, *Remarks on transportation, and on a recent defence of the system: in a second letter to Earl Grey* (London: B. Cowie & Co., 1834), 145.

In spite of these critiques, the use of transportation remained an important assertion of colonial authority over individual subject rights. Particularly in the Irish case, this often meant the incarceration and forcible removal of individuals having committed no felonies, but deemed subversive for social, political, or religious reasons. Lord Chancellor Thurlow, for instance, admitted in 1789 that many Irish convicts were 'transported for other crimes than felonies, and by other authority than formal judgments'. Over a decade later, in response to a letter from Governor King enquiring about the records for Irish convicts transported following the 1798 Rebellion, the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland wrote that records of transport ships had not been kept. 'The sentences,' he claimed,

> were mostly by court martial prior to the time when the proceedings of such courts were sanctioned by law, and in other instances the convictions were summary before magistrates, who exercised their powers under the Injunction acts, and whose proceedings were, in the disturbed state of the country not recorded.[102]

Comparable sentiments influenced the British administration in India, where the Governor General voiced his support for the transportation of those whose guilt was 'undoubted', even when there was insufficient legal evidence to obtain a conviction in court. The governor justified this circumvention of the law since 'the very security of the British Dominions in India' was at stake.[103] Under such circumstances, transportation was presented as an imperative for the security and stability of the colonial state.

While transportation offered an immediate – and professedly humane – solution for the removal of subversive colonial subjects, the disillusionment it provoked in the 1820s and 1830s raises the issue of its overall effectiveness. Regardless of its stated goals, Patrick Fitzgerald questions the extent to which administrations were genuinely invested in transforming criminal aspects of colonial societies such as Ireland and India. 'The individual problem,' he argues, 'went unreformed or uncorrected but was transferred on a more permanent basis.'[104] However, this lack of resolution can be explained through the continuous cycle of anxieties and fears present in British colonial experiences. Specific crimes such as toryism or thuggee, or social problems such as vagrancy, often challenged the British understanding of their colonial subjects and presented gaps in their banks of knowledge.

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[102] Lord Thurlow to W.W. Grenville, 18 November 1789, *The manuscripts of J.B. Fortescue preserved at Dropmore (Grenville Papers), Thirteenth Report, Appendix Part III* (10 vols., London: Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, 1892), I, 540; Earl of Hardwicke to Lord Pelham, Dublin Castle, 21 May 1802, section 'Governor King, c. 1801 – 1802,' SLNSW AO Fiche 3289 (5/3822.2A), fols. 6 – 7, and more generally 6 – 8.

[103] 'Extract letter from the governor general in council to the secret committee, 20 December 1806,' *BC Vol. 245*, BL IOR F/4/245, fols. 1 – 2.

[104] Fitzgerald, 'Poverty and vagrancy in early modern Ireland 1540 – 1770,' 447.

Awareness of these gaps caused officials to react through severe measures to counter these problems. When these measures did not prove as effective as desired, this created an even greater sense of anxiety among officials – it thus became important to visibly remove from society elements that reminded officials of their knowledge gaps. Both in Ireland and in India, cycles of reactive policies sprung up during this period in the wake of significant social disruptions that created groups of nomadic or semi-nomadic groups. In Ireland, this was characterised by bands of dispossessed landlords following the transplantation policies of the 1650s. These groups of men were quickly associated with Jacobitism, itself subsequently linked to the Irish Catholic population at large. The memory of the 1641 Rising and fears of a Catholic resurgence were resurrected in the wake of the 1798 Rebellion, which consequently led to mass arrests and trials (often without official sanctioning or reliable evidence), and either execution or transportation. In the Indian context, the Bengal famine of 1769 – 1770 contributed towards a noticeable upsurge in the number of landless individuals travelling through Bengal. Considering the contemporary efforts to establish English-accepted notions of private property, large masses of landless groups who could not be readily classified represented the same type of threat that Irish vagrants presented throughout much of the eighteenth century. Additionally, the attacks of dacoit bands belied EIC claims to authority and successful governance in the region.

In keeping with these cycles of reactive policies, the convict lists from Irish transport ships provide compelling evidence that transportation overseas was frequently governed by colonial perceptions and assumptions. Whereas Indian convicts from the period were only transported for serious crimes with violent connotations, legislature in Ireland rendered even minor crimes felonies punishable by death. In many cases, instances of minor theft resulted in Irishmen and woman being transported to New South Wales. As a result, the widespread stories of rebellion and resistance that surrounded highway banditry or political subversion detract attention from the fact that Irish transportation often operated at a scale that was unnecessarily severe and targeted individuals who represented no clear and direct threat to the state – not unlike the exaggerations that were part of the mythology surrounding the issue of thuggee discussed in the previous chapter.

Transportation did not address the root causes of issues such as highway banditry or vagrancy, yet it still had a significant impact on colonial society. Most significantly, it allowed various colonial administrations to give the appearance of acting decisively against perceived threats, regardless of their own doubts. Discussing this element of visibility in the

context of New South Wales, Grace Karskens argues that '[i]n a way, the image of Botany Bay as a "fatal shore" which would disempower men and women was created in the talk of convicts before they embarked.'[105] Regardless of Bigge's complaints regarding the opportunities available in Sydney, at least initially it was the perception of penal colonies such as New South Wales that was invaluable to administrators. Reflecting the Foucauldian position that punishment was no longer only aimed at the guilty, but also at creating an impression among the innocent, transportation left the latter to the powers of their imagination to conceive of the worst possible forms of penal measures in the colonies.

The comparison of Irish and Indian transportation practices highlights several symmetries between different colonial experiences of empire. At the same time, important differences indicate the ways in which British officials adapted their approaches to suit local contexts. In both cases, the favoured method of punishment towards the end of the eighteenth century became transportation overseas, in an attempt to solve the thorny problem of jail overcrowding. However, the explicitly stated mission in New South Wales was the establishment of a new Pacific colony to be built through convict labour. In contrast, Tomotaka Kawamura's study of early Penang prior to 1830 illustrates the intricacies of a vibrant and multi-ethnic trading port that was involved in the Asian maritime trade. Indian convicts were eventually transported to Penang in order to supplement the existing workforce. Their goal, however, was not to settle the region.[106] Moreover, at least until the late 1810s, convicts in the Straits Settlements were always kept under far greater surveillance and were more rigidly controlled. Religion and race played significant roles in both penal colonies, influencing the treatment of Indian and Irish convicts. Nevertheless, the ways in which they were characterised were quite different. Irish Catholics were widely distrusted in early New South Wales and rumours of Irish rebellions continuously surfaced – often without concrete evidence. Given this level of distrust, Irish convicts were frequently segregated and sent to remote plantations in attempts to avoid 'infecting' other convicts. Conversely, they were not barred outright from practising their faith. The simple act of transportation overseas, on the other hand, was thought to have monumental implications for Indian convicts because of British orientalist beliefs regarding the observance of caste. Even just crossing the ocean was seen as a way to psychologically perturb convicts. Once in the Straits Settlements, Governor Phillips wrote that many Indians were kept in chains and that the observance of

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[105] Karskens, *The colony*, 96.
[106] Kawamura, 'Maritime Asian trade and colonization of Penang,' 145 – 165.

religious festivals should be denied to the lower orders of convicts. Irish convicts were certainly stigmatised for their Catholic faith and their Irish origins; but in the case of the Straits Settlements, religion was a weapon to be used against the Indian convicts. However, in spite, of these differences, the comparison of Irish and Indian transportation experiences remains valid. While Irish/European prisoners from India were segregated from Indian prisoners, and there was significant resistance to the merging of European and Indian convicts in New South Wales, colonial governors such as William Edward Phillips did compare the two sets of penal colonies and debated the best modes of governing them.

Chapter IV. Land settlement policies

Traditionally, early modern Irish and Indian settlement policies were depicted through stark distinctions between the oppressive Anglo-Irish and East India Company landholders, and their respective peasantries. Substantial reformations to Irish and Indian land tenure systems occurred at different times in the early modern period, and for different reasons: the late seventeenth century for Ireland and the late eighteenth century for India. Nevertheless, these systems provide useful points of comparison because of the similar changes they had both undergone by the end of the 1700s. As such, they are indicative of larger imperial questions regarding land ownership and sovereignty that surpassed local colonial circumstances. Work has already been carried out by Scott Cook linking the land policies of nineteenth-century Ireland and India, in which he argues that each colony influenced developments in the other at the end of the 1800s. According to Cook, Irish tenants had comparatively fewer rights than Indian ones in this period given a wave of pro-tenant legislators in India as of the 1870s. As a result, Cook believes the Irish Land Act of 1870 was inspired by the greater protection afforded to Bengali ryots (peasants). The Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885, in turn, was modelled on Irish reforms to offer stronger protection for tenants from abusive landlords and rent collectors.[1] While Cook's assessment of the situation in the late nineteenth may be accurate, the concerns which he focuses upon were hardly new ones. On the contrary, a comparison of both regions in the late 1700s, when the British began to formalise land settlement policies in India, shows that subjects such as tenant coercion and fixed rents or tenures were already fiercely debated a century prior to Cook's analysis. This chapter argues that while the British did not explicitly connect the two areas in shaping their approaches, an earlier comparison is warranted to demonstrate how they were similarly influenced by basic assumptions relating to land ownership and tenant rights in both places. This consequently indicates that there existed pan-imperial, as well as regionally specific, attitudes towards land issues.

For decades the prevailing debate in South Asian historiography on early EIC interference with Indian agrarian systems revolved on notions of continuity or change.[2] Recent work has challenged this interpretation and many scholars now write of a transformative process rather than sudden disruption or stasis. This chapter applies the more

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[1] See Scott Cook, *Imperial affinities: nineteenth-century analogies and exchanges between India and Ireland* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1993), 37 – 39, 51 – 61, 74.
[2] David Washbrook, 'South India 1770 – 1840: the colonial transition,' *Modern Asian Studies* 38:3 (2004): 479.

nuanced reading of late eighteenth-century India to contemporary Ireland to show similar processes of transformation. This approach allows for a better understanding of British attitudes towards, and actions regarding, land policies throughout their colonies. It demonstrates that British officials shared the same concerns in both contexts and, for the most part, attempted to implement the same changes which were subsequently tailored to local circumstances. These sorts of broad comparisons, and an understanding of specific contexts, provide greater insight into colonial tenurial systems. Observing of Ireland that '[s]ystems of land-holding and the forms of ownership in land are not merely the product of law and custom,' Kenneth Nicholls maintains that 'they must also largely depend upon the political and social organisation of the possessors, on the use which they make of the land and on the manner in which they came into possession of it.'[3] The manner of possession played a large role in Ireland and in India, distinguishing them from colonial spheres in America and the Pacific. In both areas, pre-existing visibly settled populations meant that the British could not claim sole possession of uninhabited lands. Instead, British officials became responsible for the management of land policies and revenue collection following violent takeovers. In such circumstances, the cooperation of loyal landed elites became paramount for the successful implementation of stable collection systems and property ownership became the central concern in land settlement policies.

Eighteenth-century British views on property ownership were influenced by John Locke's arguments concerning the right to private property through labour, in addition to Anglo-Saxon laws and the Roman concept of *dominum* – i.e. the indivisibility of ownership. While Locke's intention had been the separation of individuals from the state, his theories were manipulated 'to exalt private property as an inalienable human right'.[4] As a result, private ownership became seen as an essential social element. Philip Francis, for instance, argued in the 1770s that private property was a requirement for a stable society. A great deal was at stake, for 'without private property, there can be no public revenue. I mean that regular and permanent revenue, on which alone a wise government ought to place its dependents.'[5] Moreover, the British expected to see this replicated in other societies. By the mid-1700s, land ownership was considered essential for the prosperity of the state. Different

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[3] Kenneth Nicholls, *Land, law and society in sixteenth-century Ireland. O'Donnell Lecture* (Cork: University College Cork, 1976), 6.

[4] Ainslie Embree, 'Landholding in India and British institutions,' in *Land control and social structure in Indian history*, ed. Robert Frykenberg (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 36 – 38, 39.

[5] Philip Francis to William Young, Calcutta, 5 July 1778, *Official and private correspondence and papers of Sir Philip Francis*, BL Mss. Eur. E16, Francis Collection, fol. 308.

definitions of ownership in Ireland and India contradicted these views and were met by demands for greater British intervention.

I.

The evolution of Irish property ownership prior to the eighteenth century was strongly influenced by the anglicisation of Ireland with the sixteenth-century Elizabethan plantation programmes and the early seventeenth-century imposition of English common law. Before this, the varying degrees of social relations in Gaelic Ireland made it difficult to define land ownership in the English legal sense, especially given the Gaelic inheritance practice that contravened primogeniture (tanistry).[6] The Irish legal system underwent significant changes in the first decades of the seventeenth century, especially after tanistry (inheritance by the strongest male relative) and gavelkind (the redistribution of property to all male heirs) were outlawed in 1606. At the same time, Gaelic notions of property ownership had already begun to shift in the sixteenth century as the central administration sought to strengthen its hold on landowners. As of the 1540s, the English administration increasingly tied land ownership to the Crown through the introduction of 'surrender and regrant,' whereby Gaelic lords surrendered their lands to the administration and had them regranted according to English common law practices.[7]

Nevertheless, the most important change to Irish land settlement policies in the early modern period was the dispossession of Catholic landlords following the War of the Three Kingdoms. This land redistribution, in response to the 1641 Rising, facilitated the rise of the Protestant ascendancy and ensured their political and juridical authority in the eighteenth century. The penal laws enacted against Catholics from the 1690s onward similarly contributed to the consolidation of Protestant power. Anti-Catholic sentiment following the Rising led to the implementation of universal guilt throughout the country (meaning that Catholics who could not prove their innocence were judged guilty of participating in the conflict). In addition, as of 1653 Catholic landowners were targeted by legislation declaring

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[6] Martin Dowling, *Tenant right and agrarian society in Ulster 1600 – 1870* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1999), 13 – 14; Nicholls, *Land, law and society*, 9 – 10.

[7] Michael MacCarthy-Morrogh, *The Munster plantation: English migration to southern Ireland 1583 – 1641* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 89; W.H. Crawford, 'The significance of landed estates in Ulster 1600 – 1820,' *Irish Economic and Social History* 17 (1990): 44, 47. For a brief overview of the changes in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Ireland, see Nicholas Canny, 'Irish resistance to empire? 1641, 1690 and 1798,' in *An imperial state at war: Britain from 1689 to 1815*, ed. Lawrence Stone (London: Routledge, 1993), 291 – 292; Jane H. Ohlmeyer, 'Conquest, civilization, colonization: Ireland, 1540 – 1660,' in *The Princeton history of modern Ireland*, eds. Richard Bourke and Ian McBride (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 34.

that 'all such of yx [the] Irish, especially estated [illegible], men at arms, & their kindred, as should not transplant themselves into Connaught, or county Clare, by yx first of May 1654, (...) should be found out of yx said province or county, should be taken as spies or enemies, & suffer death'.[8] In the lead up to the Restoration Settlement, dispossessed Catholics campaigned for the return of lands given in payment to adventurers and Cromwell's soldiers. The outcome, however, remained firmly biased in the Protestants' favour. Guidelines for restitution introduced in 1662 rendered Catholic repossession significantly more difficult, requiring transported Catholics to prove that they had been displaced only because of religion and had not borne arms after 22 October 1641. Consequently, the religious division in Irish landownership changed dramatically: between 1641 and 1675, Catholic ownership dropped from 66 per cent to 29 per cent, while Protestant ownership rose from 30 per cent to 67 per cent.[9]

Religious and ideological considerations impacted the seventeenth-century transplantation policies, underlining the fragmented nature of Irish society. On the one hand, transplantation to the western provinces was viewed as a preventative measure against future outbreaks. 'Should the *Irish* at any time appear to stir in the least to oppose the ruling power,' one virulently anti-Catholic anonymous commentator gleefully noted in 1673, 'it were no less then willfully to expose themselves to immediate slaughter, and the mercy of the sword.'[10] Segregation, it was thought, would diminish the Irish threat. Moreover, there was an undeniable financial incentive since the confiscated lands yielded a sudden upsurge in land revenues for the Crown. Thomas Carte's biography of the Duke of Ormonde reveals that Gaelic land tenure practices had not been completely eradicated by the later seventeenth century, which remained a point of concern. These practices, in turn, had direct implications for land revenues. The Gaelic landlords did not hold their tenures according to English custom and were not liable to pay quit-rents. Should their lands be restored, Carte calculated that the king would lose revenues worth 60,000 livres per year upon which he depended to

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[8] 'Papers relating to Ireland 1642 – 1648,' *Collection of papers presented to the King and Council by the commissioners from the Irish council and by representatives of the Irish Catholics, relating to the settlement of Ireland*, Vol. XXVIII, BL Add. MS 4781, Milles Collection, fol. 222.

[9] 14 & 15 Charles II.C.2, 1662, *The Irish statues: revised edition. 3 Edward II to the Union. A.D. 1310 – 1800* (London: Printed by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1885), 87 – 88, 96; Kevin McKenny, 'The restoration land settlement in Ireland: A Statistical Interpretation,' in *Restoration Ireland: Always Settling and Never Settled*, ed. Coleman A. Dennehy (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 39.

[10] Anonymous, *The present state of Ireland together with some remarques upon the antient state thereof* (London: Printed by M.D., 1673), 68.

finance his army. '[H]is Majesty would in that case be disabled to maintain the army,' Carted concluded, 'and lie at the mercy of the *Irish*'.[11]

Born out of fear and opportunism, these policies served as a rallying point for Catholic communities against Irish Protestants and deepened the country's religious divide. The Gaelic poetry of the late 1600s became noticeably more politicised, reflecting widespread anger against the land seizures. David Ó Bruadair complained of targeted attacks on the most powerful Catholic families, who were driven into exile or transplanted. There was also a strong sense of bitterness and a desperate, but diminishing, attachment to the Jacobite cause as Ireland's source of salvation. Aogán Ó Rathaille's 'Brightness most bright/Gile na gile' described a feminised Ireland awaiting the Stuart king's return amidst unbearable desolation, pointedly likening England to the devil.[12] These sentiments were, admittedly, the preserve of the Gaelic elite, who had been most strongly affected by the transplantation policies. Even so, the prevalence of such poetry indicates strong antagonism towards such policies by segments of the population. Not unlike the late eighteenth-century Persian-language historians of India, there was also the sense of a world changed entirely. This resentment endured well into the eighteenth century. 'All the poor people are roman catholics,' noted the English traveller Arthur Young, 'and among them are the descendants of the old families who once possessed the country, of which they still preserve the full memory, insomuch, that a gentleman's labourer will regularly leave to his son, by will, his master's estate.'[13]

Historians have described the early eighteenth century as a period of consolidation and of contradictions. According to Philip Bull, there existed a sharp disconnect between the majority Catholic population and their Anglo-Irish landlords, which significantly influenced landlordism throughout the century. Indeed, Bull argues that through this disconnect, resistance to landlord authority and ongoing religious tensions resulted in the failure to

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[11] Thomas Carte, *An history of the life of James duke of Ormonde, from his birth in 1610, to his death in 1688* (3 vols., London: Printed by J. Bettenham, 1736), II, 214.
[12] See 'Summary of the purgatory of the men of Ireland/Suim purgadóra bhfear nÉireann 1641 – 1684 AD,' in David Ó Bruadair, *Duanaire Dháibhidh Uí Bhruadair: the poems of David Ó Bruadair*, ed. Rev. John MacErlean (3 vols., London: Published for the Irish Texts Society, 1917), III, 13 – 23; 105; Aogán Ó Rathaille, 'Brightness most bright/Gile na gile,' in *An duanaire 1600 – 1900: poems of the dispossessed*, ed. Seán Ó Tuama, trans. Thomas Kinsella (Mountreath: The Dolmen Press, 1981), lines 33 – 36, 153. On the transplantation policies as a rallying point, see McKenny, 'The restoration land settlement in Ireland,' 35 – 36.
[13] Arthur Young, *A tour in Ireland* (2 vols., Dublin: Printed by James Williams, 1780), I, 372.

implement the reformations and innovations successfully introduced in England.[14] Yet despite a lasting sense of bitterness, the picture that emerges of the Irish tenurial system in the 1700s is one of rapid stabilisation and organisation. Whereas colonies such as India experienced noticeable government involvement in their agrarian systems, Irish landlords had remarkable levels of autonomy as long as taxes and rents were dutifully paid each year. These rents, based on each acre of 'profitable land,' varied by province, but were remnants of the two series of land forfeitures in the second half of the seventeenth century.[15]

Following this restructuring of property ownership, land was either sold or rented competitively throughout the eighteenth century. Leases were usually long and the rents were fixed for the duration, though often adjusted upon expiration of the lease. Excepting the practice of customary tenure in Ulster, where existing tenants could claim priority rights to automatic lease renewals instead of land auctions at the end of their tenure, tenants held no legal rights to their lands. As shown by Lindsay Proudfoot and Thomas Power, lease durations were also extended during periods of instability. The logic behind these extensions was two-fold: it reflected the landlords' need for steady sources of income but was also thought to encourage the applications of financially-solvent tenants.[16] One notable case was that of Michael Hayes, sentenced to transportation for life following the 1798 Rebellion. In a letter to his brother Richard, Hayes confided that he had transferred the deed of his house and property to his mother and sister six months prior to the rebellion. The lease was set at 999 years.[17] With the exception of such cases, the average eighteenth-century lease ranged from twenty-one to thirty-one years, or for three lives renewable. In the latter case, land was rented to a tenant and, subject to a transferral fine, passed to his heirs upon his death.[18] There is also some indication of a practice known as 'leases for lives renewable forever,' which ensured the perpetuity of tenancy leasing in one family and hinted at more longstanding forms of

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[14] Philip Bull, 'Irish land and British politics,' in *The land question in Britain, 1750 – 1950*, eds. Matthew Cragoe and Paul Readman (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 127 – 128.

[15] J.H. Andrews, *Plantation acres: an historical study of the Irish land surveyor and his maps* (Omagh: Ulster Historical Foundation, 1985), 111. On quit rents, for example, *The general report of the commissioners of crown lands*, NAI QRO/4/1/3, fols. 2, 3; 'Quit rent receipts: purchase and rental proposals,' *Papers relating to lands and property rented out 1702 - 1792*, NLI MS 49,683/6/4, Cole Bowen family papers.

[16] Lindsay Proudfoot, *Property ownership and urban and village improvement in provincial Ireland ca. 1700 – 1845* (Edinburgh: Institute of British Geographers, 1997), 5 – 6; Thomas Power, *Land, politics and society in eighteenth-century Tipperary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 124 – 125, 132.

[17] Michael Hayes to Richard Hayes, 25 November 1812, *Letters of Michael Hayes and F. Girard, 1799 – 1833*, SLNSW A 3586, fol. 3b.

[18] 'A rent roll of the estate of the Reverend Mr. [Edmund] Lombard 1772,' *Rentals of the Lombardstown estate*, NLI MS 49,545/27, Lombard family papers; 'Estates in Co. Rosc, 8 August 1801 (signed Glascork & Black, Dublin),' TCD MSS 3974 – 3984/1404, Conolly papers.

tenancy. Maintaining that it represented the remnants of an ancient Irish custom, John Findley wrote in 1829 that the practice was 'in great measure peculiar to Ireland'. In his tract on land tenancy, he estimated that approximately one-seventh of Irish lands were still held under this form of tenancy in the early decades of the nineteenth century.[19] If Findley's estimate was correct, it raises questions regarding the traditional historiographical argument that massive change marred pre-existing forms of land tenure in the second half of the seventeenth century.

The granting of remarkably long leases fell out of favour in the later 1700s and land was increasingly auctioned off to secure the best rent rates. A commissioner's report from the 1820s issued on the Commons of Bantry in Co. Wexford, for instance, claimed that '[a]s a general principle we should be leave to recommend that the lands of the crown when out of lease should be set by competition invited by public advertizement [sic].'[20] In addition to securing tenant contracts, the Cole Bowen Papers in the National Library of Ireland demonstrate how auctions were used to sell estates and sometimes set off bidding wars. After portions of the Cole Bowen estate fell into encumbrance by 1788, the family proposed to settle these debts by selling portions of the property. This sparked a series of purchase proposals that carried into the early 1790s. Correspondence between Henry Cole Bowen and William Love discussing the deed of property transfer to Love in 1788 also indicated that the government had no involvement in the purchase of Irish estates, which remained a private enterprise.[21] Love's insistence on the production of a property deed for the estate of Meadstown *before* he issued any payment demonstrated the general importance of ownership title in this period.

One subject of contention in eighteenth-century Irish land tenure issues was the perception of high levels of landlord absenteeism. Attention was first drawn to Irish landlords in 1729 when Thomas Prior published *A list of absentees of Ireland*.[22] Prior accused the landlords of draining Ireland to finance projects in England. Fears of absenteeism persisted

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[19] John Finlay, *A treatise on the law of renewals in respect to leases for lives renewable for ever in Ireland* (Dublin: John Cumming, 1829), vii, ix, 3.

[20] 'The first report of the commissioners appointed to enquire into the title tenure extent and value of all lands houses &c held under the crown in Ireland on determinable leases on the Commons of Bantry in the County of Wexford, Crown lands,' *Report of the commissioners of crown lands, vol. I*, NAI QRO/4/1/1, fol. 172; Andrew, *Plantation acres*, 127.

[21] William Love to Henry Cole Bowen, 7 July 1788, 'Land purchase and rental proposals 1788 – 1794,' NLI MS 49,683/6/3, Cole Bowen papers.

[22] Thomas Prior, *A list of the absentees of Ireland, and the yearly value of their estates and incomes spent abroad* (Dublin: 1729).

throughout the century, underlining the extent of the perceived threat to the Irish economy. 'Next to our absentees,' *The Dublin Evening Post* vehemently proclaimed in 1799, 'the use of spirituous liquors is to this country the greatest curse.' Meanwhile, the author Horatio Townsend mourned the wedge driven between landlord and tenant through the former's apathy.[23] While this picture is indeed grim, scholars now suggest that the situation was not as clear as such sources would have it. According to Ian McBride and A. Malcomson, many landlords had more than one Irish estate and travelled between their various properties.[24] The private papers of the 2nd Earl of Courtown support this interpretation, offering insight into the scope of late eighteenth-century Irish private properties. In addition to houses in Dublin and Cheshire, the papers contain lists of the rents for the earl's various Irish estates, ranging from properties in the counties of Carlow, Wexford, and Kilkenny, to Kerry, Westmeath and Roscommon. The Conolly family of Castletown, Co. Kildare, also held property not only in Kildare itself, but also Donegal, Dublin, and Meath.[25]

II.

After significant changes in the second half of the seventeenth century, the map of Irish landownership was established by the end of the century, setting the stage for the rise of the Protestant ascendancy. Meanwhile, the British became involved in a second land settlement controversy following the EIC's assumption of administrative power in Bengal after 1764. Following their victory at Buxar, EIC officials struggled to settle the question of legal rights to land in India. Most importantly, were the revenue-collecting zamindars the rightful owners of the land? Responsible for raising government revenues, zamindars served as intermediate agents between Indian ryots and regional governing bodies.[26] Different classes of zamindars were awarded varying levels of authority and rights over lands and villages, and were responsible for collecting imperial revenues.[27] While this issue generated serious debates about the nature of private property, it differed from that in Ireland:

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[23] 'Sketch of the present times,' *The Dublin Evening Post* issue 7575, 21 February 1799; Horatio Townsend, *A view of the agricultural state of Ireland, in 1815* (Cork: Printed by Edwards & Savage, 1816), 20.

[24] Ian McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland: the isle of slaves* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2009), 116; A. Malcomson, 'Absenteeism in eighteenth-century Ireland,' *Irish Economic and Social History* 1 (1974): 21.

[25] On the Earl of Courtown material, see 'Salaries annuities and other payments that I make annually 1789,' 'A rental of my estates exclusive of my mother's 1789,' and 'Probable rising rents on my estates on the expiration of leases for lives and years 1789,' TCD MS 11183/P33/1, Courtown estate papers, fols. 5a, 6b, 7b. See also 'Abstract of state of T.C.'s estates,' 23 January 1766, TCD MSS 3974-3984/195.

[26] Sirajul Islam, *Bengal land tenure: the origin and growth of intermediate interests in the 19th century* (Calcutta: K.P. Bagchi & Co., 1988), 2; S. Hasan, 'Zamindars under the Mughals,' in *Land control and social structure in Indian history*, ed. Robert Frykenberg (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 17.

[27] Hasan, 'Zamindars under the Mughals,' 18 – 28.

indigenous landlords were not unilaterally replaced by others of a different religion or ethnicity. Supporters of the zamindars such as Charles Rouse insisted that European and Indian notions of property had evolved similarly and so the zamindars' hereditary rights should be without contest. However, opponents claimed that the zamindars were never more than mere revenue collectors.[28]

The Hindu system of property ownership inherited by the Mughals, like Gaelic property notions, differed substantially from the British one. Describing the concept of rights during the later Mughal period, C.A. Bayly argues that a lack of Roman and English common law antecedents meant 'Indians did not, in general, conceive rights in terms of simple proprietary dominion'.[29] Many Britons interpreted historical texts to indicate that private property did not exist in India. Instead, they believed that only the ruler could claim ownership over the land. '[T]he *sovereign* is *sole*, universal *proprietary Lord* of the land,' James Grant staunchly maintained, 'and (...) the *ryots*, who are the husbandmen or peasantry, hold directly of the prince'. Contrary to certain officials, Grant did not accept that private property had never existed in the times of ancient Hindu kingdoms. Rather, he believed that all property was transferred to the sovereign following the Muslim conquests. The committee of revenue gave a similar opinion in 1786 in the course of an enquiry on zamindar rights: the zamindars were deemed to hold no rights whatsoever to the land.[30]

Part of the issue at stake was the question of how to interpret Mughal statements on the power of the emperor over all aspects of his territory. Should they be read literally? In his defence of zamindars' rights, Charles Rouse argued that most of these statements were mere literary devices. 'In the course of my inquiries,' he maintained,

> I have found the Mahomedans very apt to assume a lofty tone, in speaking of the rights of the emperor; as if he was the disposer of all property, and nothing was enjoyed by individuals, but through his indulgence. At the same time, no

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[28] Charles Rouse, *Dissertation concerning the landed property of Bengal* (London: Printed for John Stockdale, 1791). For the contrasting argument, see James Grant, *An inquiry into the nature of zemindary tenures in the landed property of Bengal, &c* (London: Printed for J. Debrett, 1790), 5.

[29] C.A. Bayly, 'The British military-fiscal state and indigenous resistance: India 1750 – 1820,' in *An imperial state at war: Britain from 1689 to 1815*, ed. Lawrence Stone (London: Routledge, 1993), 330. See also Embree, 'Landholding in India and British institutions,' 45, 46.

[30] Original emphases. Grant, *An inquiry into the nature of zemindary tenures*, 1 – 2, 29; 'Appendix no. 2, extract from a letter from the committee of revenue to the governor general in council, dated the 18th April 1786,' John Harington, *An elementary analysis of the laws and regulations enacted by the governor general in council* (3 vols., Calcutta: Printed at the Calcutta Gazette Press, 1817), III, 256.

one of them ever meant to contend in earnest, that the subject in the empire of Hindostan had nothing he could call his own.[31]

The primordial importance awarded to concepts of private property in England, and applied in other colonial territories such as Ireland, rendered Indian land settlement issues a matter of serious concern.

At the same time, in spite of fiery denunciations of the tyrannical nature of Asian rulers, British officials were quick to assume similar powers in their bid to secure greater sovereign control of Bengal. A 1775 treaty concluded between the EIC and the Nawab of Awadh, Asaf-ud-Daula, oversaw the transfer of the nawab's territory to the protection of the Company. Notably, the transfer was described as granting 'the sovereignty of the said districts in perpetuity'. This explicit claim to authority followed an attempt, only three years earlier, to invest Cheit Singh with a part of the nawab's lands in the zamindary of Benares. The proposal's conditions stipulated that the land would be conferred through hereditary right to the nawab's family on condition of annual rents, with fines to be paid upon the death of each officially registered proprietor. Upon confirmation of the proposal in 1775, officials were instructed to grant a sunnud (contract) only after having 'notified to him [Cheit Singh] the sovereignty of the Company over all the territories of his zemindary, and received from him (...) a nuzzerannee, or acknowledgment of his vassalage, which we fix at 10,000 rupees'.[32] As in the case of Irish leases for lives renewable forever, this contract was also granted in perpetuity. Moreover, it was not granted by the Mughal Emperor, but rather by the newly-established EIC administration.

The question of Indian property ownership also involved numerous studies of the pre-colonial revenue policies and land settlement practices of Bengal. For rent rates, officials turned to Mughal sources and histories. But since Mughal methods differed from English ones, they were often dismissed as arbitrary augmentations rather than methodical survey-style inquiries into agrarian practices. Commissioned in the 1770s by Warren Hastings, the Amini Report concluded that the last reliable land assessments had been conducted under the sixteenth-century emperor Akbar. Additionally, the report suggested that Indian ryots did not pay fixed rents set at the beginning of each lease, as was the case in Ireland and England. Instead, rent prices were set annually. The Bengal revenue papers described the zamindars as

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[31] Rouse, *Dissertation*, 44.

[32] See 'Extract of Bengal secret consultations, 27 April 1775' and 'Extract of Bengal secret consultations, 26 August 1775,' in MS Document Summary of proceedings relative to rajah Cheyte Singh August 1775, EU MSS 624, Gregory family papers, Series I, Box I, Folder V [all documents in this collection are unnumbered].

the highest echelon of Bengali property owners, who collected taxes for the central government in Delhi.[33] Indian ryots, like Irish tenants, did not own their lands. However, according to the British they had historically possessed rights that guaranteed a measure of protection against landlords similar to the security afforded to Irish peasants through the official lease contracts that guaranteed their tenure. According to Philip Francis, '[t]he ryot claims a right of occupancy in the ground he tills, and cannot by the custom of the country, be dispossessed while he pays his proportion of the general rent.'[34] In spite of these supposed historical customs, most British officials – whether for or against them – believed tenant rights to be poor by the second half of the eighteenth century. Mr. Beaufort's report from 1786 agreed with Francis's contention that ryots once held security in exchange for regular rent payments. But his assessment of contemporary Indian bore striking similarities to the critiques of absenteeism in Ireland: zamindars ran semi-feudal estates which were leased to wealthy farmers without care for the tenants. These farmers, in turn, sublet their holdings to different levels of tenantry. Burdened by increasingly high tax rates, Bengali ryots were rendered destitute and reports circulated of desperate peasants selling their children. One argument given for the deterioration of revenue collecting policies was the invasion of Nadir Shah in 1739 and the subsequent rise of regional kingdoms. These local rulers continuously raised taxes to finance their standing armies and wage wars against their neighbours, ushering in a period of instability and oppression.[35] Through such descriptions of landlord abuse and peasant misery, the EIC was able to present its land reforms as an additional attempt to free Indians from tyrannical native rulers.

Historians have frequently described late eighteenth-century British agrarian measures as cash grabs: peasants were overwhelmed by soaring tax rates and India was drained of its wealth. Recent historiography challenges this assumption and many scholars suggest that tax collections were not precipitously raised but merely carried out on a more regular basis, which accounts for larger amounts of revenue. Robert Travers, for instance, argues that far

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[33] 'The amini report, revenue department O.C. no. 9, 3 April 1778,' in Richard Bury Ramsbotham, *Studies in the land revenue history of Bengal 1769 – 1787* (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), 99, 113. See also 'Appendix no. 14, extract of Bengal revenue consultations, the 3rd April 1770,' *Bengal revenue papers home miscellaneous series*, BL IOR H/206, fol. 335.

[34] Philip Francis, *Original minutes of the governor-general and council of Fort William on the settlement and collection of the revenues of Bengal* (London: Printed for J. Nebrett, 1782), 34.

[35] 'Report by Mr. Beaufort, on the measures adopted by the governor general & council of Bengal in consequence of instructions transmitted from the court of directors on the 12th of April 1786,' *Letters and papers concerning the decennial and perpetual settlement of the lands of Bengal, Bahar, vol. I*, BL Add. MS 12571, fols. 33b – 36b, 39b – 42a; Anonymous, *A plan for the government of the provinces of Bengal* (London: Printed for J. Wilkie, 1772), 7.

greater tax increases occurred in early nineteenth-century Awadh and Orissa.[36] Whatever the reason, the EIC administration undeniably began to consider land rents a necessary portion of their revenue. General opinion held that Company profits could act as a major subsidy to offset British debts, which explains why officials were keen to quickly implement a well-organised collection system. The anonymous *A plan for the government of the provinces of Bengal* claimed that these revenues contributed £1,600,000 towards the British debt – it would be dangerous indeed to withdraw this amount. Should this ever occur, 'the public must either become bankrupt,' the tract direly predicted, 'or such a load of new taxes be laid upon industry, as could not fail to crush it intirely [sic]'.[37] In other words, if Bengal did not finance British debts, Britons themselves would bear far stronger levels of taxation.

While the economic incentive for operating a well-organised revenue collection system was self-evident, there was also an ideological component to the Bengali case positing that the previous revenue system had fallen into shambles following the collapse of the Mughal Empire. On account of this, EIC officials often inserted a humanitarian element to their correspondence on the reformation of land settlement policies: once again, the EIC would 'save' India. A court order issued in April 1786 urged that taxes not be raised without just cause, given their already soaring levels. Bengal 'is drained' the court order claimed, and '(…) the zamindars are discontented, many of them deprived of their lands, overwhelmed by debts, or reduced to beggary'.[38] This sense of discontent was mentioned once again by Sir William Ross while arguing for greater regularisation in the revenue collecting system, where he commented on the current anger of the peasants and zamindars. Arbitrary increases, Ross worried, made allowance for corruption and the disillusioned population could very well voice their displeasure through resistance.[39]

Believing the current system to be the product of a failed administration, the EIC undertook revenue collection reformations following the famine of 1769 – 1770. Collection rights were also sold for periods of five years to the highest bidders as of 1772. This custom marked a significant point of departure from contemporary tenure practices such as those practiced in Ireland. There, landlords were the permanent legal owners of estates, while

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[36] Robert Travers, '"The real value of the lands": the nawabs, the British and the land tax in eighteenth-century Bengal,' *Modern Asian Studies* 38:3 (2004): 518 – 520.
[37] *A plan for the government of the provinces of Bengal*, 1.
[38] 'Court orders of 12th April 1786 (Separate general letter),' BL Add. MS 12571, fols. 8a – 8b.
[39] This will be elaborated upon later. 'Letter from Sir William Ross to Mr. Dundas, 28 February 1787, on revenue system of Bengal April 1786,' *Home Miscellaneous Series*, BL IOR H/392, fol. 93.

tenants were granted leases of no less than twenty years. Significant for this comparison, however, were the Irish land policies that long pre-dated the later eighteenth century. Traces of Gaelic customs could still be found in practices such as customary tenure in Ulster, but by and large the British were long accustomed to the Irish land system by this point. It is true that the EIC did have some prior experience with revenue collection as landowners in Calcutta from the late seventeenth century onwards, as well as near Madras and Bombay.[40] Nonetheless, this represented a limited experience tied to the running of single estates. The substantial difference in the length of Bengali leases arose primarily out of uncertainty regarding 'true' local practices. Explaining the perceived utility of revenue farming for a set period of years (in this case three), the Patna factory records from 1771 noted that 'other methods may appear more specious in theory but in practice we believe there is no way of ascertain: [ascertaining] the real value of a pergunna so good as that of publickly [sic] offering it to farm to whatever creditable person will give most for it'.[41] Since the British believed rent rates to have been set annually prior to their arrival, the periods of revenue collection that they set were considered first steps towards a more stable collection system. However, the new reforms backfired on the Company. While revenue farming was already taking place in several Indian locales (such as Bihar) prior to the EIC administration, the men appointed in those cases were generally well-acquainted with the lands. By contrast, many farmers who bid for lands under Warren Hastings's five-year plan significantly overestimated the value of their lands, having no prior knowledge of the specific estates. They were then unable to generate sufficient revenues to repay their debts, having vastly overpaid for their lands – not unlike contemporary accusations levelled at Irish tenants.[42]

The Permanent Settlement of 1793 was perceived as the solution to Indian land settlement and revenue collection policies. Bolstering the zamindars' social status, the settlement invested them with legal and hereditary rights to their estates in a bid to tie their loyalties more firmly to the government – after all, they now owed their position to the Company. Yet historians remain critical of its impact. Sirajul Islam, for example, points out that the Indian agrarian system's seasonal basis greatly affected production levels, which

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[40] Kabindra Singh, *Land revenue administration in Bihar 1793 – 1858: some aspects* (Calcutta: Minerva, 1987), 3 – 4; Tirthankar Roy and Anand V. Swamy. *Law and the economy in colonial India* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), 11; Philip J. Stern, *The company-state: corporate sovereignty and the early modern foundation of the British Empire in India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 129 – 131.

[41] 14 September 1771, *Patna factory records, 3 August 1771 to 30 March 1772*, BL IOR G/28/2c, fol. 150. See also John McLane, *Land and local kingship in eighteenth-century Bengal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 208; Travers, 'The real value of the lands,' 529 – 530.

[42] Singh, *Land revenue administration in Bihar*, 17 – 18; McLane, *Land and local kingship*, 22.

varied throughout the year. While this presented significant challenges for rent in certain seasons, the British, unused to such crop production fluctuations, insisted on regular payments. Islam argues that this ignorance of seasonal fluctuation was responsible for the rent defaults of many larger Bengali zamindars, who were consequently replaced within the span of ten years.[43] Even so, contemporary Britons remained persuaded that the benefits of fixed rent rates outweighed such negative conclusions. 'I am ready to admit,' Rouse wrote only two years after the Permanent Settlement's implementation,

> that under this mode, the land revenue is not assessed with correct equality. I am in the same degree convinced, that it never can be. The minute valuation and distributions, which an able and upright man might make, and for the advantage of all, in a little district, would be impracticable in a country circumstanced as Bengal is. It seems to me, that the principle object for the state to determine, is, as to the aggregate revenue, which the land is capable of yielding; to enable every proprietor to know, what he has to pay: and if the fixed valuation is tolerably fair, little inequalities are of no signification[44]

III.

In spite of significant differences between the later eighteenth-century Indian and Irish land policies, comparisons between the two demonstrate that the transformations in late eighteenth-century Indian agrarian practices were not unique. Policies were certainly adapted to suit local contexts. Nevertheless, British land settlement and revenue collection policies in India bore similarities to earlier Irish experiences. The Permanent Settlement is still often described as a seminal historical event with far reaching consequences (whether positive or negative); the contemporary *Calcutta Gazette* even wrote that it 'must be considered by the natives as the greatest blessing conferred on them for many ages'.[45] But within the Irish/Indian comparison, it could more accurately be described as a later equivalent to the seventeenth-century Irish transplantation policies and the establishment of the Protestant ascendancy. Achieving mixed results in the Indian context, the British intended in both cases to create a stable landed elite owing its position to the central administration. By the late eighteenth-century, there was admittedly less government interference with Irish landlords. This, however, was largely due to the fact that the Protestant ruling class was already well-established and steps had been taken to regulate Catholic control of Irish lands through the penal laws. In comparison, this process remained ongoing at the turn of the 1800s in India.

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[43] Islam, *Bengal land tenure*, 10 – 11.
[44] Rouse, *Dissertation*, 174 – 175.
[45] *The Calcutta Gazette* vol. XIX, 9 May 1793.

British officials in Ireland and India were confronted with notions of land ownership that differed substantially from their own frames of reference. What they did find were two similar systems that valued communal land usage over private ownership and possessed indigenous systems of rent and taxation. This last point should be emphasised given older historiographies that depicted feudal agrarian systems in Ireland and India prior to the arrival of the British. Faced with similarly unfamiliar concepts of property ownership, the British undertook the remodelling of Irish and Indian agrarian systems to make them conform to their own expectations. The major difference between the Irish and Indian contexts was the individuals targeted for the landlord class. The Gaelic Irish and Old English remained the predominant owners of Irish land until they 'proved' themselves too untrustworthy in the aftermath of the 1641 Rising. The emphasis on the creation of a Protestant settler colony, as well as recurring religious fears, overruled any desire to maintain a loyal indigenous elite in Ireland. In India, the absence of such settler-based colonisation efforts rendered it necessary for the British to support the existing landed elite in an attempt to win their allegiance.

Land settlement policies in early modern Ireland and India are often described in purely economic terms as a transition from supposedly feudal to capitalist states. Ranjit Guha interprets the doctrines of Philip Francis and Lord Cornwallis on landlord and tenant rights through a capitalist versus feudal lens. Meanwhile, Sirajul Islam's analysis of Cornwallis's fracturing of the large zamindari estates of Bengal is based on a capitalist understanding of maximising agricultural production.[46] While such economic considerations should not be underestimated, the sources also reveal significant ideological motivations. In the Irish context, religion was a central consideration in shaping land settlement policies. When Irish Catholics petitioned the newly-restored monarch for land restitutions in the 1660s, the primary argument against this restoration rested on the fact that it would strengthen Catholic power and create a sharp decline in the Irish Protestant population. Over and beyond the £6,000 annual revenue that the Crown would lose from the quit rents of adventurers and soldiers, the anti-restitution faction maintained that restitution would lead to a higher percentage of Catholics in the House of Commons.[47] Another factor that influenced opinions was the enduring stereotype of the barbaric Irish and the British civilising mission. An

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[46] Ranajit Guha, *A rule of property for Bengal: an essay on the idea of permanent settlement* (Paris: Mouton & Co., 1963), 171 – 176; Sirajul Islam, *The permanent settlement of Bengal: a study of its operation 1790 – 1819* (Dacca: Bangla Academy, 1979), 144.

[47] 'An answer to the Irish their expedient [illegible] the declaration for settlement of Ireland,' BL Add. MS 4781, fols. 269 – 279.

anonymous mid-century tract credited direct landlord intervention for the reformation of the Irish peasantry. 'I will venture to say,' the author confidently concluded, 'the most savage of our aborigines, may be easily reclaimed (…) by the just and steady conduct in our gentlemen of estates'.[48] The theme of the civilising mission also appeared in the account of Arthur Young, who was generally favourable towards the Irish. Ireland, he notably wrote, was 'a country changing from licentious barbarity into civilized order'.[49] Such descriptions represent a significant departure from the vitriolic attacks of early seventeenth-century English travel authors, who repeatedly spoke of Irish barbarity.[50] But despite their lack of similar intensity, it remains possible to detect traces of this inherent bias well into the eighteenth century.

Contemporary Indian debates on property ownership provide a telling comparison to the late eighteenth-century Irish case. Indeed, despite their geographical distance, as well as different religious and political organisations, similar ideological concerns appeared in the EIC's response to existing land and revenue issues in Bengal. Officials consistently expressed the desire to invest *someone* with property rights in India throughout the last decades of the 1700s as the means to fund further activities on the subcontinent and to pay off outstanding Company debts. This source of funding was considered so valuable that it was decreed by the Committee of Circuit in 1772 '[t]he revenue is beyond all question the first object of government, that on which all the rest depend and to which everything should be made subsidiary.'[51] At the same, the newly-minted EIC administration also feared rebellions, which had historically caused considerable trauma in colonial territories such as Ireland. It was hoped that by conferring hereditary property rights on Bengali zamindars, the British would gain their loyalty during periods of crisis. According to Ranajit Guha, the decision to invest the zamindars was a strategic one. The necessity for the reorganisation of the Bengali land tenure system was taken for granted. But given its physical distance from Britain and the lack of a British settler community, the indigenous elite became the Company's most viable potential ally. Guha pushes this further by maintaining that the British attempted to transform Bengali landlords into equivalents of the English 'gentleman-farmer' responsible for estate improvements and innovations.[52] Guha is right to suggest that Company officials hoped local

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[48] A true patriot, *A view of the grievances of Ireland* (Dublin: Printed by George Faulkner, 1745, 2nd edn), 8 – 9.
[49] Young, *A tour in Ireland*, II, 277.
[50] See, for example, Fynes Moryson, *An itinerary* (London: Printed by John Beale, 1617).
[51] 'Proceedings of the Committee of Circuit, 28 July 1772,' in Ramsbotham, *Studies in the land revenue history*, 12. On the importance of some form of landed property in late eighteenth-century India, see Roy and Swamy, *Law and the economy in colonial India*, 28.
[52] Note, however, that Indian historians such as Samir Mukhopadhyay and Binay Chaudhuri do not accept that the strategy of creating a loyal class of elite landowners was successful. Guha, *A rule of property for Bengal*, 18,

landlords would invest in estate improvements. Nevertheless, the extent to which they actively sought to transform these landlords into British proto-type farmers remains debatable. Although the zamindars' cooperation was enthusiastically sought, sources indicate that they were never trusted to the same extent as the Protestant landlords of Ireland. A court order from 1786 cautioned that the zamindars ought to be constantly monitored for signs of rebellion, as '[t]he history of every province in India shews that a confederacy of the zemindars is attended with dangerous effects.'[53] The zamindars were also continuously suspected of aiding and abetting dacoits and thugs, which would have provided further incentive for doubt.[54] The supposed infractions of Cheit Singh (presumably the same one awarded the zamindary of Benares in 1775) are a useful example of the EIC's reactionary measures against local signs of resistance. Singh was fined 50 lakhs in the early 1780s by the Governor General for unspecified transgressions. Should he refuse to pay the sum, it was ordered 'that he the Gov.' G. would deprive him of his zemindary or transmit the sovereignty to the nabob vizier'. A similar case in the same year saw the Begums and landowners of Oudh (Awadh) stripped of their land rights by the government for showing 'symptoms of disaffection and even treachery'. Somewhat contradictorily, these individuals were subsequently allocated with 'pensions (…) in lieu of the revenues,' in a clear attempt by the Company to retain their support.[55] The Company, then, did not hesitate to employ severe measures against perceived recalcitrance. At the same time, fears of outright rebellion often meant that token gestures were still bestowed to retain local loyalties.

Beyond broad ideological comparisons, one important distinction between Irish and Indian practices was the concept of the tenant lease. Irish landlords prioritised long leases to encourage solvency and tenant reliability until they found themselves constrained by lease lengths beginning in the mid 1700s. Although land values rose, they were unable to raise rents. The 2nd Earl of Courtown, for instance, estimated that following the expiry of a series of leases in 1789, the rent for his Kilkenny lands would rise by £1,900, whereas those for lands in Wexford would increase by £1,750.[56] Travelling through Ireland a decade earlier,

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105; Samir Mukhopadhyay, *Permanent settlement to operation Barga* (Calcutta: Minerva, 1994), vii; Binay Chaudhuri, 'Eastern India,' in *The Cambridge economic history of India vol. II: c. 1757 – c. 1970*, ed. Dharma Kumar (2 vols., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), II, 88 – 89.

[53] 'Court order, 1786,' BL Add. MS 12571, fols. 14b – 15a.

[54] See Chapter II.

[55] Letter from Mr. Johnson to Robert Gregory, 26 July 1782, EU MSS 624, Series I, Box I, fol. 20; 'Extract of the secret letter from Bengal, date the 11th February 1782,' EU MSS 624, Series I, Box II.

[56] 'Probable rising rents on my estates on the expiration of leases for lives and years 1789,' *Personal account book of 2nd Earl 1784 – 1793*, TCD MS 11183/P33/1, fol. 7b.

Arthur Young maintained that the total revenues of all plantation lands in Ireland, which he calculated as being 11,042,642 acres, drew seriously undervalued rents of only £5,293,312 because of previous long lease practices. Even more worrisome, according to Young, was a deplorable practice adopted by tenants. Grown overly secure because of such lengthy leases, Young claimed that tenants commonly overworked their lands in the last years of their tenure to render them unprofitable for subsequent farmers.[57] This represents a significant point of departure from the Indian context. In the latter case, British officials feared that short-term leases would create disinterested landlords purely concerned with quick forms of profit. In contrast, pre-existing ownership titles in Ireland meant that the government displayed little interest in individual landlords' personal investment in their lands.

A general suspicion of the Irish peasantry is most evident in debates surrounding the role of middlemen, which took on an ideological aspect in addition to causing concern over maximising landlord profits. A common practice arose during the eighteenth century of renting out portions of estates to wealthy peasants – the middlemen, who then sublet these holdings (sometimes to several degrees) for profit. This practice was initially quite attractive to landlords, since it guaranteed regular revenue payments from reliable sources. However, landlords increasingly became resentful of lost profits due to sublets and a certain loss of control over increasingly large pools of tenants on their estates.[58] John Perceval, Baron of Burton, already noted the prevalence of subletting on his own estate as of 1717. Writing that he had recently refused to renew the lease of a Mr. L. Croft, Perceval congratulated himself on his decision, 'because he [Croft] wou'd never have improved them, but sett the[m] imediately at long leases to under tennts'.[59] *A view of the grievances of Ireland* drew attention to this problem closer to the mid-century mark, focusing on the ways in which the middleman presented a danger to existing social hierarchies. While the tract criticised the middleman's practice of subletting rather than farming the land himself, it reserved its greatest horror for the attitude that he reportedly adopted. The middleman, the tract noted distressfully, exacted higher rents for smaller quantities of land than landlords and 'from this moment he looks upon himself as a complete gentleman'.[60] Subletting practices, therefore, subverted

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[57] Young, *A tour in Ireland*, I, 40.

[58] See W.H. Crawford, 'Landlord-tenant relations in Ulster 1609 – 1820,' *Irish Economic and Social History* 2 (1975): 15; Peter Roebuck, 'Landlord indebtedness in Ulster in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,' in *Irish population, economy, and society: essays in honour of the late K.H. Connell*, eds. Joachim Max Goldstrom and Leslie Albert Clarkson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 136.

[59] Perceval to Mr. Tisdall, London, June 1717 [copy to Mr. Taylor], *Correspondence and papers relating chiefly to Perceval estates, 1644 – 1748*, BL Add. Ms. 46968, Egmont Papers, fol. 49a.

[60] A true patriot, *A view of the grievances of Ireland*, 5.

established social hierarchies and transformed middlemen into minor competitors of the landed Irish elite.

While Irish landlords began to advocate for shorter leases in the second half of the eighteenth century, contemporary British officials encouraged the opposite in the Indian context. Part of the critiques surrounding Hastings's Five-Year Plan was its duration. Officials believed that having overpaid the value of their lands, speculative farmers were unable to form a sense of attachment to their estates and merely worked them into the ground before moving elsewhere – not unlike similar accusations levelled at Irish tenants on much longer leases, it may be noted. This can be seen in Charles Rouse's comments on Indian land settlement policies, which included a lengthy interview with a Bengali official named Mirza Moshen on the status of zamindars. The passage represented Rouse's attempt to prove the legal rights of zamindars, and indirectly illustrates the value placed by the British on landlord attachment to his or her land. Citing Moshen's opinions on the hereditary rights of zamindars, Rouse tellingly wrote that '[i]f the office of zemindarry [sic], in the nature of other offices, were limited to the life of the incumbents, they would never have exerted themselves to promote the improvements and prosperity of the country.'[61] Many Britons believed that a permanent landlord class should be established in India, just as had been the case in Ireland. At the time, many zamindars were treated almost as tenants themselves because of the duration of their leases. Increasingly, however, and in spite of concerns over resistance, Britons considered that an attachment to the land was necessary to ensure a stable and profitable Indian agrarian system.

Related to concerns about landlord attachment to the land was the common distrust of indigenous landlords or tenants; this is of particular interest in the Indian case given the constant emphasis on the need for a servile and loyal landed elite. It is true that the groups subject to these misgivings were different in each case. In Ireland, tenants were the recipients of criticism, whereas zamindars were more frequently attacked in India. Nevertheless, in both cases these were the only groups with which the British had direct contact. John Perceval's correspondence from the early 1700s reveals further suspicions of tenant misdemeanours on his Irish estates, as well as pervasive stereotypes of dishonest tenants attempting to abuse the agrarian system. 'I think what you propose concerning – Rosslinc is all that can be done,' he wrote to Berkeley Taylor in September 1717, 'namely to have a tryall [sic] – next assizes and

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[61] Rouse, *Dissertation*, 55, and more generally 51 – 55.

make the present tennants [sic] prove the lives to be in being by which they hold. 'Tis strange to me that if they are not dead, they don't correspond with their own mothr [sic] and brother.'[62] Mirroring the accusations against disinterested Indian farmers, Irish peasants were also frequently held to purposely overvalue their lands to outbid competitors. Most important, though, was the fact that this was supposedly done with the full knowledge that the amounts could never be repaid. Philip Francis directly referenced Jonathan Swift's condemnation of this practice in an exposé to Lord North on zamindar rights and Indian agrarian reformations in 1777, which indicates that high-ranking EIC officials were familiar with such accusations. Francis himself was Irish-born, which most likely influenced his outlook on tenant and landlord relations.[63] Such contentions about Irish tenants were still prevalent in the early decades of the nineteenth century and can be found, for example, in Horatio Townsend's 1815 pamphlet on Irish agriculture. The difficult agrarian situation in Ireland had been caused, he averred, by overinflated land prices and had resulted in '[t]he common farmer estimat[ing] his future profits more by the number of acres he could sow, than the number of acres he could dress.'[64] Through the migration of Irish officials such as Francis, it is plausible to argue that the memory of Irish experiences partially informed EIC policies to encourage a greater investment in land among local Indian landlords.

The decision to auction revenue collection rights in the 1770s reflected the widespread belief that land auctions were the only way of discovering their true value since Indian officials were thought guilty of embezzling rent revenues and falsifying land values to EIC officials. Influenced by such beliefs, the Beaufort Report alleged that zamindars not only acted as incompetent absentee landlords but were also corrupt and routinely avoided paying full revenue rents. 'On one point he is always clear and explicit,' the report disparagingly stated, 'the inability of his land to pay the assessment, nor will he hesitate to alledge [sic] the decline of cultivation as the cause of it, tho' the fact if true, must chiefly have arisen from his own mismanagement.'[65] Providing an overview of the Bihar revenue collection system over a six-year period, the contemporary Patna factory records insinuate a similar tale of

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[62] Perceval to Berkeley Taylor, Kew, 27 September 1717, BL Add. Ms. 46968, fol. 105a.
[63] Philip Francis to Lord North, Calcutta, 12 July 1777, *Official and private correspondence and papers of Sir Philip Francis (1740 – 1818), member of Governor-General's Council 1774 – 80*, BL Mss. Eur. E15, Francis Collection, fol. 766; John Cannon, 'Sir Philip Francis, 1740 – 1818,' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10077).
[64] Townsend, *A view of the agricultural state of Ireland*, 24.
[65] BL Add. MS 12571, fol. 34a. For similar views, see *A plan for the government of the provinces of Bengal*, 29 – 31; 'Extract of a minute of General Clavering, Colonel Monson, and Mr. Francis, dated Fort William, 25 February 1775,' Francis, *Original minutes of the governor-general and council*, 2.

concealment. In one section, they discussed the difficulties that the Company would encounter in attempts to uncover the exact tax rates paid by each individual landlord throughout the province. It would likely be impossible, the records argued, since local revenue statements were frequently modified or destroyed. Additionally, it staunchly maintained that zamindars and tax collectors would collude against the administration at the first sign of a formal EIC investigation.[66] Indeed, this belief was so pervasive that even Edmund Burke, who famously defended the rights of Indians during the impeachment trial of Warren Hastings, expressed the conviction that Indians could not be trusted in matters of revenue collection. Though he elsewhere laboured to expose Hastings's oppression of the peasant class, Burke also blamed the indigenous administration for the shambolic nature of the revenue collection system. 'When any particular account is wanted,' he notably wrote, 'it cannot be found. It is the business of all, from the ryots to the diwan, to conceal and deceive.'[67]

Another aspect in which Irish and Indian land settlement policies resembled one another was the question of inheritance laws. Related to this legal dimension was the argument that the British upheld the law as an indicator of civility, but also modified it in colonial contexts to suit local demands.[68] One of the primary focuses of reformations carried out in early modern Ireland under the guise of the 'English civilising mission' was the replacement of Gaelic Brehon laws with the English common law. Two Gaelic legal concepts in particular were of great concern to officials since they contravened the rules of primogeniture; indeed, they were the subjects of lengthy diatribes in the texts of seventeenth-century jurists such as Sir John Davies. Gavelkind constituted the division of property among all male heirs, whereas tanistry represented inheritance by the strongest and most powerful male relative. Concerted efforts were undertaken to outlaw both practices in the early seventeenth century. It is therefore striking that gavelkind was reinstated by the English during the era of the penal laws in an attempt to break up the remaining Catholic landholdings. Following its reintroduction in 1703, Catholics could not leave property to their eldest sons, but rather had to divide it among all male children. Only in cases where one of

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[66] BL IOR G/28/2c, fols. 148 – 149.
[67] 'Trial, 8th day of reply, 14 June 1794,' Edmund Burke, *Speeches on the impeachment of Warren Hastings* (2 vols., Delhi: Discovery Publishing House, 1987), II, 378.
[68] See Chapter II.

the children converted to Protestantism could the estate survive intact.[69] The resurrection of gavelkind represented a significant reversal in early modern legal debates on the reformation of the 'wild' and 'barbarous' Irish, who were partially deemed so because of such customs. Initially considered with abhorrence by English administrators, such practices were reintroduced amidst efforts to control property ownership in eighteenth-century Ireland.

A similar need to gain control over Indian land settlement policies influenced British administrators in Bengal, where the emphasis on primogeniture was also abandoned, albeit for different ideological reasons. Bengali zamindaries, British officials believed, had grown unwieldy by the second half of the eighteenth century and the basic principle of gavelkind was subsequently introduced to break up larger estates and render them more manageable. Though a staunch defender of zamindars' hereditary rights, Philip Francis, among others, argued that a two-tier system should be introduced whereby larger estates would be divided among male heirs and smaller ones would pass intact to the eldest surviving son.[70] Ratnalikha Ray argues that there were two purposes to this fragmentation: to regulate revenue collections more effectively and to cut off the zamindars' political influence.[71] This type of reasoning once again gives some sense of the tension that existed between EIC officials' desire to gain the loyalty of a firmly-established landed local elite and their certainty as to the untrustworthy nature of an indigenous population under constant surveillance.

British policies related to land settlement in eighteenth-century Ireland and India undeniably differed in many details. The primary concern in India throughout much of this period was the entrenchment of a loyal and stable elite class of landowners who owed their positions to the EIC's Permanent Settlement. Though it did not have the intended effect, the Permanent Settlement was designed to consolidate and confirm landowners' property claims. Accordingly, the debates about the nature of private property so common in India were lacking in contemporary discourse on Irish land policies. At this time, the loyalty of the Irish landed elite was undoubted. Indeed, '[p]rovided that he paid his taxes and quit or Crown rents and obeyed the criminal law, the typical Protestant Irish landlord of the eighteenth century was free from all but family-imposed restraints on what he did with his estate'.[72] Drawing

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[69] Sir John Davies, *A discoverie of the state of Ireland* ([London]: Printed [by William Jaggard], 1613). On the reintroduction of gavelkind, see S.J. Connolly, *Religion, law, and power: the making of Protestant Ireland 1660 – 1760* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 272 – 273.
[70] 'Plan for a settlement of the revenues of Bengal, Baha, and Orixa, 22 January 1776,' Francis, *Original minutes of the governor-general and council*, 59.
[71] Ratnalikha Ray, *Change in Bengal agrarian society c. 1760 – 1850* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1979), 252.
[72] Andrews, *Plantation acres*, 111.

attention to the EIC's lack of complete authority in Bengal at this time, substantial differences also existed regarding attitudes towards tenant leases at the end of the 1700s. Whereas longer leases were no longer considered desirable or profitable in Ireland, they were considered beneficial in implementing a sense of stability for the still-nascent Anglo-Indian revenue collection system. Yet despite these differences in contemporary approaches, the goal throughout the early modern period was the same in both places: the establishment of privately-owned estates managed by loyal individuals who would ensure the timely and efficient collection of government revenue.

IV.

British interventions in the Indian agrarian system were traditionally described in terms of abrupt change or continuity. These terms, in turn, framed the ways in which historians interpreted British actions. Did the British introduce private property to India, or not? Did they change the existing systems, or did they assimilate to them? Mazharul Huq maintained that the EIC completely remade Indian agrarian classes through its efforts to regularise revenue collections. These efforts also gave rise to a merchant and speculative middleman class interested only in making profits, which dramatically changed rural society. Sirajul Islam likewise described the Permanent Settlement as a monumental change that created private landownership and a landed class of zamindars.[73] Other scholars such as Eric Stokes adopted the more moderate position that the British did indeed introduce private property to India but were also perfectly aware of the differences between the two systems. In short, they did not attempt to mold the zamindar into the 'gentleman farmer' described by Ranajit Guha.[74] Contemporary sources corroborate the second part of Stokes's argument, as many late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British authors voiced doubts regarding parallels between Indian and British landlords. 'It is by attempting to assimilate the complicated *system which we found* in this country,' a 1792 letter from the Court of Directors noted,

> with *the simple principles of landlord and tenant* in our own, and especially in
> applying to the Indian system terms of appropriation and familiar
> signification, which do not, without considerable limitation properly belong to

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[73] Mazharul Huq, *The East India Company's land policy and commerce in Bengal 1698 – 1784* (Dacca: Printed by A.K.M. Abdul Hai, 1964), 44; Islam, *The permanent settlement of Bengal*, xi.

[74] Eric Stokes, *The peasant and the Raj: studies in agrarian society and peasant rebellion in colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 1 – 2.

it, that much, if not all of the perplexity ascribed to the subject has arisen.[75]

Reflecting back on early revenue collection attempts, the Madras civil servant A. Campbell also described the confusion generated among late eighteenth-century EIC officials by the term zamindar. '[F]rom the petty sovereign of the hills, or powerful rajah of the plain, to the chief cultivator of some obscure village, [each] was given the indiscriminate appellation of zemindari, a term which, in the native language, means a *landman* or *landholder*, one connected with the land, but which was at first understood to be equivalent to the English term *landlord*.'[76]

More recent scholarship avoids such polarising views of rupture or continuity, arguing instead for processes of transformation. Neeladri Bhattacharya strongly objects to dichotomous portrayals of land settlement policies as either 'imposition' or 'adaptation'. Calling for a more nuanced understanding of the subject, Bhattacharya's reading suggests that changes inevitably occurred following the British assumption of administrative power, but that they did not completely revolutionise Indian agrarian society. EIC rule did not, in his view, represent a mere continuation of previous indigenous administrations. At the same time, it also did not mark the abrupt end of the existing system.[77] Although developed in the Indian historiographical context, this more nuanced approach to land and revenue policies can also be applied to the Irish situation, which has historically been described in terms of rapid change.

Dramatic changes in Irish landownership in the early modern period are usually attributed to two episodes of transplantation in the seventeenth century: the Cromwellian programme of the 1650s and a smaller one following the Irish Catholic defeat at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. According to contemporary Catholic accounts and later nationalist ones, Catholics lost all land property through these two episodes and were kept in oppression by the penal laws throughout the eighteenth century. A 1668 treatise by the exiled Catholic Nicholas French embodied the disappointed hopes of Catholics following the Restoration monarchy's failure to reinstate their lands. Attributing this failure to the machinations of Irish

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[75] Original emphases. 'Appendix no. 18, letter from the court of directors, 19 September 1792,' Harington, *An elementary analysis of the laws*, III, 398 – 399.

[76] Original emphases. A.D. Campbell, 'A paper on the land revenue of India,' in *The making of agrarian policy in British India 1770 – 1900*, ed. Burton Stein (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), 39.

[77] Neeladri Bhattacharya, 'Colonial state and agrarian society,' in *The making of agrarian policy in British India 1770 – 1900*, ed. Burton Stein (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), 119.

Protestants, French notably described the country's Catholic population as a people betrayed, and 'condemned to a perpetual sufferance, far surpassing those they formerly endured under the Government of *Cromwel* [sic]'.[78] Increasingly, however, historians have begun to question this bleak portrayal. Most notably, they point to a continued – though admittedly reduced – Catholic landownership, a large Catholic presence among property middlemen, and the gradual repeal of the penal laws throughout the 1700s. Analysing Ulster tenant rights from the early modern period to the late nineteenth century, Martin Dowling argues that at least in Ulster, change occurred much earlier in the seventeenth century through the transition from a Gaelic cattle-based economy to one centred on land ownership.[79] Bearing such considerations in mind, while the transplantation policies created a shift in the religious inclinations of property owners in the post-1641 Rising period, the Irish situation should also be viewed more as one of transformation than rupture. Significant changes were unquestionably wrought by the Cromwellian transplantation programme; Jane Ohlmeyer, for instance, has described these changes as a 'revolution'.[80] At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the continuities that also existed in the landholding system. Kenneth Nicholls's extensive work on pre-English Gaelic culture also challenges the traditional interpretation according to which the Elizabethan reconquest generated a rapid imposition of the English system over Gaelic forms of landholding. Property in Gaelic Ireland, according to Nicholls, was not fixed, but was frequently transferred through practices such as gavelkind. Nonetheless, he dates a firmly-established culture of rents and tenant leases at least to the sixteenth century.[81]

Over the past few decades, historians have also revisited the actual impact of the penal laws on ordinary Irish Catholics. Rather than a coherent series of legal attempts to limit Catholics, Sean Connolly describes them as 'a rag-bag of measures, enacted piecemeal over almost half a century (...) drawn up in response to a variety of immediate pressures and grievances and to accompaniment of continual disagreement over both the principle and the detail of the measures taken'.[82] The major piece of eighteenth-century legislation regulating Catholic landownership was passed in 1703 and barred Catholics from inheriting lands

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[78] Nicholas French, *A narrative of the settlement and sale of Ireland* (Lo[u]vain, 1668), 1, 2.
[79] Dowling believes that the legal reforms implemented by Sir John Davies after the flight of the earls in 1607 sparked the change. Dowling, *Tenant right and agrarian society in Ulster*, 13 – 15, 17.
[80] Jane Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English: the Irish aristocracy in the seventeenth century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 301.
[81] Nicholls, *Land, law and society*, 10, 12, 14 – 15.
[82] Connolly, *Religion, law, and power*, 263.

owned by Protestants, as well as buying or renting lands on long-term leases. An amendment in 1704 further decreed that Protestants who reported contraventions of this law would inherit the property of Catholics caught in misdemeanours.[83] Even so, the extent to which this law affected ordinary Irish Catholics is now challenged. While Connolly believes the amendment rendered this legislation 'the most effectively implemented of all the penal laws,' the economic historian Louis Cullen questions its impact. Cullen acknowledges that it would have affected wealthy Catholics, who were prevented from subletting their lands to under tenants. That being said, he rejects the notion that shorter leases would have impacted most Irish tenants in any significant way. Moreover, many scholars believe that the official record of falling Catholic land ownership throughout this period masks the fact that many Catholics converted to Protestantism to retain their lands.[84] Indeed, Nicholas Canny argues that one of the penal laws' primary goals was to ensure landowners' adherence to the Protestant church. According to Canny, due to conversions, the rate of Catholic landownership in Ireland fell from 14 per cent in 1700 to a mere 5 per cent by the end of the 1770s. As such, while the shift in property ownership appeared significant on paper, it did not always signal the actual transferral of land.[85]

In addition, a significant portion of the eighteenth-century middleman class was made up of relatively wealthy Catholics.[86] Only twenty years after the implementation of the landownership legislation, Henry Cole Bowen's estate rent rolls indicated that a James Konnoly [sic] paid revenues of £94 10s. per annum for lands in Ballyanmeey (Ballymoney). The tenant's surname suggests Catholic origins and, by implication, a level of continuity with pre-legislation times. The sum was substantial and is worth highlighting, especially when compared to later eighteenth-century rent rates following a sharp rise in land values. Bowen himself paid half-yearly rents of £27 10s. for the estate and demesne of Sentleger Sentleger at Killcumer, Co. Munster in 1769. By contrast, a group of men including Timothy Callaghan

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[83] *Ibid.*, 272 – 273, 276 – 277.
[84] S.J. Connolly, *Divided kingdom: Ireland 1630 – 1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 257; Louis Cullen, *An economic history of Ireland since 1660* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1972), 79; John Simms, *The Williamite confiscation in Ireland 1690 – 1703* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), 158.
[85] Canny, 'Irish resistance to empire?,' 307.
[86] Lindsay Proudfoot, 'Spatial transformation and social agency: property, society and improvement,' in *An historical geography of Ireland*, eds. Brian Graham and Lindsay Proudfoot (London: Academic Press, 1993), 223.

paid half-yearly rents of £39 7s. 6d. for farms on Sentleger's Ballyhooly estate in Co. Cork, which represented a comparable sum to Konnoly's earlier yearly rents.[87]

Eighteenth-century accounts of Irish land tenures, like contemporary EIC ones of Bengali ryots, often stressed the extreme poverty of Irish peasants and their abuse at the hands of ruthless middlemen and indifferent landlords. Arthur Young embarked on an extensive diatribe against the poverty he witnessed in Co. Kerry throughout his travels, accusing the region's middlemen of generating rising land prices while also driving down labour wages.[88] The Irish convict Michael Hayes referenced the persistent belief in remarkably high Irish quit rent taxation two decades later in a letter to his brother Richard. Quit rents, he claimed, had not been collected in New South Wales for twelve years. 'What happiness it would be to the unfortunate Irish tenantry,' he wrote, 'were they here to participate on [in?] those blessings.'[89] Even following the gradual demise of the middleman, Robert Bellew mournfully proclaimed in 1808 that the situation of the Irish peasantry had remained unchanged for over a century. A fiery contemporary tract by U. O'Dedy blamed the eighteenth-century middleman for damaging the possibility of positive tenant/landlord relations. The Irish peasant, he claimed, remained the prey of exorbitant rents and cruel landlords eager for profit. Drawing attention to the lack of recourses for these peasants, O'Dedy concluded that '[o]wing, as is the case generally, a year's rent to his landlord, he [the tenant] is always at his mercy, and may be harassed in any of the modes which the law provides for enforcing payment of rent or recovered possession.'[90]

Notwithstanding such accounts describing the grim realities of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Irish tenants, historians once again question the accurate extent of these claims.[91] In 1764, the Chief Baron of the Irish Exchequer complained of Irish landlords' failure to keep up with the estate improvements, which he estimated to lag behind their

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[87] 'A rent roll of the estate of Henry Cole Bowen a minor as now let to tenants this 26th of May 1724, including quitt rent and all, Papers relating to lands and property rented out,' NLI MS 49,683/6/2, Cole Bowen papers; 'Half a year's rent roll of Sentleger Sentleger Esq: estate of Killcummer for the first of November 1769 (no. 4),' and 'Half a year's rent roll of Sentleger Sentleger Esqrs: estate of Ballyhooly for the first of November 1769 (no. 1),' *Arundel Hill's account with Sentleger Sentler Esq. for the rents of his estate*, NLI MS 32,955 (5), Doneraile Papers.

[88] Young, *A tour in Ireland*, I, 469.

[89] Michael Hayes to Richard Hayes, 23 December 1816, SLNSW A 3586, fol. 6b.

[90] Robert Bellew, *Thoughts and suggestions on the means apparently necessary to be adopted by the legislature, towards improving the condition of the Irish peasantry* (London: Printed by J. Dean, 1808), 5 – 6; U. O'Dedy, *A view of the laws and landed property in Ireland* (London: Printed for W. Reed and J. Ebers, 1812), 17, and more generally 8 – 9, 18 – 19, 81.

[91] On recent doubts, see Proudfoot, 'Spatial transformation and social agency,' 220 and McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, 123 – 125.

English counterparts by about fifty years. Given Ireland's lack of capital, this remained an issue according to James Kearney as late as the 1790s.[92] A partial explanation for this lies in the previous Irish practice of granting long leases to tenants until the second portion of the eighteenth century. As seen earlier, long leases prevented landlords from raising land rents, even while the value of the land itself rose throughout specific tenures. While perhaps not as extensive as those carried out in England, it is also incorrect to argue that Irish landlords did not undertake improvements to their estates during this period. Among the stipulations included in an indenture from 1790 granting Henry Braddell a lease for three lives renewable in Co. Wexford, the Earl of Courtown required that Braddell uphold improvements made to his estate and carry out all necessary repairs.[93] Additionally, Crown land reports commissioned in the 1820s further indicate that by the early nineteenth century, government land surveyors were dispatched to evaluate estates and provide recommendations regarding rent rates.[94] This official – and supposedly more impartial – rent assessment represents a substantial departure from contemporary accounts of widespread middleman corruption and arbitrary rent impositions by absentee landlords.

Several of the estate paper collections held at TCD also indicate that tenant/landlord relations of the eighteenth century were more nuanced than the traditional depiction of tyrannical landlords would allow. When under-tenants of college lands in Co. Kerry petitioned for assistance from the Board's Charity Trust in 1784 following a difficult agricultural season, the request referenced assistance granted by the Board for previous difficulties.[95] Individual tenants also appear to have occasionally been given a measure of flexibility regarding rent payments. Entries in the rent rolls from the Conolly family papers frequently represented arrears from previous years' required payments. For instance, the account book for the counties of Dublin and Kildare listed a payment from Charles Neale on

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[92] Edward Willes to the Earl of Warwick, c. 1764, cited in *Aspects of Irish social history 1750 – 1800*, eds. W.H. Crawford and Brian Trainor (Belfast: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1969), 2; [James Kearney], *Essays on agriculture and planting, founded on experiments made in Ireland* (Dublin: Printed by Graisberry & Campbell, 1790), xi – xii.

[93] Jane Ohlmeyer's extensive analysis of the seventeenth-century aristocracy demonstrates that there was a precedence for improving landlords throughout the 1600s. 'Leases of the lands of Bolenrush in the County of Wexford, 27 March 1790,' TCD MS 11183/P/1/40, Courtown papers, of the earls of Courtown; Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*, 372 – 380.

[94] Appendix no. 1, Valuation of the manor of Mountjoy in the County of Tyrone made by order of the right honorable and honorable the commissioners of crown lands in Ireland, 1822 in 'The report of the commissioners appointed for enquiring into the title tenure extent and value of all lands houses &c upon the crown lands belonging to the castle and fort of Mountjoy in the County of Tyrone,' *Report of the commissioners of crown lands, vol.II*, NAI QRO/4/1/2, fols. 108 – 114.

[95] 'The humble petition of the under tenants on the college lands in Glanerough in the County of Kerry whose names are hereunto subscribed – the 24th of June 1784,' TCD MUN/P/23/1485a, Munster estate papers.

2 July 1782 for the half year's rent due on 1 May of the previous year. Some of the rent books cover a span of several years, which also makes it possible to track tenants' payments over the course of several entries. The case of Jeremiah Sullivan (Co. Dublin) is one example. While his Gaelic surname suggests Catholic origins, Sullivan's half yearly payments were for the relatively substantial sum of £32 11s. The entries on Sullivan between June 1788 and October 1791 render it clear that he also owed fixed rents throughout this period. Tellingly, one late payment due on 29 September 1790 was recorded on 11 April 1791. The sum, however, was the same as all of Sullivan's previous and following payments.[96] He did not appear to have received any sanctions for his late payment, nor did he accrue interest on any of the subsequent half-year rents. One final example from 1775 also helps to balance the image of relentlessly oppressive middlemen. Describing the levels of poverty among certain tenants in a letter to the guardian of that particular estate, the middleman George Hamilton firmly contended that rents were too high. Moreover, he claimed to have addressed this issue before with the estate's previous owner. Stating that he had been paying some of the tenants' rents for the past two and a half years to prevent them from falling into arrears, Hamilton begged Caldwell to 'indulge (& if I may say) nurse the poor tenants, who by such treatment in time pay honestly'.[97] Hamilton's actions and sentiments naturally cannot be generalised to all eighteenth-century middlemen. However, statements such as these do point to the need for a more balanced understanding of tenant and landlord relations.

The recent shift away from interpretations of rupture or continuity in South Asian historiography on agrarian systems provides a useful lens to reinterpret Irish tenurial practices of the same period. While no case was ever made for continuity between Gaelic and English land practices pre- and post-dating the transplantation policies of the 1650s, the eighteenth century has often been viewed through a very specific focus. Following a sudden and dramatic restructuring of property ownership at the onset, the remainder of the century was marked by constant tenant oppression at the hands of middlemen and landlords alike. Yet the same shift from polarising views has now occurred in the Irish context, with an emphasis on transformation rather than rupture. C.A. Bayly, for instance, refers to the development of 'agrarian patriotism' in the later eighteenth century, arguing that agrarian reformations had a distinct ideological component. Such reformations, he contends, were considered necessary

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[96] 'Land agent's account book re rentals of land in co. Dublin and Kildare,' TCD MS 3945, Conolly papers; *Rent book commencing 8 June 1789*, TCD MS 3947, Conolly papers.

[97] 'Holograph letter from George Hamilton to Andrew Caldwell, 26 May 1775,' RIA 12 R 41/21, Caldwell Collection, Vol. III.

for the maintenance of a strong state; moreover, they also functioned as instruments of civility.[98] This shift also indicates the extent to which the two colonial experiences resembled one another. In an analysis of an 1812 report on Indian land settlement policies, the early twentieth-century scholar Walter Firminger first drew attention to similarities between British colonial approaches to tenure and revenue collecting systems in Ireland and India. 'Francis' scheme,' he noted regarding revenue collection, 'while it pretends to be a return to the principles of the Mughal empire, is in reality, parallel with the methods of those early English administrators in Ireland, who being so familiar with land-holding *by contract* in their own land, simply could not recognise in Ireland the existence of land-holding *by status*.'[99] The situation in both areas was rather more complicated than Firminger implies. Private ownership and lease contracts already existed in Ireland prior to the early seventeenth-century legal reforms, while the hereditary legal rights of the zamindars prior to 1764 remained a widely debated topic in British India. Nevertheless, Firminger is right to argue that British officials approached the two spheres in similar manners. The British already had clearly defined views regarding appropriate land settlement practices and variant models were frequently met with consternation and calls for modifications.

If one views British land settlement policies in Ireland and India as transformations rather than rupture or assimilation, Valentine Mudimbe's theory regarding the transformation of colonial spaces into 'fundamentally European constructs' becomes highly relevant. Ireland might appear somewhat anomalous in this context since it was already a European space, but the parallel remains. To complete this process of transformation, Mudimbe identifies a number of essential components among which are 'the domination of physical space, (...) and the integration of local economic histories into the Western perspective'.[100] The concept of dominating physical space is relevant to both cases. The English blatantly asserted their authority over the Gaelic Irish by reconfiguring the landowning class in the second half of the seventeenth century and the earlier practice of surrender and regrant. And while Irish Catholics retained more options over the course of the eighteenth century than previously supposed, the entrenchment of the Protestant ascendency served as a constant reminder of the assumption of greater English sovereignty by the early 1700s. Likewise, though elements of

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[98] C.A. Bayly, *Imperial meridian: the British Empire and the world 1780 – 1830* (London: Longman, 1989), 122.

[99] Walter Firminger (ed.), *The fifth report from the select committee of the House of Commons on the affairs of the East India Company. Dated 28th July, 1812* (3 vols., Calcutta: R. Cambray & Co., 1917), I, cccviii.

[100] Valentine-Yves Mudimbe, *The invention of Africa* (Indiana, 1988), cited in Dowling, *Tenant right and agrarian society in Ulster*, 18.

Gaelic customary law such as leases for lives renewable forever trickled down into the 1700s, English notions of private property and tenurial arrangements gained prevalence in the reorganisation of the 'ancient organisations' that Mudimbe also mentions.[101] No such overt appropriation of physical space took place in India, through a combined lack of manpower and a settler population. Additionally, the Permanent Settlement formalised the rights of local landholders in the 1790s. Yet repeated EIC attempts to reformulate property laws in accordance with British views can be read as a subtler manifestation of dominance. In other words, only the EIC could dictate ownership. The continued insistence on regular rent payments in spite of regional complicating factors also heralded the beginning of attempts to integrate the local economy into wider European practices.

The land settlement situation in late eighteenth-century India is also of interest because numerous debates arose surrounding issues already considered problematic in the Irish context. Most notable among these was the use of middlemen versus the benefits of greater interaction between landlords and their tenants. Initially viewed as an economically beneficial arrangement, Irish middlemen were increasingly demonised by contemporary authors such as Arthur Young. Similar critiques were levelled at their Indian counterparts, who were accused of jeopardising the country's stability. A. Campbell, for instance, took issue with the subletting practices of the Rajah of Burdwan for further separating labourers from the government. 'If, as above stated,' he vehemently wrote, 'the zemindary system itself had failed to define the public revenue payable by the cultivator, or to fix it on the fields he occupies, still less can this most desirable end be accomplished, when the cultivator is driven to a fifth remove from the Government, his original and natural protector.'[102] According to such an interpretation, both landlords and middlemen became obstacles to the protection of Indian tenants.

Finally, returning to the parallels drawn by Cook between late nineteenth-century Ireland and India with which this chapter began, it is clear that although possibly true for the later period, the argument that greater concern was evinced towards Indian ryots than Irish tenants is not sustainable for the eighteenth century. The EIC records abound with expressions of concern for the lot of the ryot and calls for greater protection against oppressive tax collectors and corrupt zamindars. In 1789, for example, the Minute by Mr.

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[101] *Ibid.*, 18.
[102] Campbell, 'A paper on the land revenue of India,' 42.

Shore alleged that exorbitant rent rates were continuously being inflicted on ryots who had no recourses for protection against their landlords, and even provided a list of the seven greatest abuses perpetrated against the peasantry.[103] Yet despite these numerous professions of concern, the Company never decisively acted against the allegations. One theory upon which this chapter has previously touched is Samir Mukhopadhyay's contention regarding British fears of increased zamindar power and peasant insurgency. Such fears were not without some foundation, since the 1770s and 1780s were marked by peasant rebellions attributed by C.A. Bayly to anger over landholding rights and demands for revenue payments from tribal groups.[104] Gambling on the hope that the zamindars would prove loyal in the event of any rebellions, British officials often favoured Bengali landowners. Documents from the *Bengal secret consultations* discussing the relationship between the Company and the ruler of Benares make the incentive for cordial relations with indigenous rulers abundantly clear. Since Benares shared a border with Awadh, one entry pointedly noted that 'the rajah should have the *strongest tie of interest* to support our government, in case of any future rupture with the soubah of Oudh'.[105] EIC officials also undertook further efforts to consolidate the zamindars' position in Bengali society. The Haptam Regulation of 1799 awarded landlords the right to arrest defaulting ryots without recourse to the courts of law, while simultaneously depriving the ryots in large measure of the ability to voice complaints regarding their treatment. An attempt to temper the law was made in 1812 (a regulation known as Panjam), but historians agree that this had little concrete effect in providing better security to tenants. '[R]uinous though it was for the peasantry,' Sirajul Islam contends, 'this law guaranteed the greatest security of the public revenue and that unexampled punctuality was the argument of many revenue authorities against any alteration in the present regulations'.[106]

While Cook argues that India was used as a template for Irish tenurial reforms of the later nineteenth century, Irish tenants appear to have had a much better legal standing than Indian ones at the turn of the 1800s. Company officials often made references to customary rights supposedly held by ryots. The district collector for Bihar mentioned in a letter from 1793 'that I do not recollect an instance of a zamindar's having attempted to remove a ryot

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[103] Mr. Shore's minute of 28 June 1789 included in 'Appendix no. 18, letter from the court of directors, 19 September 1792,' Harington, *An elementary analysis of the laws*, III, 421 – 424.
[104] C.A. Bayly, 'The British military-fiscal state and indigenous resistance: India 1750 – 1820,' in *An imperial state at war: Britain from 1689 to 1815*, ed. Lawrence Stone (London: Routledge, 1993), 339, 340.
[105] 'Extract of Mr. Barwell's Minute on the same subject,' EU MSS 624, Series I, Box I, Folder V.
[106] Islam, *The permanent settlement of Bengal*, 67 – 68. For the Haptam and Panjam regulations, see Singh, *Land revenue administration in Bihar*, 72 – 73; Mukhopadhyay, *Permanent settlement to operation Barga*, 18 – 19, 22.

who had not been guilty of a breach thereof [i.e. rent rates]'.[107] Even if this was the case –
and there are many other EIC letters that testify otherwise – land reformations implemented
in the 1790s rendered tenants' situations far more precarious. With regards to Ireland, W.
Crawford refutes previous interpretations of what he calls tenant right (meaning the automatic
renewal of leases) as having given tenants a more permanent hold on their land. Although
proposals from existing tenants were prioritised following the expiration of leases, he insists
that no preference could be guaranteed. At the same time, other historians such as Ian
McBride maintain that the relatively small pool of eighteenth-century Irish tenants did give
them a certain agency and power over landlords faced with limited choices.[108] McBride's
argument is confirmed by a commissioners' report issued on lands in Co. Wexford belonging
to religious institutions in 1819. 'When a tenant,' the report stated, 'holds over after the
expiration of his last lease without any stipulation for a new rent the law supposes that a
landlord agrees to let him hold at the same rent which was reserved in the lease or grant
which expired last.'[109] This represents a striking contrast to Burke's contention, in the Indian
context, that officials invariably sided with the big farmers whenever ryots brought
complaints against them. [110] By comparison, Lindsay Proudfoot maintains that as a result of
preference given to existing tenants upon lease expirations and lower rents, '[f]or much of the
eighteenth century, the system seems to have favoured the tenant rather than the
landowner.'[111]

Prior to the late nineteenth century, then, British officials adopted similar approaches
in Ireland and India areas that were influenced by their own conceptions of landed property
and ownership. Some sources point to possible catalysts for the changes that occurred in the
early nineteenth century. Burton Stein argues that by 1812, Britons had realised that the fixed
rents imposed by the Permanent Settlement were a mistake, since landowners were unable to
raise their sources of revenue to carry out estate improvements. A. Campbell's discussion of

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[107] Footnote entitled 'Extract of a letter from Mr. A. Seton, collector of the district of Behar, 6 January 1793,'
Harington, *An elementary analysis of the laws*, 426.
[108] Crawford, 'Landlord-tenant relations in Ulster,' 11; McBride, *Eighteenth-century Ireland*, 136.
[109] 'The report of the commissioners appointed for enquiring into the title tenure extent and value of all lands
houses &c which are held under the crown in Ireland on determinable leases upon the tythes of the rectories of
Mothell Rathgormuck Mayrielarge and Ballyelan in the county of Waterford part of the possessions of the late
suppressed monastery or religious house of Mothell in said county,' NAI QRO/4/1/2, fols. 87 – 88.
[110] 'Trial, 8th day of reply, 14 June 1794,' Burke, *Speeches*, II, 377.
[111] Proudfoot, 'Spatial transformation and social agency,' 230. See also Dickson, 'Property and social structure
in eighteenth-century South Munster,' 137; Louis Cullen, 'Economic development, 1750 – 1800,' in *A new
history of Ireland: eighteenth-century Ireland 1691 – 1800*, eds. Theodore William Moody and William Edward
Vaughan (10 vols., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), IV, 177, 178.

the settlement's failure two decades later noted that the situation of Indian peasants was dire, while officials now saw the zamindari system which had previously been encouraged as incompatible with European notions of landownership. 'The hereditary contractor for the land revenue of the state,' he wrote,

> was treated as the European landlord, whose interest is to promote the prosperity of his subordinate tenantry: whereas such had invariably been the interest of the state itself alone, to which that of the zemindari is directly opposed.[112]

The late eighteenth-century Irish landlords' opposition to long-term leases therefore had no impact on contemporary British policies in India. Driven by the ambition of securing EIC rule in Bengal, rent profits were sacrificed in favour of attempts to solidify a loyal landed Bengali elite.

Eighteenth-century Irish and Indian land policies differed in several aspects, especially regarding the prioritisation of estate improvements or shorter leases and increased rents. Yet it is still possible to argue that British policies in both places were influenced by the same notions of property ownership. Though eventually deemed a failure, the Permanent Settlement represents a parallel attempt to emulate the (successful) implementation of the Protestant Ascendancy in late seventeenth-century Ireland. Irish and Indian land policies reflect empire-wide British assumptions according to which officials deliberately remodelled problematic existing systems to conform to their own world views – in this case property ownership. Motivated by economic and ideological concerns, concerted efforts were deployed in both colonial settings to create landed elites who were loyal to the government and would ensure regular revenue payments while also controlling the activities of their respective peasantries.

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[112] Campbell, 'A paper on the land revenue of India,' 50 – 51; Burton Stein, 'Introduction,' in *The making of agrarian policy in British India 1770 – 1900*, ed. Burton Stein (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), 79.

Chapter V. Visual representations of empire

Previous chapters have detailed the documentary, legal, and administrative ways in which Britons attempted to lay and solidify claims to authority over their colonial subjects. Material culture, particularly visual representations, was another medium through which individual colonial identities were subsumed under the larger project of empire. By creating closer, almost personal, ties, the visual element of maps and landscape portraits had an emotive dimension similar to early modern and eighteenth-century histories. No longer geographically remote and exotic destinations, these areas became known to viewers through visual depictions. Maps and drawings brought the empire to life not only for British administrators and officials, but also for the general British public, by rendering the 'unknowable' knowable. The processes for producing these depictions suggested that the final products showed the empire in finer detail and, by extension, that a greater level of detail corresponded to greater imperial control.

The anthropologist Bernard Cohn was the first to introduce the concept of 'investigative modalities' as a lens to consider British colonialism. This chapter draws from Cohn's work, particularly his definitions of the observational/travel and survey modalities, to consider three different types of imperial visual representations: maps, landscape illustrations, and commemorative paintings. Although these forms of representations might not share any similarities at first glance, they illustrate different facets of Cohn's two visual modalities. According to Cohn, Britons used the observational/travel modality to establish 'a repertoire of images and typifactions that determined what was significant to the European eye'. Moreover, elements considered significant changed over time to reflect contemporary needs or political dynamics.[1] This chapter argues that Cohn's visual modalities should be layered to present a broader picture of the ways in which visual representations of Ireland and India were designed to shape British perceptions of them. These three forms of imagery dictated what was important to visually and ideologically recognise about these colonial spheres, functioning on two separate levels. Firstly, notionally the intended audience for these representations was frequently domestic Britons. Visual representations presented a useful medium to present the image of a strong, vast, and united empire in which the colonies prospered, or at the very least improved, under British rule. In the case of Ireland, this meant civilising the formerly wild Irish; representations of Ireland consequently incorporated

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[1] Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its forms of knowledge: the British in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 6, 7.

elements of untamed wildness, a pagan past, and hints of potential unrest. In the Indian context, representations often reinforced contemporary perceptions of stagnation, *former* grandeur, and *current* degeneration to justify British expansion as an attempt to restore the subcontinent to its former glory. Given the increased resistance to imperial expansion in later eighteenth-century Britain, such images were vital tools in propagandistic attempts to justify colonial endeavours.[2] With regards to the question of a public British sphere, this study adopts Kate Fullagar's position that a sense of imperial consciousness was present in Britain as early as the 1710s. Fullagar broadly accepts Kathleen Wilson's pioneering argument that a domestic consciousness of empire existed throughout the eighteenth century, while stipulating that this consciousness was never homogenous but, instead, fiercely contested and varied until the 1790s.[3] On a second level, visual representations of empire also had their genesis in the same anxieties occasioned by gaps in colonial knowledge discussed throughout this study, and which guided colonial policymaking and activities. Visual representations did not merely represent efforts to convince domestic Britons of the grandeur and control of the realm, but additionally efforts to convince colonial officials who could, in turn, justify imperial expansion to themselves. In short, if the image that circulated about the colonies was one of well-known, well-represented, and well-controlled spaces, it could become so.

Visual representations were part of wider imperial programmes of colonial knowledge building intended to ensure more efficient governance. Nevertheless, as Max Edelson notes in the context of imperial mapping, '[w]hat these maps mean depend on what we think they are.'[4] Visual representations could mask details to better suit their creators' objectives. The ostensible purposes of maps throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were primarily military and administrative. In reality, they conveyed far more. Geographical and political boundaries unclear on the ground suddenly became clearly demarcated. A similar process to the reconfiguring of empire discussed in Chapter I was at stake: maps, as well as representations of the colonies, allowed British officials to rewrite the physical space of empire. These maps usually did not highlight contested boundaries, instead emphasising British attempts to render boundaries fixed and incontestable. Regarding colonial landscape portraiture, such representations often offered sanitised versions of Ireland and India. At least

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[2] The history of Rome was often upheld as a warning for empire. For example, P.J. Marshall, 'Empire and authority in the later eighteenth century,' *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 15:2 (1987): 107.

[3] Kate Fullagar, 'Popular contests over empire in the eighteenth century: the extended version,' *History Australia* 13:1 (2016): 67 – 70.

[4] S. Max Edelson, *The new map of empire: how Britain imagined America before Independence* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2017), 6.

on the surface, they depicted contented peasantries peacefully coexisting with their landlords, although subtle undertones still conveyed a sense of evolving British notions of race, social hierarchies, and civility. Absent from standard illustrations of the Irish countryside were the issues of abject poverty and vagrancy that featured so strongly in contemporary descriptions.[5] Whereas the messages were more explicitly conveyed in the British-produced histories, maps and illustrations also offered suggestions for administrative courses to take in Ireland and India.

Analysing British mapping endeavours in the American colonies prior to the War of Independence, Edelson argues that large scale projects such as the eighteenth-century ones in America and India are indicative of wider imperial concerns. 'That such comparable mapping projects should emerge separately at this moment,' he contends, 'shows that within those British government agencies that looked outward toward the wider world, there was such a thing as the "imperial state," which cohered around a new ethos of systematic governance.'[6] Ireland does not feature in Edelson's work, but the major surveying project carried out by Major Charles Vallancey in the 1770s demonstrates its inclusion in this growing imperial consciousness. Material culture also contributed to the development of official policies in Ireland and India. These images of empire contributed to the creation of cohesive British notions of self and those under their authority.[7] Between 1650 and 1800, the changing focuses of Irish and Indian maps point to different British colonial interests and concerns. In Ireland, the primary cartographic concerns during much of this period were the annexation and redistribution of confiscated land and, subsequently, the maintenance of a loyal Protestant landed elite. Indian maps, on the other hand, primarily reflected trade concerns. While fears of a French invasion remained remarkably strong in both cases, the maps were increasingly tailored to their particular colonial contexts over the course of the eighteenth century. The rise in popularity of landscape portraits and commemorative paintings in the 1700s complimented this cartographic output and provided detailed representations of various imperial locales.

This chapter considers those visual representations, examining how maps and illustrations conveyed propagandist views of the expanding empire, as well as informed

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[5] See Chapter III. One exception is the series of sketches found in Hugh Douglas Hamilton, *The cries of Dublin &c*, ed. William Laffan (Dublin: Irish Georgian Society, 2003).

[6] Edelson, *The new map of empire*, 17.

[7] John E. Crowley, *Imperial landscapes: Britain's global visual culture 1745 – 1820* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 2.

Britons' perceptions of Indians and the Irish. It concludes with a comparison of commemorative paintings produced at the end of the eighteenth century that celebrated significant events in the British history of Ireland and India. While these case studies reflect an emerging trend in British paintings at the turn of the nineteenth century, they are of particular interest because they demonstrate a departure point between British approaches to the two colonies. It is important, however, to note that this represented a departure point not of process through the utilisation of visual representations, but rather of content. In other words, the case studies demonstrate the same processes, but with content specifically tailored to each colonial setting. Historical commemorative paintings represented extreme versions of maps and landscape illustrations – less subtle expressions of the power demarcations in the colonies. Finally, many of these visual representations were also made for public consumption. Maps frequently had clear strategic and military aims and were created with defensive or tactical strategies in mind. However, map compendiums also made up significant portions of early modern private collections and were evidently purchased for personal use. The proliferation of printed Irish maps in the eighteenth century, with multiple editions no less, further suggests a level of public demand. On the Indian side, the EIC surveyor James Rennell's *A memoir of a map of Hindoostan* had already reached its second London edition by 1785.[8] With regards to landscape illustrations, these were frequently published as picture books or as companions to travel accounts and were also mass-produced both in Great Britain and in Europe. The translation of the famous artist William Hodges's Indian travel account into French at the beginning of the nineteenth century and the republication of images by Thomas and William Daniells in Paris point to the high demand for artistic representations not only in Britain, but throughout Europe.[9] Finally, historically-commemorative paintings were almost invariably displayed in large public spaces, such as the London Vauxhall Gardens, where they were viewed both by the elite and working classes.

These visual mediums not only symbolised British attempts to assert their authority over colonial subjects, but also introduced previously unknown subjects and territories to the general British public. These particular mediums were also chosen because they represent

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[8] James Rennell, *A memoir of a map of Hindoostan* (London: Printed by M. Brown, 1785, 2nd edn). On the importance of Rennell's work for imperial cartography, see Michael Bravo, 'Precision and curiosity in scientific travel: James Rennell and the Orientalist geography of the new imperial age (1760 – 1830),' in *Voyages & visions: towards a cultural history of travel*, eds. Jaś Elsner and Joan-Pau Rubiés (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), 162 – 183.

[9] William Hodges, *Voyage pittoresque de l'Inde fait dans les années 1780 – 1783*, trans. L. Langlès (Paris: De l'Imprimerie de Delance, 1805); Mildred Archer. *Early views of India: the picturesque journey of Thomas and William Daniell 1786 – 1794* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), 223.

different visual depictions of colonial landscapes: geographical, agricultural, military, and political. In an analysis of early modern Irish mapmaking processes, William Smyth argues that conquering powers needed to continually demonstrate their authority through shows of force that were both psychological and physical. On these grounds, landscapes '[became] a key vehicle for the manifestation of such visible symbols of colonial rule. The management and adornment of carefully selected sites such as parliament buildings, fortresses, the official residences of key officials, (...) as well as either the conscious adaptation or destruction of sites of key symbolic significance to the conquered people, are all components of this landscape strategy.'[10] Maps, landscape portraiture, and pieces of historical commemoration represented the different facets of Irish and Indian landscapes. While drawing the public's attention to those elements of colonial society deemed significant, as shown by Cohn, these different types of landscapes also functioned as displays of colonial power.

I.

Though upheld as objective and truthful in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, maps provide useful insight into British attempts to create carefully constructed images of the colonies through their inclusions, deliberate omissions, as well as over emphases and minimisations. The clear demarcation of colonial boundaries also added legitimacy to sometimes tenuous sovereign British claims.[11] Historians of cartography such as Matthew Edney have linked the creation of maps to Jeremy Bentham's prison panopticon. According to Edney's interpretation, maps created a powerful visual effect by depicting an entire colonial space in a single image, which he describes as 'all-encompassing'. The British, he argues, did not create a true panopticon through Indian maps, but they *thought* they had done so.[12] While this possibly holds some truth for India, many of the examples discussed below testify to the uncertainties that accompanied Indian cartographic endeavours – not least the fact that the production of such maps was only possible using indigenous knowledge. More specifically, forms of knowledge that the British lacked. This was explicitly articulated, for example, in EIC correspondence with the court of directors in 1767 as a justification for the

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[10] William J. Smyth, *Map-making, landscape and memory: a geography of colonial and early modern Ireland c. 1530 – 1750* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2006), 11 – 12.

[11] On the truthfulness of the map, see, for example, Denis Wood, *The power of maps* (London: Routledge, 1993), 106; Smyth, *Map-making*, 25. On the legitimising quality of maps, see J.B. Harley, 'Maps, knowledge, and power,' in *The iconography of landscape: essays on the symbolic representation, design and use of past environments*, eds. Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 282.

[12] On Jeremy Bentham and the panopticon, see Chapter III. Matthew H. Edney, *Mapping an empire: the geographical construction of British India, 1765 – 1843* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), 25, 26.

use of EIC personnel in mapping projects. 'So much depends,' the letter stressed, 'upon accurate surveys both in military operations and at coming at a *true* knowledge of the value of your possessions.'[13]

Even if the argument can be made for India, several Irish examples demonstrate that it is not sustained across the empire. At first glance, the substantial blank spaces in the western parts of Ireland on contemporary maps confirm Edelson's claim that '[b]y mapping contested spaces and demarcating extensive new frontiers, Britain created images that concealed imperial weaknesses as much as they functioned as instruments that enabled the state to exercise real power over remote areas.'[14] One possible explanation for these blank spaces was that more detailed information of those particular areas was simply not politically expedient. The same can be said of the blank spaces left on certain maps of different Indian territories. However, another explanation is that maps occasionally did the exact opposite of concealing weaknesses. Blank spaces represented the unknown, an unspoken but implicit acknowledgement that the British did *not* control those areas and, moreover, that their information was lacking. This, in turn, could potentially have acted to spur increased imperial expansion. Edney's somewhat monolithic view of the map as 'all-encompassing' does not make allowance for the anxieties often displayed during the map-making process, which will be discussed below.[15] Nevertheless, maps did serve as attempts to claim territorial authority and to contain imperial space. In particular, the map could claim the symbolic function of suggesting the creator's longstanding settlement in the area. Examining the production of colonial maps in eighteenth-century India, Ian Barrow notably points to the continuous production of regional maps over the course of several decades as an oblique way for European powers to suggest their 'legitimate ownership [of the area] by referring to a history of acquisition'.[16]

Early modern and eighteenth-century maps traced the gradual expansion of empire and the consolidation of British authority in Ireland and India – albeit often leaving the misleading impression of an easy and peaceful expansion. However, they also hinted at

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[13] Emphasis added. Paragraph 17, letter to the court of directors, 30 March 1767, in Narendra Krishna Sinha (ed.), *Fort William – India house correspondence and other contemporary papers relating thereto, 1767 – 1769* (21 vols., Delhi: Published for the National Archives of India by the manager of publications Government of India, 1949), V, 307.

[14] Edelson, *The new map of empire*, 18.

[15] This position emerged out of a discussion with Tom Simpson at the University of Cambridge on the meaning of borders and boundaries on maps.

[16] Ian Barrow, *Making history, drawing territory: British mapping in India c. 1756 – 1905* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), 16.

British anxieties over claims to territorial sovereignty. Moreover, these maps represented the manufactured images of Ireland and India that Britons wished to see. The evolving uses of these maps were also based on changing geopolitical situations and British colonial ambitions. In a similar fashion to innovative colonial legal measures implemented in times of crises, cartographic adaptations throughout the period reflect the ways in which the British modified their approaches to suit various political and military challenges. One important way in which this was the case for India was the extensive use of indigenous informants. Although such collaborations were rarely, if ever, acknowledged in the final products, recent work by scholars such as Kapil Raj stresses their central importance. Given these circumstances, Raj questions the extent to which historical maps can be viewed as European products. While Raj is right to draw attention to this point, Ian Barrow objects to overly stark distinctions: regardless of the production process, the maps were not created for Indians, but rather for Europeans.[17] As a result, they remain useful indications of the ways in which the British wished to view the world around them. Maps were visual elements that could contain the various geographical spaces of empire. But they could also be modified on a continual basis to serve contemporary British interests.

Ireland and India represent examples of areas in which maps were used to bolster existing British claims to sovereignty and legal jurisdiction in previously settled lands. Recent historiography underlines the dichotomy between the depiction of fixed boundaries on early modern and eighteenth-century maps and the changing significance of these maps throughout the period. Dorinda Outram even refers to the mapmaking process as part of an 'exploration' to uncover knowledge about previously unknown places, rather than a final statement about physical geographical boundaries.[18] The Ireland-India comparison links colonies traditionally described as being of settlement and of trade, demonstrating how mapmaking processes in different colonies were similar or diverged from one another. At the same time, these processes played an essential role in both colonial settings. Thus, it is useful to first begin with several basic questions. What were these similarities or differences? What do they reveal about British perceptions of self and geographical space? And, finally, why were these projects carried out in these settings?

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[17] *Ibid.*, 8, 11.

[18] Dorinda Outram, 'On being Perseus: new knowledge, dislocation, and enlightenment exploration,' in *Geography and enlightenment*, eds. David Livingstone and Charles Withers (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 289; Matthew Edney, 'The irony of imperial mapping,' in *The imperial map: cartography and the mastery of empire*, ed. James Akerman (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 12.

Map collections such as the one found in the library of Edward Stillingfleet (1635 – 1699), Bishop of Worcester, are good points of departure to understand early modern and eighteenth-century changes in cartographic representations of Ireland and India. Most of the maps in the Stillingfleet papers predate the 1650s and are consequently representative of Europe-wide perceptions of Ireland and India just before the advent of large-scale mapping projects. The information provided by these maps was often remarkably rudimentary; though perhaps unsurprising in the Indian context, the lack of knowledge surrounding Ireland is striking considering that an English presence was first established there in the twelfth century. Regarding their audience, it is worth noting that the majority of the Stillingfleet library maps were collections of printed volumes, which suggests that at least among the elites, there was a readership for maps by the late seventeenth century.

The information found in early Indian maps largely corresponded to seventeenth-century trade concerns; many areas included rather fanciful artistic liberties that betrayed the map-maker's ignorance of the subcontinent. The map of the Mughal Empire created by Johannes Janssonius, included in an anonymous compilation c. 1660, ended abruptly at the line of the Deccan. Moreover, although it contained a suspicious degree of geographical detail for portions of northern India, it was virtually bereft of any large cities.[19] By contrast, the map produced by Edward Well in 1700 all but ignored the area labelled 'the emp. of the great Mogul'. Indeed, Delhi does not feature on this map. While the interior portions of India were left almost completely blank, the maritime frontiers of the western, southern, and eastern coasts were remarkably detailed.[20] The lack of detail provided for the interior of India on both of these maps highlights the trade routes and the port towns that would have been of greater contemporary interest to British merchants and sailors.

Early modern maps of Ireland displayed a similarly limited understanding of the country's terrain. The unusual and unrecognisable place names scattered over the 'Tramontana' map of 1566 are proof that knowledge of Ireland beyond the regions immediately adjacent to the English Pale (roughly the area surrounding Dublin) remained poor mid-century. This map stands in sharp contrast to the 'Theatre de l'univers' produced by Abraham Ortelius in 1587, which was widely available in London.[21] The lack of reliable

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[19] Anonymous, 'Compilation of maps' (c. 1660), ML (reference withheld at the request of the archive).
[20] Edward Wells, 'A new set of maps both of antient and present geography,' (Oxford, 1700), ML (reference withheld at the request of the archive).
[21] Anonymous, 'Tramontana' (Venice[?], 1566), BL Maps K.Top.51.1, King George III's Topographical Collection; Abraham Ortelius, 'Theatre de l'univers' (Anvers: De l'imprimerie de Christofle Plantin, 1587), ML

information on the 'Tramontana' copy can be explained by the fact that it was produced at the onset of the Elizabethan plantation projects, before administrators began to seriously consider colonising the Irish countryside. However, given the politically volatile situation towards the end of the sixteenth-century and the beginning of the Nine Years War only six years later, Ortelius's map was created under vastly different circumstances.[22] While the first element one notices is the unusual rendering of Ireland as an elongated rectangle, the map clearly indicated all large cities as well as the Gaelic lords' various areas of influence. It is within that changed context that new information was deemed vital for the administration. One of the last maps produced in the mid-seventeenth century prior to the implementation of surveying and fieldwork techniques, John Blaeu's geographical atlas, still displayed limited descriptions of the island's terrain but did focus extensively on the identification of Irish towns. Its production in the wake of the 1641 Rising and the beginning of the transplantation policies also signaled the introduction of county maps, which demonstrated an increased interest in greater levels of accuracy at more regional levels.[23]

The two major mapping projects carried out in Ireland at the beginning and the end of the period under discussion best demonstrate how mapping concerns evolved to meet contemporary British concerns. The first project led by Sir William Petty was a direct response to the Cromwellian Settlement and was intended to assess the value of confiscated lands as of 1654, prior to their redistribution. The significance of Petty's survey project to both general European cartographic history and the more specific history of Irish mapping should not be understated. Smyth refers to Petty's project as 'the first full field-survey and *mapping* of any European country. Moreover, it completely reconfigured the landscape of Irish property ownership by the end of the seventeenth century.[24] Petty's techniques set the standard for future European surveyors, including Major Charles Vallancey who oversaw the second major Irish survey project in the 1770s amidst rising concerns of European rivalries and French incursions.[25] In India, an increased need for more detailed maps of the interior

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(reference withheld at the request of the archive). On Ortelius, see Laurence Worms, 'Maps and atlases,' in *The Cambridge history of the book in Britain, Volume IV: 1557 – 1695*, eds. John Barnard and D.F. McKenzie, with Maureen Bell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 230.

[22] The English secretary of state Sir William Cecil had amassed a substantial collection of Irish maps by the end of the 1500s and insisted that any good collection should include Ortelius's map. Smyth, *Map-making*, 36.

[23] John Blaeu, 'Geographiae Blauianae volume sextum, quo liber XII, XIII. Europae continentur' (1662), ML (reference withheld at the request of the archive).

[24] Smyth, *Map-making*, 167, 196.

[25] Yann Goblet, *La transformation de la géographie politique de l'Irlande au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1930), 240; William O'Reilly, 'Charles Vallancey and the military itinerary of Ireland,' *Proceedings*

followed the British victory at Plassey in 1757. While the maps from the Stillingfleet collection focused on coastal lines and sea ports, the EIC quickly found itself in need of regional studies detailing the new lands under its control. The 'Plan of the Company's lands and lakes' (1761 – 1762), for instance, provided detailed material on the lakes and vegetation, as well as an elaborate plan of Calcutta. The most notable element of the plan of Calcutta is the striking difference between the civil city centre and the enormous surrounding military camp. The impression gained was of a well-ordered city firmly under the control of the Company's army.[26] The creation of such maps was a strategic necessity, since it permitted the safe and efficient transportation of military and administrative personnel throughout the territory. Moreover, individuals such as the EIC historiographer Robert Orme staunchly maintained that only through more detailed maps would the Company gain the knowledge essential for the successful defence of its newfound acquisitions.[27]

A survey of the maps produced in Ireland from the Cromwellian period onward, and following the initial EIC victories in India, provides insight into British views of their colonies over time and the ways in which they interpreted their expanding empire. Throughout the eighteenth century, Europeans began to believe that in order to understand the land, one had to be able to visualise it. As a consequence, fieldwork became increasingly prized. James Rennell was motivated to create a general map of Hindustan in the 1780s because of increased EIC involvement in the affairs of Bengal and a greater need for interaction with regional Indian rulers. Consequently, Rennell's map allowed British viewers to situate Bengal within the larger context of subcontinent politics.[28] Andrew Drury employed the same rhetoric in his own 1794 map by contextualising India within the affairs of the EIC. According to Drury's interpretation of Indian affairs, ordinary British men and women now had a stake in the EIC's Indian possessions, which were of benefit to the entire British nation.[29]

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of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C: archaeology, Celtic studies, history, linguistics, literature Vol. 106C (2006): 133.

[26] 'Plan of the Company's lands and lakes, by Captain Cameron, 1761 – 1762,' TNAI, Survey of India, F 51/6, Historical maps.

[27] Robert Orme, *Essay on the art of war*, BL IOR OV.303, Orme Mss, fol. 109 [undated]. On the development of British information networks in India, see C.A. Bayly, *Empire and information: intelligence gathering and social communication in India, 1780 – 1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), especially 6, 8.

[28] Charles Withers, 'On Enlightenment's margins: geography, imperialism and mapping in Central Asia, c. 1798 – c. 1838,' *Journal of Historical Geography* 39 (2013): 5; Preface to the first edition in Rennell, *A memoir*, i.

[29] Relatively little information survives on Drury, but he was known for the quality of his products. Andrew Drury, 'Provinces of Delhi, Agra, Oudh, E& 1794,' BL Maps *55355.(1.); Yolande Hodson, 'Maps, charts and

The crucial role played by indigenous intermediaries in the mapmaking process is now widely acknowledged by historians, in spite of their near-complete erasure from the final products. According to Michael Bravo, this erasure was a result of highly selective European production processes that cast doubt on indigenous information while simultaneously depending on it.[30] One notable example of this is found in Drury's map, which contains numerous editorial asides indicating geographical landmarks. One particular aside noted the area between Singrowla and Sirgoojah as the 'supposed boundary of Cheet-Sing's country'. Evidently, Drury was unable to receive independent confirmation of this political frontier, which rendered Cheet-Sing's claim questionable. A similar example from 1757 was reported in correspondence between the Calcutta administration and the EIC Court of directors describing recent land surveying projects. In one instance, a local nawab had reportedly sent a deputy to survey land he had recently granted to the Company. It was deemed necessary, the letter testified, for Company officials to assign an independent – British – observer to verify and legitimate the deputy's findings.[31] Cases such as these point to the anxieties that lurked underneath the surface of colonial map production. They highlight the internal British struggle between the need for indigenous knowledge and fears of dependence on colonial subjects.

The first major mapping project undertaken during this period was the survey carried out by William Petty in the wake of the confiscation and transplantation policies of 1650s' Ireland. While Petty described his work as a contribution to the reconstruction of Ireland following two decades of warfare, the survey was primarily intended as an administrative tool that enabled the English to resettle and restructure the country's political and social order.[32] The same process of restructuring later occurred in India. Rennell rather overstated the matter when he claimed in the introductory comments to his *Memoir of Hindoostan* that the EIC now 'displayed the British standard from one extreme of it [the Mughal Empire] to the other'.[33] Nevertheless, his intention was clear: the northern portions of India had fallen under the Company's control. The same type of factual manipulation in the full title of an earlier

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atlases in Britain, 1690 – 1830,' in *The Cambridge history of the book in Britain, Volume V: 1695 – 1830*, eds. Michael F. Suarez, S.J. and Michael L. Turner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 763 – 764.
[30] Michael Bravo, *The accuracy of ethnoscience: a study of Inuit cartography and cross-cultural commensurability* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 4 – 5.
[31] Drury, BL Maps *55355(1); Paragraph 20, 'President and council to court of directors, 20 August 1757,' in Sinha, *Fort William – India House correspondence*, II, 243.
[32] Petty's account and 'Report of the said committee of survey, 11 May 1654,' in William Petty, *The history of the survey of Ireland, commonly called the Down Survey, by Doctor William Petty, A.D. 1655 – 6*, ed. Thomas Aiskew Larcom (Dublin: Irish Archaeological Society, 1851), 1, 5; Goblet, *La transformation*, 44.
[33] Preface, Rennell, *Memoir*, i.

map by William Bolts explicitly stated contemporary EIC political aspirations: 'The kingdom of Bengal, Bahár, and part of Orissa, which are now under the dominion of the honourable society of English merchants trading to the East Indies; together with the conquered provinces of Illahabâd, Oud & Banarás, which by the servants of the said society, in 1765, were conferred on the Mogul Emperor, Shah Allum and the Nabob Sujah-Al-Dowlah.'[34] It can consequently be argued that maps could operate in the same ways as British-produced colonial histories, which depicted a version of historical events in line with British, rather than indigenous, narratives. Consequently, maps such as Rennell's and Bolts's over exaggerated the EIC's authority and influence to portray it as the genuine sovereign of Bengal, rather than its more accurate position as an employee of the Mughal emperor.

In comparison to the increasingly detailed maps of India, portions of Ireland remained deliberately under-mapped because of political and religious considerations. A late eighteenth-century second edition map by Daniel Beaufort purported to show the roads and towns, as well as the religious sites of Ireland... with the notable exceptions of Galway and Connacht.[35] Roughly contemporary maps by Major-General William Roy and Thomas Jefferys gave no indication of the road systems in Clare, Connacht, and Connemara. The difference was indeed so glaring that many of the Irish villages appear completely cut off from the remainder of the country. Meanwhile, Bernard Scalé sneeringly referred to Connacht in his own map as 'the least cultivated, and inclosed, the thinnest of inhabitants, and these the most ignorant and unpolished' of all the Irish counties.[36] It is no coincidence that these were the counties traditionally described as 'Irish,' and those to which the dispossessed Irish Catholics were transplanted following the land confiscations of the 1650s. Moreover, since these areas were not deemed at risk of European (mostly French invasions), they had no strategic value for the British and would not have warranted proper surveys.

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[34] William Bolts, 'The kingdom of Bengal, Bahár, and part of Orissa' (London, 1773), BL Maps K.Top.115.28.
[35] Daniel Beaufort, 'A new map of Ireland civil and ecclesiastical' (London: W. Faden, 1797, 2nd edn).
[36] Major-General William Roy, 'General map of the south part of Ireland... from observations... in August 1765,' BL Maps K.Top.51.30.a.2 TAB; 'A new and accurate map of the kingdom of Ireland,' in Charles Vallancey, *Military survey of Ireland, Part I*, 1776, BL Maps K.Top.51.31.2, fol. 1; Bernard Scalé, 'An Hibernian atlas, or general description of the kingdom of Ireland' (London: Printed for Robert Sayer and John Bennet, 1777), RIA MR 16 D/33.
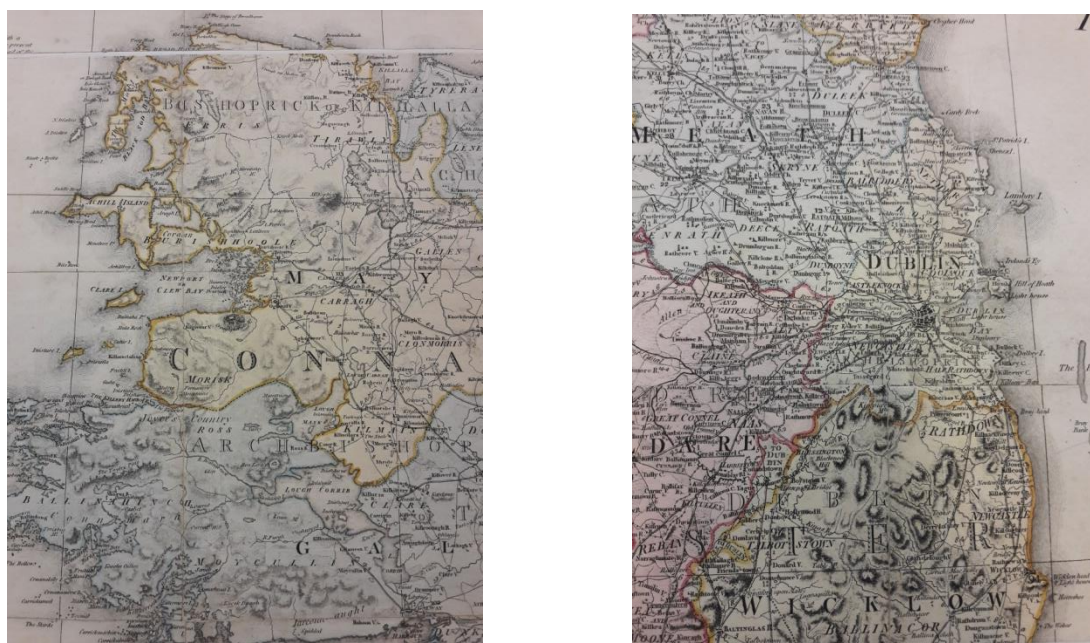
Figure I. Excerpts of the areas around Connaught and Dublin from Daniel Beaufort. 'A new map of Ireland civil and ecclesiastical.' London: W. Faden, 1797, 2nd edn. By permission of the British Library.

In comparison to this deliberate practice of exclusion, British maps of India routinely included territories outside of the EIC's jurisdiction in an attempt to inflate the Company's authority. Rennell insisted on depicting both the 'permanent' boundaries set out in the Mughal *Ain-i-Akbari* as well as the current boundaries of regional kingdoms.[37] The implication of Rennell's words was that the Mughal boundary lines were authentic ones, whereas current frontiers were less so – not unlike Drury's aside on the kingdom of Cheet-Sing. This insistence on the value of ancient knowledge displays the persisting European belief that contemporary India was not representative of the 'genuine' India which could only be discovered through the study of ancient documents. In doing so, Rennell subtly cast doubt on the legitimacy of regional rulers' authority. Moreover, his language suggested that there was a correct way of envisioning India not reflected in the politics of the day. Cartographers such as James Rennell or Samuel Dunn further emphasised the British obsession with keeping abreast of current Indian politics by highlighting British and Indian possessions (red always indicated the boundaries of British influence). The use in both cases of the words 'English' or 'British,' rather than 'EIC,' lands once again strengthened the illusion of a

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[37] Preface to the first edition, Rennell, *Memoir*, iii.

British imperial presence that was not entirely accurate, since the Company's holdings remained under the nominal authority of the Mughals.[38]

Maps also played a direct role in the elaboration of military strategies. Confronted with unstable situations in Ireland and India throughout the long eighteenth century, sufficient knowledge of the country was necessary to allow for the rapid deployment of troops at all times.[39] A primary concern for the British following the 1750s was the threat of a French invasion of one of their colonies. Charles Vallancey's monumental surveying project was intended to provide maps for the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland and so included a lengthy analysis of various locations along the coast which could be used either as enemy landing sites or as centres of strategic defence. The commentary hints at widespread antagonism from the Gaelic Irish population toward the administration, although it is difficult to gauge the extent to which this resentment was genuine or inflated in the context of invasion fears. While discussing the aptitude of certain towns and hamlets to house troops between Dublin and Waterford Harbour, Vallancey noted that 'nine tenths of the inhabitants would meet the enemy with open arms'. A second, slightly different, version of the survey in the RIA conveys an even deeper sense of pessimism on the general mood in Ireland. '[W]henever an enemy invades this island,' concluded its section on the sea coast between Wexford Harbour and Waterford Harbour, 'it will probably be with such an army as assisted by our peasantry may be able to penetrate the country'.[40]

Contemporary fears about French and European activities on the subcontinent resulted in similar calls for maps tracing the evolution of contemporary Indian geopolitics. 'An accurate map of the seat of war in India' (c. 1785) identified the English, French, Portuguese, Dutch, and Danish establishments throughout India, quickly revealing itself to more accurately be a map of European activities in India, not of relations with regional rulers.[41] Another example from 1788 ostensibly showed the southern peninsula of India. However, a closer glance reveals that its true purpose was to highlight the realm of Tipu Sultan of Mysore, as well as British and French possessions in the area. Since Tipu was allied to the

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[38] Preface to the second edition, Rennell, *Memoir*, xv; Samuel Dunn, 'A complete map of the East Indies, exhibiting the English territorial acquisitions' (London, 1774), ML (Reference withheld at the request of the archive).

[39] On the advantage of military maps in the Scottish context, see Jessica Christian, 'Paul Sandby and the military survey of Scotland,' in *Mapping the landscape: essays on art and cartography*, eds. Nicholas Alfrey and Stephen Daniels (Nottingham: University Art Gallery Castle Museum, 1990), 21.

[40] See 'Plate 2, Rivers Barro, Nove, Suire & Slaney,' BL Maps K.Top.51.31.2; 'Plate 1, Sea Coast,' in Charles Vallancey, *Military survey and itinerary of Ireland, begun in the year 1776, part I*, RIA Ms 12.S.6, fol. 3.

[41] Anonymous, 'An accurate map of the seat of war in India' 1785[?], BL Maps *52430.2.

French, this underscored the danger represented by Mysore. While the French possessions appeared negligible in comparison to those of Britain, Mysore was depicted as the dominant force in the peninsula and served as a visual representation of continued French threats to British interests. If Mysore flourished and possibly extended the sphere of its authority, French influence in the south would only grow stronger.[42] These two maps demonstrate the ways in which cartography was often used to depict India as a territory undergoing constant change, as European powers vied for influence with little or no reference to local rulers.

In spite of parallel fears of French invasions, Irish and Indian maps had considerably different military purposes. The instability and trauma sparked by the 1641 Rising in Ireland, as well as the constant threat of rebellions, created an atmosphere in which the cartographer's primary concern was to chart the road networks that would allow for the rapid deployment of troops in moments of crisis. As a result, most Irish maps from the eighteenth century included varying levels of detail on all Irish county barracks. The two versions of William Robinson's 'The kingdome of Ireland, with the distribution of the barracks for quartering the army' demonstrate the clear strategic value of the eighteenth-century map. Explicitly demarcating the jurisdictional zone of each Irish regiment, these maps conveyed the visual impression that Ireland was under military control at all times.[43] All county barracks and garrisons were listed in Herman Moll's contemporary version, while Thomas Jefferys's piece from 1759 was commissioned by the Lord-Lieutenant to include all roads and barracks.[44] Although Irish and Indian maps shared several commonalities, the individual circumstances of each colony also dictated the peculiarities of contemporary maps. British acquisitions in India were only partial, and indeed part of the much larger territory governed by the Mughals. In addition, the EIC also found itself involved in the regional politics of local rulers, in previously under-scrutinised areas. In comparison, the administrators of Ireland, backed by official histories, lay claim to a colonial authority dating from the twelfth century. Repeated uprisings and sectarian conflict were merely the products of a refractory Catholic population not yet quelled. As a result, the interest of Irish cartographers lay in the consolidation of a territory

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[42] James Rennell, 'The peninsula of India from the Krishnah river to Cape Comorin, 1788,' BL Maps *52415.95.

[43] Sir William Robinson, 'The kingdome of Ireland, with the distribution of the barracks for quartering the army' (1729[?]), BL Maps K.Top.51.15 and version two, BL Maps K.Top.51.16.

[44] Herman Moll, 'A new map of Ireland divided into its provinces, counties and baronies' (Dublin, 1720), TCD Maps 057 (iii); Thomas Jefferys, 'A new and accurate map of the kingdom of Ireland divided into provinces, counties & baronies' (London, 1759), TCD Maps 091 (iii).

that was already under British jurisdiction, rather than the exploration of previously unknown territories of potential further expansion.

A final matter relating to maps was the inclusion of decorative cartouches and dedications. In the Irish context, cartouches were often an important visual component that tied the maps' different themes together, while also illustrating contemporary social realities. The cartouche on the Beaufort map depicted contemporary stereotypes against the Gaelic Irish through the inclusion of a Catholic church, a round tower, and a castle in ruins. While this indicated the central importance of religion for the general population, as well as the eighteenth-century vogue for antiquarianism, the ruins also hinted at the dissolute state of current society. Additionally, four angels hold various religious and social symbols, including a portrait of George III in prominent display, and, finally, a ship in the background is also shown displaying the British flag.[45] These additional elements reflect the image that Britain wished to circulate about an Ireland firmly under British control, which downplayed the sectarian tensions that persisted throughout much of the century.

One of the most notable features of Irish cartouches was their use of female figures, more particularly Britannia as an allusion to British colonial authority and power. A comparison between the cartouches on the maps produced by John Rocque, and John and Carington Bowles, is a good case in point. On the Rocque cartouche, the map's title is set against the backdrop of a ruined wall under which a nude woman lies on a bed of reeds. While this woman is unclothed and appears languid and almost nymph-like, the woman overseeing a cargo loading zone in the Bowles's version appears unyielding and has a military association through the spear that she holds. Seated on a crest bearing the cross of St George or a Union Jack, she is evidently Britannia.[46] Given the liberal use of other traditional Irish symbols in the Rocque map's cartouche, it is possible to argue that the unclothed woman is Hibernia. The women depicted in the two cartouches, then, contrast forcibly: the Hibernia-figure of Rocque's map hints at dissipation, while the ruins suggest neglect; Britannia, meanwhile, exudes a sense of authority and strength. This opposition between allegorical female figures received its strongest manifestation in the heavily militaristic map produced by Alexander Taylor in 1793. Seated on the left of the inscription is a woman

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[45] Beaufort, 'A new map of Ireland civil and ecclesiastical.'

[46] John Rocque, 'A map of the kingdom of Ireland, divided into provinces counties and baronies' (London, 1773), TCD Maps 093 (ii)A; John and Carington Bowles, 'A new and complete map of the kingdom of Ireland' (London, 1770), TCD Maps 105.

bearing a strong resemblance to Minerva, who holds a spear and helmet. Military standards flutter behind her, and she is suggestively leaning over a shield covered by an Irish harp capped with a crown. Standing opposite her, another pensive and plainly-dressed woman peers into a mirror, with a snake wrapped around her arm.[47] There is no sense of languidness in this image, but the snake clearly references Ireland; moreover, this woman is completely engrossed by her mirror, appearing far less imposing and decisive than the Minerva figure. Once again, these women served as visual representations of Britain and Ireland: one forthright, depicted in the classical style, and always watchfully monitoring. Absorbed by her own reflection, bucolic Ireland strikes a submissive pose.

There is one significant difference between the cartouches on Irish and Indian maps. Irish ones favoured heavily embellished and decorative illustrations. Conversely, fewer Indian maps bore elaborate illustrations and instead featured flowery – as well as highly political – dedications. Free of embellishments, William Bolts's 'The kingdom of Bengal, Bahár, and parts of Orissa,'nonetheless revealed a significant political agenda through a lengthy address to members of the Secret and Select committees of the House of Commons. The names of these men, Bolts staunchly maintained, were so illustrious that 'the natives & oppressed of India may eventually have reason, gratefully to venerate, so long as the British maintain their Empire in Asia'.[48] Although perhaps not as explicit as the more elaborate of Irish cartouches, Bolts's language nevertheless painted the same picture of British force. Additionally, his reference to the 'oppressed' Indians was also significant because it fit into the standard narrative of the Briton as saviour. These maps often reflected how the British wished to view themselves in relation to their colonial territories through carefully constructed views of actual geographical boundaries.

II.

Drawings and illustrations represented a second visual medium that facilitated British collecting of representations of colonial sites, and books of prints became increasingly common and affordable following the 1760s and 1770s when they also began to be exported.[49] While these images were purported to accurately depict the colonies for domestic

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[47] Alexander Taylor, 'A new map of Ireland having the great features of the country described in a manner highly expressive and the distances between the towns & stages, marked in miles and furlongs for the use of travellers' (London, 1793), RIA C 31/2/B.
[48] BL Maps K.Top.115.28.
[49] Tim Clayton, 'Book illustration and the world of prints,' in *The Cambridge history of the book in Britain, Volume V*, 231 – 232, 235.

Britons, more often they are most useful in highlighting contemporary British interests and fears. Maps and landscape portraits represented similar manifestations of British claims to authority, complementing one another. Discussing the symbolism redolent in colonial paintings, Beth Tobin Fowkes emphasises specific messages conveyed about the subjects of these representations. 'Paintings (...),' she argues, 'are not merely reflections of larger social and economic forces; they participate in the production of meaning, in the dynamic construction of identities, and in the structuring within discursive fields of particular positionalities.'[50] Through maps, vicariously the British were able to quickly and easily visualise large expanses of colonial space while obliterating the traces of conflict and tension reflecting the reality of colonial life. Meanwhile, illustrations of landscapes and buildings provided an opportunity to draw the public's attention to the minutia of colonial sites. These images are vital to the historian's understanding of British perceptions of self and other, since they helped to shape British understandings of these areas. '[P]laces,' according to Karen Till, 'are never mere backdrops for actions or containers for the past. They are fluid mosaics and moments of memory, matter, metaphor, scene and experience'.[51] Usually, they were also the only depictions that most Britons would ever see of Ireland or India. The power of the landscape portrait to influence British perceptions of the colonies was substantial.

Artistic bias is a key factor in the interpretation of illustrations. Writing on British Guyana, D. Burnett claims that imperial artists deliberately used art to convey messages and opinions.[52] As such, imperial landscapes were highly subjective images that reflected elements of reality chosen by their artists. This was particularly true in the eighteenth century, when the picturesque became the favoured style of portraiture. Since this style dictated specific modes of illustration that required products to be aesthetically pleasing, art historians and anthropologists agree that artists' adherence to these rules meant that the colonies were only ever portrayed under particular – and artificial – conditions throughout this period.[53]

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[50] Beth Tobin Fowkes, *Picturing imperial power: colonial subjects in eighteenth-century British painting* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 1, and also 13 – 14.

[51] Karen Till, *The New Berlin* (2005), 8, as cited in Rosie Dias, 'Memory and the aesthetics of military experience: viewing the landscape of the Anglo-Mysore wars,' *Tate Papers* 19 (2013), http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/memory-and-aesthetics-military-experience-viewing-ladnscape-anglo (14.06.2015).

[52] D. Burnett, *Masters of all they surveyed: exploration, geography, and a British El Dorado* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 132.

[53] G.H.R. Tillotson, 'The Indian pictures: images of India in British landscape painting, 1780 – 1880,' in *The Raj: India and the British 1600 – 1947*, ed. C.A. Bayly (London: National Portrait Gallery Publications, 1990), 146. For a contemporary account of the picturesque, see William Gilpin, *An essay upon prints: containing remarks upon the principles of pictures beauty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Representations of Ireland first began to circulate in the second portion of the eighteenth century – around the same time that images of India were also displayed to the British public. Throughout this period, the dominant British impression of Ireland was 'poverty-stricken masses on the one hand, and empty wild landscapes profusely dotted with picturesque ruins on the other'. Yet historians such as P.J. Duffy note that artists rarely depicted this poverty, deeming it unsuitable for portraiture. Instead, their focus was a sanitised version of Irish wildlife.[54] One brief example of this practice is found in Jonathan Fisher's album of Irish landscapes. In one scene depicting Blarney Castle in Co. Cork, Fisher included a descriptive note indicating that the castle's owner had establishment a near-by village designed to employ 'a number of poor people rescued from idleness, and its attendant poverty'. Fisher concluded his note by observing that labour was an excellent means of improving the minds and dispositions of the common Irish.[55] Tellingly, and in spite of this praise, Fisher elected not to include an illustration of this village. In India as well, landscape illustrations only became popular artistic subjects in the last decades of the eighteenth century, when imperial artists such as William Hodges and the Daniells uncle and nephew began to tour the subcontinent. While many of these individuals displayed genuine appreciation for Indian landscapes, their images often presented India as an exotically foreign land.[56] Both in Ireland and in India, illustrations can be broken down into different themes, the two most prevalent ones being cities and buildings, and countryside sceneries.

In a study on the significance of architecture in British India, Thomas Metcalf notes that the choice of style in erecting public buildings was of primordial importance. '[I]t was essential always,' Metcalf maintains, 'to make visible Britain's imperial position as ruler, for these structures were charged with the explicit purpose of representing empire itself'.[57] Consequently, the buildings that artists chose for their work often had considerable symbolic value and highlighted British civility and power. In an illustration of Leinster House in

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[54] Fintan Cullen, *Visual politics: the representation of Ireland 1750 – 1930* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1997), 11, 15; P.J. Duffy, 'The changing rural landscape 1750 – 1850: pictorial evidence,' in *Ireland: art into history*, eds. Raymond Gillespie and Brian Kennedy (Dublin: Town House, 1994), 32, and 36 – 37; John Barrell, *The dark side of the landscape: the rural poor in English painting 1730 – 1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 5, 16.

[55] 'Blarney Castle, in the County of Cork,' Jonathan Fisher, *Scenery of Ireland: illustrated in a series of prints of select views, castles and abbies* (London: Published by J. Debrett, 1795).

[56] Mildred Archer and Ronald Lightbown, *India observed: India as viewed by British artists 1750 – 1860* (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1982), 8 – 9; Dias, 'Memory and the aesthetics of military experience.' For an overview of the major British painters in late eighteenth-century India, see Pheroza Godrej and Pauline Rohatgi, *Scenic splendours: Indian through the printed image* (London: The British Library, 1989).

[57] Thomas Metcalf, *An imperial vision: Indian architecture and Britain's Raj* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 2.

Dublin, Thomas Milton presented a well-ordered view of military might, with soldiers featuring prominently in the scene.[58] Some are in the act of running into the frame from the left foreground, but the majority of them are shown in strict formation at a make-shift firing range on the house's grounds. Their actions, meanwhile, are observed by a number of well-dressed men and women on the right side of the frame. The image presents an overall impression of genteel civility, while the soldiers' prominence also hints at Britain's military strength. The attached description indicates that such firing practices were commonly held at Dublin House, directly linking the seat of British power to its military might. The overall effect of the sketch served to emphasise Britain's position in Ireland.

Figure II. 'Leinster House in Dublin, 1 January 1783.' In Thomas Milton. *A collection of select views from the different seats of the nobility and gentry in the kingdom of Ireland*. London: Published by J. Walter, 1793. By permission of the British Library.

William Ashford's 'A view of Dublin from Chapelizod' offers another anglicised and sanitised vision of Ireland.[59] The painting's city panorama offered a bucolic look at a seemingly thriving city, once again presenting a sense of order and structure. The wildlife surrounding the city is carefully cultivated, with wide clear spaces for agricultural purposes. However, the painting's greatest interest lies in the city's magazine fort, depicted atop a hill in the furthest left point. A disproportionately large flag flies from its walls and a procession of soldiers snakes along the narrow road leading away from the magazine. Considering the fact that this painting was produced in the late 1790s, the inclusion of soldiers in an otherwise peaceful cityscape is particularly relevant. In keeping with the rise of sectarian and agrarian

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[58] 'Leinster House in Dublin, 1 January 1783,' Thomas Milton, *A collection of select views from the different seats of the nobility and gentry in the kingdom of Ireland* (London: Published by J. Walter, 1793).
[59] William Ashford, 'A view of Dublin from Chapelizod' (1795 – 98), National Gallery of Ireland 4138.

conflicts in this decade, the painting hinted that Dublin, the country's largest administrative centre, was always under the watchful and protective eye of the British army.

In comparison to Irish forms of architecture, which broadly resembled British ones at least in the larger cities, Indian architecture appeared far more exotic and foreign. At the same time, soldiers were still often included to highlight the growing British power in the region. Nevertheless, Indian cityscapes usually favoured European-administered areas and British architecture over traditional Indian forms. European quarters deliberately replicated the neoclassical style popular in Britain, which lent them a familiar and less threatening feel.[60] Accordingly, although British artists travelled to India intending to produce depictions of their new colonial territory, they spent a significant amount of their efforts on cityscapes that bore little Indian influences.

One of the more popular subjects for British artists in Calcutta was Fort William, which historian Jagmohan Mahajan describes as 'the symbol of British military ascendancy' in the region.[61] The similarly titled pieces 'A view of Calcutta' by William Hodges and the engraver Edward Orme both provided city perspectives from the fort that bear strong European influences. In the two compositions, the buildings along the horizon across from the maidan are classically-inspired and uniform, showing no traces of Indian architecture.[62] Both pieces include prospects of the harbour, where clearly European war ships and merchant vessels abound. The one noticeable difference between the two compositions lies in their depictions of Britons. In the Hodges piece, several unoccupied Indians loiter in the foreground of the fort. In contrast, the lone Briton is directly in the centre of the image and commands the viewer's attention. Orme's slightly later rendition conversely depicts British soldiers lounging against a wall in the right foreground while Indian sepoys are shown in neat rows down in the garrison, prominently bearing a British flag. While the loitering Indians and the lounging British soldiers might initially seem to be conveying contradictory messages, they are in fact complementary. The Indians in the Hodges piece are portrayed as lazy and inactive, which could be extrapolated to argue that they were unable to govern themselves.

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[60] Jagmohan Mahajan, *The Raj landscape: British views of Indian cities* (New Delhi: Spantech Publishers, 1988), 10; Holger Hoock, *Empires of the imagination: politics, war, and the arts in the British world, 1750 – 1850* (London: Profile Books, 2010), 279.

[61] Mahajan, *The Raj landscape*, 41.

[62] 'A view of Calcutta, taken from Fort William, 1 January 1793,' William Hodges, *Travels in India, during the years 1780, 1781, 1782, & 1783* (London: Printed for the author and sold by J. Edwards, 1793); Edward Orme, 'A view of Calcutta from Fort William (1807),' BL Maps K.Top.115.46-a. On Orme's engraving activities, see John Maggs, rev. by Annette Peach, 'Edward Orme, 1775 – 1848,' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (DOI: 10.1093/ref:odnb/37824).

This argument was carried to its logical conclusion in the Orme image: under the supervision of the British, the Indian sepoys have become as well-regulated and ordered as the volunteers at Leinster House. The British, meanwhile, are shown in an effortless position of authority.

Hodges's series of drawings also highlight the difference between British renditions of European-inspired and indigenous forms of architecture. It is useful to compare his illustration of Calcutta with the one of Akbar's tomb at Sikandra. Calcutta underwent extensive refurbishments in the 1770s and art historian Mildred Archer argues that greater demand for cityscapes was partially generated by a growing sense of pride in the newly renovated city. Whereas Calcutta scenes such as Hodges's, or the contemporary series of engravings produced by the Daniells uncle and nephew, gave the impression of pristine civic buildings and an imposing military fort, Akbar's tomb conveyed a sense of dilapidation.[63]

Figure III. Section of William Hodges, 'A view of the gate of the tomb of the emperor Akbar at Secundri,' [undated], BL PDP/p2327. By permission of the British Library.

In this scene, the tomb's entrance is shown to be in ruins, while the building's brick shell is exposed in numerous areas since it had clearly been allowed to fall into disrepair. Most importantly, the group of men dressed white standing on the platform of the tomb (likely religious figures) appear unaware of this state. This echoes the indolence and inactivity of the Indian figures in Hodges's Calcutta scene. It also reflects the carefully cultivated image of a

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[63] William Hodges, 'A view of the gate of the tomb of the emperor Akbar at Secundri' [undated], BL PDP/p2327. Archer, *Early views of India*, 13 – 14.

stagnant Indian culture so popular in British-produced histories. In a way, Akbar's tomb itself can be interpreted as an allegory for India itself: once great, but now stagnant.

The other favoured subjects of British artists were colonial rural landscapes, the manor demesnes of Ireland, and the captured fortresses of local Indian rulers. While the cityscapes of Ireland and India tended to show similar, European-like civic and military structures, the rural landscapes of both places tended to be quite different. In Irish scenes, the quality of country and demesne wildlife represented an indication of Irish society as a whole and often showed a deep divide between landlords and the Irish peasantry. The illustration of the manor at Beau-Parc in Milton's collection truly represents two distinct worlds separated by the river running through the centre of the composition.[64] The lawns of Beau-Parc cover the right side of the illustration, where every element is beautifully structured and planned. In contrast, the wildlife on the opposite side of the river appears uncontained and almost impenetrable. Most noteworthy is the inclusion of a peasant family on this wilder left side of the composition, which is almost absorbed by the vegetation in which it appears to be living. For Milton, the river acts as a barrier not only between the genteel and untamed portions of the Irish countryside, but also between the landed elite and the lower classes. Milton also focused on peasants in another piece that illustrates the sanitised version of the Irish poor described by Duffy.[65] Here, the Irish feature prominently in the foreground. However, as in the Beau-Parc illustration, they are physically separated from the remainder of the composition. While the sun has started to pierce the clouds, illuminating the castle as well as the ship lying in the bay, the Irish travel away from the light, into the darkness of the forest. This contrast between light and dark was a deliberate artistic choice, as shown by John Barrell's work on depictions of rural English poverty in the 1700s. Such contrasts, according to Barrell, reflected contemporary beliefs about social order and its link to the rural landscape. 'This division,' he notes,

> has the advantage of marking the differences in status and fortune between rich and poor, while showing that the unity of the landscape and of society it can be seen to represent is dependent on the existence of both. (...) As the landscape could not be structured without the natural contrasts of light and shade, so the society could not survive without social and economic distinctions which are thus also apparently natural.[66]

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[64] 'Beau-Parc, 1 March 1785,' Milton, *A collection of select views*.
[65] 'Shanes Castle, 1 June 1793,' *Ibid*.
[66] Barrell, *The dark side of the landscape*, 22.

In comparison to these depictions of rural landed estates, British artists travelling through India often featured buildings that followed Muslim or Hindu styles of architecture, such as major fortresses or religious temples. Considering the fact that British expansion only began in earnest following the Battle of Plassey in 1757, the majority of the fortresses would have been taken within living memory. However, these images rarely showed the moment of conquest, but rather an appearance of order and stability under the new British administration. These depictions functioned as visual proof to British audiences of their nation's power and expanding influence. They are also representative of the different timelines of British expansion in Ireland and India. While certain Irish landscapes did include military forts or public buildings, these did not represent celebrations of recent military conquests. Instead, they symbolised the established power of the British. Historian David Solkin argues that art only became 'a commodity to be consumed ostensibly for its own sake' in the eighteenth century, which led to a substantial rise in London galleries.[67] Images of significant captured indigenous sites – now successfully administered by the British – were starting to be widely disseminated to the general public. One such fortress was that of Gwalior, one image of which is now held in the King George III's Topographical Collection (Hindustan) at the British Library. In this image, the enormous and imposing fortress boasts a conspicuously visible British flag. The illustration itself seems to suggest a peaceful transition from local to British hands, especially since the fortress does not appear to bear signs of damage. However, the accompanying text reveals a rather more political purpose. The text makes a point of describing Gwalior as 'ancient and celebrated fortress,' thereby rendering its capture all the more impressive. This is spelled out explicitly in an additional passage where the note indicates that '[i]t is probable, that it must in all ages, have been deemed a military post of the utmost consequence, both from its situation in respect to the capital [Agra], and from the peculiarity of its site, which was generally deemed impregnable.'[68] The unvoiced conclusion to this sentiment was that it remained impregnable until the British were able to capture it. The same type of message was conveyed in Robert Home's image of Bangalore. Although that fortress does show minor signs of damage, Home's rendition still makes it clear that Bangalore remained a functioning administrative

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[67] David H. Solkin, *Painting for money: the visual arts and the public sphere in eighteenth-century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 2.
[68] 'A view of the fortress of Gwalior, taken by Major William Popham, August 4th' 1780,' BL Maps K.Top.115.54-a.

centre.[69] Both images suggested a peaceful transition to British authority, in which Britons had successfully adapted to the role of Indian governors.

Eighteenth-century drawings and illustrations of Ireland and India were among the first attempts to produce supposedly accurate visual representations of the colonies for British audiences, which were afterwards rendered widely available to the public through their exhibition in London galleries.[70] Images of these colonies were visible to the public for the first time through such galleries and significantly contributed in shaping general British opinion on Ireland and India. While images of Indian buildings and sites did give a sense of their grandeur, this was a faded opulence that was no longer maintained. Instead, like British-produced histories, the illustrations suggested that Indian society had once achieved a degree of civility but was now stagnant. Meanwhile, the ruins and wild countryside of Ireland hinted at a slightly wild society that had never achieved comparable levels of civility (to Britain or, possibly, even to India).

III.

Given the public nature of the dissemination of colonial illustrations and drawings in the second half of the eighteenth century, it is worth considering a final type of illustration that promoted a standardised vision of British involvement with colonial subjects and territories. As of the 1750s, British artists increasingly began to commemorate significant historical events or battles through paintings. Unlike maps and illustrations, which presented propagandistic visions of empire while sometimes hinting at underlying tensions or anxieties, historically commemorative portraits boldly celebrated British expansion and victories. According to art historian Greg Sullivan, history paintings are significant because they 'tend to depict a telling moment or narrative that prompts us to consider our place in history, as an individual or as a society'.[71] This chapter ends with an analysis of three late-eighteenth century historical productions that illustrate Sullivan's argument: the ceiling paintings in St Patrick's Hall, Dublin Castle, by Vincenzo Waldré; Francis Hayman's 'Robert Clive and Mir Jafar after the Battle of Plassey, 1757'; and John Vendramini's 'The storming of

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[69] Robert Home, 'North view of Bangalore from the Pottah, showing the bastions that were breached' (1792), BL PDP/WD 3775.

[70] This was especially true following the foundation of the Royal Academy in 1769. Brian Allen, 'From Plassey to Seringapatam: India and British history painting c. 1760 – c. 1800,' in Bayly, *The Raj*, 27; Hermione de Almeida and George Gilpin, *Indian renaissance: British romantic art and the prospect of India* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 105.

[71] Greg Sullivan, 'The story of British history painting,' in *Fighting history: 250 years of British history painting*, ed. Greg Sullivan (London: Tate Enterprises, 2015), 15.

Seringapatam'. The Irish portraits trace the history of British contributions to Ireland, offering a narrative of benevolent intervention. Meanwhile, Hayman's and Vendramini's portraits represent defining episodes in the history of British India which marked the defeat of longstanding indigenous enemies.

As a result of longstanding conflicts and tensions between various Irish political, social, and religious groups through the early modern period and the eighteenth century, representations of important events in Anglo-Irish history could be highly contentious. At the same time, they are invaluable because they reveal the ways in which the British wished to remember Irish history. Scholars such as Fintan Cullen and Finola O'Kane stress the dichotomy between the prevailing view that historical paintings were supposed to represent past events and the difficulties in defining an Irish past because of ongoing sectarian struggles. Cullen is particularly emphatic on this point, noting that '[t]his form of painting was thus concerned with concluded history. [But] Ireland was an unresolved problem within the context of late eighteenth-century British politics.'[72] Accordingly, it was not always easy to isolate the past – especially when it was deployed for propagandist purposes.

Commissioned between 1787 and 1802 by George Grenville, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, the ceiling paintings in St Patrick's Hall, Dublin Castle, were scenes made up of three major events in Anglo-Irish history and one allegorical centre piece. Intended as propaganda pieces following the American and French Revolutions, the paintings served as reminders of positive British influences on Ireland and were prominently displayed in Grenville's public apartments.[73] Of the three historical scenes, two showcase key events from Irish history rewritten from a British perspective. In the image depicting the conversion of the pagan chiefs by St Patrick, the latter holds a cross and points towards a fire that is obscuring several ogham stones (symbols of Irish pagan beliefs). The Irish thereby owed the introduction of Christianity to a Briton. The second shows the twelfth-century submission of the Irish lords to Henry II as a peaceful congregation. The Irish lords are simply dressed, in stark contrast to the heavily-armoured Normans. The numerous shields displayed on the wall of the tent further reinforced the Normans' military association, while also suggesting the more technologically-advanced status of the conquerors in comparison to the unarmed Irish

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[72] Cullen, *Visual politics*, 50; Finola O'Kane, *Ireland and the picturesque: design, landscape painting and tourism 1700 – 1840* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 136.

[73] Róisín Kennedy, *Dublin Castle art: the historical and contemporary collection* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 2010, reprint), 22; Private tour of St Patrick's Hall and State Apartments, Dublin Castle, 24 August 2015.

who wear mere cloaks.[74] The message conveyed by this scene was similar to the one found in British-produced histories and would have been readily understandable to viewers. An English, and later British, presence in Ireland could not be attributed to violent conquest, but rather to peaceful alliance and submission.

The primary scene in the set, however, is the allegorical centre piece that most clearly attempted to emphasise the peace and stability of Ireland in a time of great uncertainty. A seated King George III is surrounded by the figures of Peace, Justice, Liberty, and Fame. The two figures flanking him are of particular interest given earlier discussions of the cartouches included on Irish maps: Hibernia and Britannia. Once again, these women are explicitly contrasted in order to convey a distinct message. The image as a whole promotes a sense of mutual cooperation, stability, and peace between Ireland and Britain. Indeed, the figure of Peace is even shown offering the two countries' crowns to the king. Nevertheless, a subtle suggestion of Britain's superiority remains.[75] Britannia is once again presented in the classical mode, displaying confidence and blatantly holding a large flag. Conversely, the green-robed Hibernia appears sensual, languid, and almost impertinent in comparison to Britannia's grave demeanour. While individuals such as Grenville actively sought peace between Ireland and Britain, the allegorical ceiling paintings of St Patrick's Hall demonstrate that Ireland was still considered inferior.

Early paintings of Indian historical events follow the same pattern of depicting events as peaceful transactions. Consider, for instance, Francis Hayman's portrait of the meeting between Robert Clive and Mir Jafar following their victory at Plassey. Part of a series of portraits created for an exhibition in Vauxhall Gardens, the primary theme of Hayman's painting is mercifulness.[76] Hayman's Clive politely and graciously extends his hand towards Mir Jafar, who is shown bowing respectfully, while a British flag symbolising the recent victory flutters in the background. This type of representation underwent a significant transformation by the end of the century, when paintings began to display more militaristic, triumphant, and aggressive tones. Even Hayman's painting contains signs of concealed violence: another flag (presumably that of Siraj ud-Daula) lies trampled on the ground, while a dead Indian soldier is ignored in the right foreground. The most noteworthy element of this

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[74] See Kennedy, *Dublin Castle art*, 20 – 21, 23.
[75] Kennedy, *Dublin Castle art*, 22.
[76] Francis Hayman, 'Robert Clive and Mir Jafar after the Battle of Plassey, 1757' (c. 1760), London, National Portrait Gallery 5263; Solkin, *Painting for money*, 194, and more generally 191 – 194.

portrait was its intended purpose: to be displayed in Vauxhall Gardens. The public nature of this exhibition demonstrates that there was a definite appetite for historical commemorative painting in the eighteenth century. Pamphlets were even created to guide visitors' experiences of the gardens, which also points to the educational nature of visual representations. On Hayman's historical painting, one such pamphlet proclaimed that '[t]he subject of this picture is of the most interesting nature to every Briton, who regards the honour and prosperity of his country.'[77]

John Vendramini's 'The storming of Seringapatam' represents a natural progression in British portraiture and is itself an important piece because it was based on an illustration of the same name by Robert Ker Porter, which has been described as 'the first battle painting of the British taking active possession of an Indian site'.[78] The engraving commemorates a transitional moment in British Indian history – the defeat of Tipu Sultan of Mysore, the EIC's enduring enemy and French ally. In the left foreground, one of Tipu's canons, identifiable because of its lion regalia, has already been overtaken. Nearby, a fallen British soldier is supported by his comrades in a pose reminiscent of Benjamin West's 'The death of General Wolfe'. Tipu's leaderless soldiers are entirely surrounded in the centre foreground, and an imposing Scot fights a richly-dressed Indian on the right. The entire composition gives the impression of having captured a single instant in the British surge and of a sweeping uninterrupted movement towards the walls that have already been breached in the left-hand background. The viewer can see that high on the ramparts, a British flag already flies from the fortress and that the Indian solders there no longer offer any resistance. While the fighting is still ongoing between the Scot and the lone Indian fighter in the field below the fort, the battle has clearly already been won. The tone of Indian historical portraiture shifted dramatically between the productions of Hayman's painting and Vendramini's print. Even so, both of these visual representations encapsulate Marc Salber Phillip's argument that '[h]istories were expected to represent the Ideal summoning humanity to strive for the highest possibilities.'[79] In Hayman's case, the ideal was to stress British benevolence, grandeur, and dignity. Several decades later, following the victory against their long-time enemy Tipu Sultan, triumphant victory had become the highest possibility for the British in India. The defeat and subsequent death of Tipu of Mysore represented a momentous occasion

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[77] Solkin, *Painting for money*, 194, and 213 for the reception of paintings at Vauxhall Gardens.
[78] Almeida and Gilpin, *Indian renaissance*, 161; John Vendramini, 'The storming of Seringapatam' (1802), BL P779.
[79] Marc Salber Phillips. 'What is the history in history painting?,' in Sullivan, *Fighting for history*, 32.

in British Indian history. Described by C.A. Bayly as 'the first of the great "black" bogeymen whose successors were to haunt the British consciousness,' Tipu was considered such a threat that people throughout the empire celebrated his demise.[80]

Figure IV. Portions of John Vendramini, 'The storming of Seringapatam' (1802), BL P779. By permission of the British Library.

Returning to Cohn's modalities, the different ways of commemorating Irish and Indian historical events at the turn of the nineteenth century reflected contemporary – and different – political British needs. Representations of Irish history once again became contentious throughout this period due to sustained sectarian and agrarian agitation. Moreover, the perceived threats presented by the examples of the American and French Revolutions were considered substantial. Politically and ideologically, these events had shown to the British just how much they had to fear from a growing Republican movement in Ireland. It was, accordingly, in Britain's interests to adopt a conciliatory tone with its oldest colony. Instead of glorifying its military successes throughout the early modern period (1641 immediately comes to mind), Britain chose to present itself as Ireland's benefactor. As far as the British were concerned, India, on the other hand, was not yet plagued by fears of constant rebellions or by longstanding economic, political, social, or religious tensions.

These three mediums represent the principal ways in which British administrators and officials attempted to influence colonial policies and public perceptions through visual methods. Outwardly manifestations of growing British power, maps had the power to re-write political and geographical boundaries. Additionally, they presented a version of reality that appeared definite and finite, often erasing the tensions and uncertainties evident in the field.

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[80] C.A. Bayly, *Imperial meridian: the British Empire and the world 1780 – 1830* (London: Longman, 1989), 114. On some of the changes that led to a more nationalist, militarised, empire at the turn of the nineteenth century, see more generally 100 – 115.

Landscape portraits served the same purpose of depicting sanitised versions of Ireland and India to the British public, which were the only images of the colonies that most Britons would ever see. As such, they wielded huge power through their ability to shape British perceptions of the colonies. However, these types of visual representations also occasionally provided glimpses into the anxieties and uncertainties of empire. Map-making processes relied on a close collaboration with indigenous informants; lacking sufficient knowledge about either area, Britons depended on these collaborations. The extensive surveying of Ireland's coasts by Major Vallancey in the later eighteenth century also highlighted enduring British fears of European – particularly French – rivalry. Images also hinted at a sense of disquiet. Through the collections of landscape illustrations produced throughout this period, Ireland emerged as a wild and untamed territory that defied civility. Illustrations of India that actually included Indian forms of architecture also provided unwritten commentaries on the state of Indian civility. Although Indian society had once achieved grandeur, it had long since grown stagnant. Finally, historically commemorative portraits represented blunter expressions of British power that often masked the anxieties found elsewhere in colonial documents. These represented some of the most significant pieces of colonial propaganda and also re-wrote Irish and Indian history to present the versions considered most agreeable to Britons. These three different types of representations were invaluable tools in guiding British perceptions about their colonies. The images were not merely colonial officials' attempts to convince the general public, which allowed them to control public perception. They were also attempts to convince themselves, which then empowered them to justify further expansion. While the messages conveyed by these representations were sometimes different, as seen by the contrast between the ceiling paintings of Dublin Castle and Vendramini's interpretation of the siege of Seringapatam, British officials were carrying out the same attempts to convey coherency and completeness, as well as propaganda, in both places, highlighting a pattern over time and geographical space.

Chapter VI. The Irish experience of empire

As noted throughout the thesis, there is a basic disconnect between the traditional portrayal of Ireland as a victim of empire and the reality of Irish participation in colonial endeavours abroad. Recent historiography has challenged this mantle of victimhood, and scholars such as Barry Crosbie and Angela McCarthy have begun to examine Irish networks and migration throughout the empire in areas such as India and New Zealand. However, many of these works focus on the later nineteenth century.[1] The previous chapters of this thesis drew comparisons between Ireland and India in order to challenge the unique status sometimes accorded to pre-Union Ireland. They emphasise the interconnected nature of empire, the influences across global spaces, and the similar approaches often adopted in different colonial spheres (as well as occasional differences). This final chapter diverges from this line by focusing on the experiences of the individual Irish in empire. It follows from previous work carried out by Craig Bailey and Andrew MacKillop, which has begun to unpack Irish and Scottish elite and middle-class networks on the subcontinent in the eighteenth century.[2] Whereas Ireland has traditionally been described as a victim of empire, this chapter presents specific examples in which this was not the case. Many Irishmen (and later Irishwomen) were willing and active participants both within the larger empire, in this case India, and at home, through the issue of Catholicism.

While earlier chapters primarily addressed various forms of resistance to British rule, whether through scholarly works, physical violence, or subversion, the experiences of many individuals in India highlight Ireland's participation in colonial expansion. These were the Irish who, for different reasons, profited from the benefits of empire. Many of these individuals, particularly members of the Irish Protestant ascendancy, openly embraced the empire, even describing themselves as British rather than Irish. Based on the types of sources that have survived, this chapter is divided into two sections. The first portion is an analysis of EIC wills dating from the 1780s to the early 1810s where it is possible to identify Irish men (and one woman). There is a paucity of work on the ordinary Irish in India for this period, given source limitations. Military records from this period detailing embarkations from

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[1] Barry Crosbie, *Irish imperial networks: migration, social communication and exchange in nineteenth-century India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Angela McCarthy, *Scottishness and Irishness in New Zealand since 1840* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011).

[2] As a result of source availability, the majority of individuals discussed in this chapter are men. For example, see Craig Bailey, *Irish London: middle-class migration in the global eighteenth century* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013); Andrew MacKillop, 'Europeans, Britons, and Scots: Scottish sojourning networks and identities in Asia, c. 1700 – 1815' in *A global clan: Scottish migrant networks and identities since the eighteenth century*, ed. Angela McCarthy (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2006), 19 – 47.

Europe demonstrate that the majority of Irish recruits were labourers, with the occasional tradesmen.[3] Most of the individuals who figured in contemporary EIC wills, however, were clearly not representative of this social class. Instead, they fall into the category of middle-class migrants examined by Bailey. Many of the wills are brief and do not provide a sense of personal convictions. On the other hand, what they do provide is valuable insight into the lives of the Irish middle-class in India: their personal relationships, ties (or lack thereof) to Europe, and local administrative dealings.

The two following sections provide a case study of three Anglo-Irish men from the Protestant elite, for whom collections of private papers have survived. The three men, the private merchant turned EIC director Robert Gregory (1727 – 1810), his son William (1762 – 1840) who was Civil Undersecretary of Ireland, and Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and later Governor of Madras Sir George Macartney (1737 – 1806), were specifically chosen based on their connection with India and their decision to embrace a distinctly British sense of self. This portion of the chapter analyses what this British sense of self meant to each man and the ways in which it shaped their different careers. In a discussion of another Irishman in Vienna during this period, and of that individual's assertion of Britishness, Bailey cautions historians against accepting such statements at face value. They should not always, he contends, be read as deliberate attempts to reject an Irish identity in favour of a British one. Instead, an Irish identity became an important tool of integration and connection for middle-class migrants throughout the empire. Bailey's case study in the Indian context is the London-born attorney William Hickey, who grew up in Britain before travelling to different parts of the empire. While Hickey was of Irish origin (but not Irish-born), Bailey demonstrates that particularly in India, Hickey was part of a larger Irish network.[4] The fact that Hickey was able to connect with this group is suggestive of cultural affinities and once again demonstrates that the question of 'Irish' and 'British' identities was complicated during this period. The rejection of a dichotomous view between both forms of association further serves to illustrate the idiosyncrasies of empire and is used throughout this chapter to demonstrate how Irish individuals frequently embraced distinctly local traits as well as the broader values of empire. As individual case studies, the careers of Robert Gregory and George Macartney highlight many of the themes discussed in earlier chapters.

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[3] For example, 'List of military for ship contractor, for Fort St George, 1783,' *Military records, embarkation lists, Jan. 1775 – Dec. 1784*, BL IOR L/MIL/9/90.
[4] Bailey, *Irish London*, 1 – 3, and Chapter IV, 122 – 156 for William Hickey.

Both men were amateur historians, as well as Irish landlords. They were also heavily involved in the political, economic, and administrative spheres of EIC interests in India. Conversely, on the domestic side, William Gregory's career reflected the continued anti-Catholic sentiment present at the highest levels of the Irish administration throughout the period of the Catholic emancipation movement in the early nineteenth century.

I.

Although the rank and file Irish soldiers and sailors of the EIC remain an understudied subject, EIC wills and testaments represent one source of information on the lives of Irishmen in India. While many of the individuals in the wills who can positively be identified as Irish were relatively wealthy, they do nonetheless provide sources of information with respect to men (far fewer women wrote wills during this period) who were not part of the elite circles frequented by Gregory or Macartney. Specific patterns emerge from the wills dating between the 1780s and the early 1810s, demonstrating how most Irishmen with at least moderate means lived in India. While certain individuals mentioned their town or county of origin, most did not, and it is only through casual references to family relations that it is possible to infer their ties to Europe. Moreover, it also becomes abundantly clear that in comparison to individuals such as George Macartney, who never viewed India as more than a stepping stone in his career, many Irishmen from the period entrenched themselves into Anglo-Indian society with the intention of at least semi-permanent settlement. Despite numerous wills making references to family members still living in Europe, it quickly becomes apparent that many were written years prior to the individual's death. This would have meant that these individuals settled, at least to some extent, in India.

One of the dominant elements to emerge from the wills throughout the period is the sustained references to long-term female Indian companions. This corroborates Durba Ghosh's argument that the decline of Anglo-Indian relationships took place over several decades between the end of the eighteenth and the middle of the nineteenth century.[5] 'Natural' (meaning illegitimate) children were among the primary beneficiaries of all Irishmen's wills from this period. The inclusion of so many natural children in the wills points to another significant contradiction in the evidence regarding Irish forms of identity during this period. One the one hand, these men established themselves in India, had

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[5] Durba Ghosh, *Sex and the family in colonial India: the making of empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1 – 2, 8 – 9.

longstanding relationships with Indian women, and left considerable fortunes to their children. Major Arthur Forbes Auchmuty, for instance, bequeathed 300 pounds to his siblings in Ireland, the remainder of his fortune reserved for his three sons. The very wealthy Lieutenant-Colonel Jacob Camac left one of his most sizable bequests to his natural daughter Eliza Mariam Camac, whereas Lieutenant Pierce Cassady left his entire fortune apart from minor stipulations to this natural daughter Mary, who was to be educated at a Calcutta boarding school until her marriage (a codicil was added in 1799 according to which the estate would be divided between Mary and an as-yet unbaptised female child whose mother claimed Pierce's paternity).[6] On the other hand, several men also expressed the desire that these children be sent back to Europe, to be raised as white Europeans. Robert Gumly's two oldest natural children had already been sent back to Ireland when he wrote his will, even though a third unnamed child appears to have still lived in India. Samuel Mageough left instructions that his son William should remain with his mother only until he was of age to be sent to England for his education.[7] These men still drew a distinction between European society and the world in which they had chosen to live; whereas certain individuals were content to have their natural children educated in India (primarily Calcutta), many also sought to somehow dissimulate their children's origins.

Even when no children were involved, many of the Irishmen left bequests to their Indian companions, though these were usually much smaller than the children's inheritances. The most interesting element of these entries is the names given for these women. Ghosh has written extensively on the significance of names – or lack thereof – in the Indian context, as well as the ways in which these names reflected larger anxieties about interracial families. As Ghosh notes, many of the wills do not provide the full names of these Indian women, and sometimes no names whatsoever, in attempts to 'erase' the women from the colonial record.[8] As a result, they were described only in relation to their male partners or the children that they bore. John Barcley left his entire fortune to his sister, excepting 500 rupees to be paid to 'my girl Annarcally'. The expression, 'my girl,' it may be noted, was commonly used throughout the wills. Even more vaguely, Lieutenant James Collins mentioned two natural daughters 'by a native woman of Hindostan' and Lieutenant Patrick Macdougall left three

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[6] Arthur Forbes Auchmuty, 8 December 1780, *BW 1780 – 1783*, BL IOR L/AG/34/29/4, index 1780, fol. 18; Jacob Camac, 22 February 1781, *BW 1784 – 1786*, BL IOR/AG/34/29/5, index 1785, no. 86; Pierce Cassady, 16 April 1797, *BW 1798 – 1799*, BL IOR L/AG/34/29/11, index 1799, fol. 54.

[7] Robert Gumly, 20 October 1783, IOR L/AG/34/29/5, index 1784, no. 64; Samuel Mageough, 8 September 1791, *BW 1791 – 1792*, BL IOR L/AG/34/29/7, index 1792, no. 42.

[8] Ghosh, *Sex and the family*, 14, 17 – 19.

children by an unidentified Indian woman.[9] While at first glance the frequent mention of Indian companions in the wills might suggest that relationships with these women were openly acknowledged, these were, according to Ghosh, often the *only* places where Europeans admitted to such relationships. Moreover, the fact that these women's full names were rarely provided (indeed many men such as Pierce Cassady renamed their companions with European names) is highly significant. 'In early British India,' Ghosh argues, 'the absence of native women's names in colonial archives correlated with the state's interests to suppress the visibility of subjects who threatened the whiteness of colonial society.'[10]

In addition to the frequent mention of Indian female companions and natural children, the numerous references to siblings or extended family members in the wills reveal that the Irish were geographically mobile during this period. James O'Hara's siblings were all listed as residing in a town near Navan, Co. Meath, but his daughter Dorothea lived in St Martin's Parish, London. The even more globally-connected Patrick William Burke had family in America, London, and Ireland, including property in Co. Galway. Additionally, his cousin had a daughter living in Calcutta during the 1790s. There is also evidence of more wide scale family participation in imperial endeavours. Burke's cousin Hugh Kelly was also employed by the EIC and had manifestly brought at least part of his family to India. Major Daniel Butler left instructions in his will regarding a bequest to his brother Norton, who was expected to arrive shortly in India. Meanwhile, the EIC lieutenant Patrick Macdougall wrote of a brother who was a captain in the Royal Navy, while Clement Gore had a brother, also a lieutenant of infantry, who died at sea c. 1797 or 1798. The most prolific of the Irish families found in the wills was that of John Williams, a captain in the EIC army. His daughter Mary was the wife of a Lieutenant George Nugent, while his son Edward Ellerker Williams was, as of 1808, a midshipman in the Royal Navy. Williams had clearly been married more than once, for he also mentioned that Edward had a half-sister named Elizabeth, who was the widow of another captain. Finally, his natural son John Williams was listed as a lieutenant in the 8th regiment of dragoons.[11] Based on the information provided in their wills, these men

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[9] John Barclay, 7 November 1791, BL IOR L/AG/34/29/7, index 1792, no. 1; James Collins, 16 July 1794, *BW 1803*, BL IOR/L/AG/34/29/15, no. 25; Patrick Macdougall, 16 July 1791, BL IOR L/AG/34/29/11, index 1798, no. 39.

[10] Ghosh, *Sex and the family*, 18, on the dissimulation of interracial relationships see 3; Cassady, BL IOR L/AG/34/29/11, index 1799, fol. 54.

[11] James O'Hara, 12 March 1783, BL IOR L/AG/34/29/4, index 1783, fol. 57; Patrick William Burke, 8 April 1794, *BW 1796 – 1797*, IOR L/AG/34/29/10, index 1796, no. 46.; Daniel Butler, 23 June 1784, IOR L/AG/34/29/5, index 1784, no. 37; Patrick Macdougall, 16 July 1791, IOR L/AG/34/29/11, index 1798, no. 39; 'Clement Gore,' in Major V.C.P. Hodson, *List of the officers of the Bengal army 1758 – 1834* (4 vols., London:

were all relatively wealthy, which suggests that class factors (at least partially) motivated their families' geographical mobility. Nevertheless, while the migration practices of poorer Irish families involved with the EIC remains a subject for further study, the wills do point to an increasing mobility among the middle-class Irish along the lines argued by Bailey.

As a final matter, in many cases these wills indicated a growing sense of settlement in India. The earliest wills almost invariably left the entirety of an individual's estate to family in Europe, with minor bequests possibly left to Indian companions. For instance, the collector of ordnance William Magee's wife and daughter Mary and Eliza were listed in his will as residents of Enniskillen.[12] However, beginning in the 1790s, it became noticeably more prevalent for individuals to leave portions of their estates to family or friends also residing in India. Hugh Oniel, whose surname suggests an Irish background, left one third of his estate, as well as a bequest of 5,000 rupees, to his daughter Mary by a previous wife, who was being schooled in Calcutta. As mentioned previously, Jacob Camac left a large sum for his natural daughter Eliza. However, the inheritance that he set for Eliza's mother reveals the extent to which certain Europeans became involved in local affairs. In one of the few instances where an Indian companion was given a full name in an EIC will, Camac left substantial properties to Mariam nissa Kow. The first bequests in Camac's will showed that he owned several estates in Ireland. However, the amount of the legacy to Mariam also suggests that Camac was a zamindar. Among other things, Camac left her the towns of Kummurjee, Pulluckiah, Koo[i?]lee, and Allaxbux[sc?]poor, 'with all the lands, tenements and heridetaments [sic] thereunto (…) amounting to about nine hundred rupees yearly income.' In addition, Mariam was also awarded the town of R[K]adely and the neighbouring four or five villages, which were being leased, and which had been given to Camac by the Raja of Ramgur (most likely Ramgarh). While Henry Martin D'Esterre left most of his estate to a brother in the EIC marine unit, he included several provisions for friends residing in India. D'Esterre's most notable stipulation was the deeding of a silver-handled sword and dagger to his friend Lieutenant William Neville Parker, since the sword had belonged to William's father, Colonel Parker. Similarly, Lieutenant Thomas Anderson left his books to an EIC assistant

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Constable & Co., 1928) II, 293, 294; John Williams, 11 September 1808, *BW 1810*, BL IOR L/AG/34/29/22, fols. 157 – 161.
[12] William Magee, [undated 1795], IOR L/AG/34/29/10, index 1797, no. 7.

surgeon named Thomas Casement. Clearly material belongings had a sentimental value for many of these men and travelled throughout the army ranks.[13]

Finally, there are few wills in the EIC collection written by women and only one in which it is plausible to suggest that the author was Irish. Catherina O'Brien appears to have been a woman of some means and, intriguingly, did not identify herself as a widow unlike most of the other women who left wills. In comparison to the manner in which Indian female companions and most widows presented themselves in the wills, Catherina O'Brien did not choose to define herself in relation to a man. She was wealthy enough to keep servants and at least one slave. Most of her bequests were to other women, none of whom were identified as her children (which is a relatively standard feature in most wills). She made no explicit mention of family, either in India or in Europe, but provided two clues about her origins. First, half of the profits from the sale of her estate following the settling of servants' wages and sums left to Misses Elizabeth Deatker and Francisca Pererau was to be 'paid in to the Roman Catholick [sic] Church for the service of my soul'. And second, she also decreed that one quarter of the profits would go to the Poor House and Lying in Hospital of Dublin.[14]

The wills found in the EIC collection provide only fragments of information on the lives of the individuals who travelled to India in the late eighteenth century. They are not detailed enough to provide insights into these Irishmen's opinions of empire. However, they do reveal ties to people in England and the participation of family members in various British military units. Whether through necessity, advantages, or genuine conviction, many lower and upper middle-class Irishmen took part in the expansion of British interests in India. More detailed insights into attitudes towards empire from those involved in India are only possible through the private papers of the Irish elites.

II.

Direct comparisons between Ireland and India were rare in the late eighteenth century, though Sir George Macartney once made a telling one in a letter to Edmund Burke discussing the nominations for an EIC administrative position. Highlighting his own contradictory views of his country of origin, Macartney wrote that 'I am very much mistaken if they don't find it

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[13] Hugh Oniel, 12 May 1808, BL IOR L/AG/34/29/22, fols. 169 – 174; Camac, BL IOR/AG/34/29/5, index 1785, no. 86; Henry Martin D'Esterre, 30 November 1800, *BW 1801*, BL IOR L/AG/34/29/13, no. 8; Thomas Anderson, 30 July 1788, BL IOR L/AG/34/29/7, index 1791, no. 3.
[14] Catherina O'Brien, 27 January 1788, IOR L/AG/34/29/10, index 1797, no. 45.

as difficult to get any one [sic] to accept of Bengal as they did to accept of Ireland. I am sure no man who knows India or Ireland as well as I do, would be tempted with the offer of either.'[15] Macartney, along with his earlier compatriot Robert Gregory, showcases the ways in which India could offer an opportunity for advancement, both financially and politically. Gregory's son William, on the other hand, represents the Anglo-Irish faction that remained in Ireland, but resolutely sought to attach itself to the larger empire by crusading against domestic 'evils' such as the Catholic emancipation movement.

Born into a well-established Anglo-Irish family from Co. Galway, Robert Gregory spent twenty years as a private merchant in India before returning to Europe as one of the infamous nabobs.[16] Robert's vast knowledge of India and its trading industry was made clear in an interview given to an open committee in the House of Commons shortly after his return from the subcontinent in 1767, and also revealed the broad understanding of Company affairs that served him during his time as an EIC director. The committee's line of questioning is noteworthy due to their evident interest in the possibilities of maximising trade profits and expanding the South Asian trade theatre, while also drawing attention to the government's increasing concerns regarding the management of India following the acquisition of the *diwan* of Bengal. Robert further revealed his talent, as a private merchant, for evading the control or wrath of the Company. When he was asked if 'private traders [had ever] met with any interruption from the Company?' he cautiously responded that there was talk of cases in which private traders were expelled from the country following local government complaints. But his answer to the follow up question of whether he knew of this having been done to rid the EIC of competitors revealed him as a savvy businessman keen to avoid any conflict. 'I have heard such complaints,' he stated, 'but whether any foundation I don't know – I have traded very considerably to all parts and never had any obstruction either directly or indirectly.'[17] Even once he was made a director, Gregory continued to be involved in trade at least until 1779.[18]

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[15] George Macartney to Mr. Burke, Tanjore, 8 March 1784, George Macartney, *The private correspondence of Lord Macartney, governor of Madras (1781 – 85)*, ed. Collin Davies (London: Royal Historical Society, 1950), 226.

[16] Brian Jenkins, *Sir William Gregory of Coole: the biography of an Anglo-Irishman* (Colin Smythe: Gerrards Cross, 1986), 4.

[17] 'Interview with Robert Gregory, 1 April 1767,' *Vol. VII. Evidence taken before the committee [of the House of Commons] on the state of the East India Company, 27 March to 13 April 1767*, BL Add. MS 18469, fols. 35a, 39a.

[18] Captain George Forbes to R. Gregory, *Mercury* at the Cape of Good Hope, 24 April 1779, EU MSS 624, Gregory family papers, Series I, Box 1, Folder I.

In addition to trading, Robert Gregory became heavily involved in the politics of India. In private correspondence, many contemporaries described the close relationship between Gregory and the Bengali official Nandakumar, who was infamously hanged by Governor Warren Hastings in 1775 on charges of forgery.[19] Another EIC director, Laurence Sulivan, wrote to Hastings that Gregory acted as Nandakumar's 'attorney' while in England. Sulivan also vigorously denied allegations that he was responsible for the dismissal of Mohammad Reza Khan as head of the indigenous administration, laying the blame on another. He did not name this guilty party, but the scholar Abdul Majid Khan believes that this was Robert Gregory, who orchestrated Khan's removal in favour of Nandakumar.[20] Gregory's relationship with Nandakumar was also noted by Richard Barwell, who commented that Gregory was deeply involved in Bengali factional politics. Barwell claimed that Nandakumar once attempted to frame another official for his own forgeries, but was unable to fool Robert, Lord Clive. Most tellingly, Barwell described Clive's knowledge of previous forgeries and his subsequent low opinion of Nandakumar, 'notwithstanding all the efforts of Mr. Gregory in his behalf'.[21] Considering the eminence of Clive's reputation at this point, as well as Gregory's personal reputation for incorruptibility, Robert's steadfast support for a man widely suspected of corruption is significant and suggests an attempt at political gain through Nandakumar's influence.

Robert Gregory's reputation for moral probity was widely acknowledged by friends and British officials alike, which proved highly beneficial during his tenure as an EIC director. Glowingly describing Robert's expertise in Company affairs, the Marquess of Rockingham praised his excellence of character and social standing in a 1773 letter to Edmund Burke. The Marquess notably expressed the hope that Robert would prove a beneficial influence over James Adair, the Duke of Richmond, with whom he had recently been appointed to a special committee following the Regulating Act of 1773.[22] Conversely, an entirely different and more antagonistic view of Robert Gregory emerges from the

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[19] On Nandakumar, see P.J. Marshall, 'Nandakumar [Nuncomar], maharaja, 1705? – 1775,' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/69061).
[20] Abdul Majid Khan, *The transition in Bengal, 1756 – 1775: a study of Saiyid Muhammad Reza Khan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 290, 300 – 301. On the spelling of Sulivan's name, see P.J. Marshall, 'Sulivan, Laurence (c. 1713 – 1786),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/38032).
[21] Richard Barwell to Alexander K., 9 March 1774, no. 454, in 'The letters of Mr. Richard Barwell,' *Bengal Past & Present* 13 (1916): 107.
[22] Marquess of Rockingham to Edmund Burke, post 13 December 1773, in Lucy S. Sutherland (ed.), *The correspondence of Edmund Burke, July 1768 – June 1774* (2 vols., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), II, 497.

correspondence of Warren Hastings. Describing the level of support Hastings could expect in 1782, a friend cautioned him that 'your shifting friend (the backward way) Mr. Gregory upon the whole against you altho [sic] pretends a great deal of candour'.[23] Gregory, therefore, was highly skilled at navigating EIC politics and cautiously distanced himself from a former acquaintance whose reputation had soured.

Closely connected to the influential Fox and Burke families, and married to the daughter of the politically-influential Lord Bute, Robert Gregory's contemporary Sir George Macartney (b. 1737) mobilised his connections to obtain an appointment as negotiator to the Russian court in 1764, followed by a parliamentary seat in the Irish House of Commons four years later. He eventually bore the distinction of being appointed the first British ambassador to China in 1792 and ended his career as the governor of the Cape of Good Hope.[24] Within the context of Anglo-Irish experiences of empire, however, he is primarily of interest given his Irish and Indian appointments.

To begin with, these appointments are noteworthy because they illustrate how imperial networks facilitated geographical mobility through various colonial spheres. With regards to Macartney's specific circumstances, the context of each appointment is also significant. When Macartney was appointed Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1769, he inherited a position that had suddenly become a politically-charged post due to the recent power struggle between Lord Townshend and the Irish parliament. While the Seven Years' War had provoked calls for increased control by colonial governors, the Irish parliament bitterly resented any challenge to its authority. As a result, Macartney unexpectedly – and not altogether happily – found himself holding a position that required active participation in government debates and motions.[25] His later appointment to the governorship of Madras also came at a time of uncertainty and restructuring within both the EIC and the British administration. As with Robert Gregory's election to a Company directorship, the appointment was significant given Macartney's previous lack of connection with the Company. This took place against the backdrop of the Company charter's scheduled

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[23] J. Woodman to Warren Hastings, 24 June 1782, *General Correspondence of Warren Hastings, April – June 1782, Vol. XXIII*, BL Add. MS 29154, Warren Hastings Papers, fol. 479.

[24] Thomas Bartlett, *Macartney in Ireland 1768 – 72: a calendar of the chief secretaryship papers of Sir George Macartney* (Belfast: Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, 1978), vii – xi; Lucy S. Sutherland, 'Lord Macartney's appointment as governor of Madras, 1780: the treasury in East India Company elections,' *The English Historical Review* 90:356 (1975): 524.

[25] Bartlett, *Macartney in Ireland*, xv, xiv – xix. On Townshend's struggles as Lord Lieutenant, consider George, 4th Viscount and later Marquess Townshend to Macartney, 9 February 1769, *Ibid.*, 4, 6.

renewal in 1780. Furthermore, the British government was already involved in several other colonial conflicts and was increasingly attempting to gain a measure of control over the EIC amid allegations of corruption. Although Macartney's term as governor was not particularly successful according to Lucy Sutherland, his well-known (and frequently proclaimed) personal integrity in the larger context of EIC corruption scandals did '[mark his term as] a definite step forward in the provision of disinterested administration in British India'.[26]

Just as Robert Gregory's supposed moral probity became a hallmark of his time as a private merchant, Macartney attempted to build a similar reputation for himself in Madras. In Macartney's case, this was strongly influenced by previous charges of nepotism while in Irish office. Unfortunately for Macartney, these attempts were unsuccessful in contradicting rumours of dishonest or unbecoming conduct and he remained a popular subject in the Dublin press. One entry from November 1769 upbraiding his behaviour following a scandal that involved his sister is particularly illuminating. Providing a surprisingly diverse list of character faults mostly unrelated to the scandal, *The public register* (later known as the *Freeman's journal*) accused Macartney of being a catamite, a hypocrite who cast off his sister after developing delusions of grandeur through his wife's connections, and of embracing atheism.[27] Macartney's Irish origins were also used against him, both in the press and among politicians, which draws attention to the deep-seated prejudices that endured among British circles – even when referring to a member of the Anglo-Irish ascendancy. Lord Townshend notably mentioned this to Macartney in May 1769 while complaining about the inconsistencies of his political opponents. 'It would be ridiculous to recite to you what stories they propagate here, against you in particular,' Townshend remarked, 'these men who complain of an English chancellor and an English lieutenant, begin to object to an Irish secretary.'[28]

Such repeated censure clearly made a strong impression on Macartney; protestations of his moral strength liberally abound throughout his Indian correspondence. This comes across most clearly in letters written between 1781 and 1782 to his friend John Macpherson, where he constantly referred to his refusals to accept bribes and the corrupt practices of most EIC officials, who he accused of lying in manufactured reports to the directors in England. 'I

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[26] Sutherland, 'Lord Macartney's appointment,' 529.
[27] 'To the right hon. Sir G-ge M-t-y,' *The public register; or, the Freeman's journal* 7:200 (2 – 4 November 1769).
[28] Townshend to Macartney, 14 May 1769, Bartlett, *Macartney in Ireland*, 14. On references to Macartney's Irish origins in the press, see *The public register; or, Freeman's journal* 6:100, 12 – 15 August 1769.

must certainly be next to an idiot,' he wrote in April 1782 about the accepted methods of negotiation with Indian rulers, 'if I were ignorant of what is called the way of managing them [what he later refers to as the 'rabble' of the durbar].'[29] That being said, Macartney also emerges from his letters as a staunch imperialist who deeply mistrusted most Indian officials. While discussing the nawab Muhammad Ali Khan Walahjah of Arcot with Macpherson, Macartney dismissed the notion that the nawab's amir could be trusted to honestly implement the conditions imposed by the Company. 'It is too late,' he cynically observed, 'to think of allowing these people to play the same tricks over again.' Macartney followed this by turning to Muhammad Ali himself, for whom he claimed great fondness. Stating that the nawab's revenue was currently being diverted to fund EIC projects, which was as it should be, he concluded that 'the support of any of his [the nawab] rights which are in the smallest degree incompatible with the Company's interest must end in his destruction'.[30] Macartney's inflexibility in this matter of the treatment of an Indian nawab is striking when contrasted with his known sympathies towards Irish Catholics, as well as his vocal support for Catholic emancipation. His statements about the nawab and his amir also reveal racial undertones which allowed him to draw distinctions between the various inhabitants of the empire. Macartney openly acknowledged that Irish Catholics continued to suffer persecution throughout his own time. They were thus considered deserving of emancipation and of equal rights with their Protestant neighbours. Macartney also openly acknowledged that the nawab of Arcot had specific rights. Nevertheless, these rights both could, and should, be disregarded when they proved contrary to Company interests.

Robert Gregory's third son William, who was born in India shortly before his family's return to Europe in 1766, represents a useful foil to both his father and Macartney by illustrating the generational shift away from religious tolerance for Catholics at the end of the eighteenth century. Through his early work as surveyor of the Skerries in 1799, tasked with collecting loyalist depositions from the 1798 Rebellion, William developed a militant anti-Catholic stance that strongly influenced his later work in government. Appointed undersecretary to the Lord Lieutenant under Robert Peel in 1819, he eventually became a powerful figure in the Irish administration and was known to operate with extraordinary

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[29] Macartney to Sir John Macpherson, 21 December 1781, Macartney, *The private correspondence of Lord Macartney*, 8.
[30] *Ibid.*, 50 – 51.

autonomy.[31] Whereas Macartney's correspondence was riddled with often verbatim protestations of moral righteousness, William Gregory's papers instead betray an obsessive fear of Irish (meaning Catholic) subversion and the consequent need to maintain Irish Catholics in a state of complete subjection. Exhibiting the standard prejudices against the peasantry (again, primarily Catholics) in a letter to the officers of the Irish militia in 1807 which have been discussed at length in previous chapters, William enthusiastically endorsed the implementation of educational programmes for militiamen's sons throughout the country. Through this scheme, he argued, 'many members of society would be rescued from ignorance & taught principles, religion & morality, who otherwise from loose & idle habits could become useless to themselves, or perhaps dangerous to the state'.[32] This fear of potential threats to the Irish state recurs throughout William's correspondence, mirroring the paranoid fears of Irish Protestants following the 1641 Rising and the rise of the Jacobite threat.

Throughout his tenure in office, William Gregory vigorously campaigned against Catholic emancipation, as seen through the descriptions he provided to Robert Peel of his endless attempts to monitor the activities of prominent Irish Catholics. In one letter from 1813, William revealed that he had undertaken investigations to uncover the number of Catholic landowners, as well as produced a risk assessment of their potentially gaining admittance to parliament or high office. Reporting on a previous conversation with the governor of the Bank of Ireland, William displayed an enduring prejudice against Catholics in an era usually regarded as one of growing stability and toleration. While the information could not be used in parliament, William confided to Peel that less than 10 per cent of Irish bank stock was owned by Catholics. This, he maintained, would hopefully ensure that 'they are not entitled to be [bank] directors'. There were no actual regulations barring Catholics from holding such positions, William acknowledged, but the likelihood of it occurring was doubtful. He concluded the letter by pointing out that too few Catholics held sufficient property to qualify for such posts and that any nominee would be obliged to swear the oath of allegiance – which he was confident would not be undertaken by most Catholics.[33] In other words, there was little danger of Catholics gaining sufficient influence to assume positions of authority in Ireland.

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[31] 'Register of marriages and christenings for the year 1766,' BL IOR N/1/2, fol.135; Jenkins, *Sir William Gregory of Coole*, 6 – 7, 9, 11 – 13.
[32] William Gregory to the officers of the Irish militia, 18 January 1807, EU MSS 624, Series II, Box 9, Folder I.
[33] W. Gregory to Robert Peel, 21 May 1813, EU MSS 624, Series II, Box 9, Folder II.

Another set of letters reveals the elaborate network of spies and informants that William Gregory set up to monitor Catholic meetings throughout the country. In a particularly alarmist passage to Peel, William displayed a fatalistic belief in a perpetual and imminent threat against the Protestant administration while reporting on the latest information obtained from one of his informants. This man supposedly 'thinks that the hatred to the government is as strong as ever, & the inclination to overthrow it equally steady (...). But that it will be almost impossible to curb the violence of the common people who have been worked upon by such accounts of their strength & numerical force, that they believe themselves capable of accomplishing their ends by their own means.'[34] What stands out the most about this passage is the poor estimation in which William clearly held the Irish peasantry. His use of the expression 'accounts of their strength' is highly reminiscent of Protestant accounts from 1641 according to which foolish peasants were blindly led into error by their superiors. It also clearly displays the extent to which he mistrusted the Irish lower classes and continued to perceive them as a threat to stability.

William Gregory's enthusiastic activities against Irish Catholicism, as well as the great leniency shown him by Peel, quickly brought him to the attention of Catholic reformers. Figuring prominently in the correspondence of the nationalist Daniel O'Connell, William was described as holding great power and as one of the greatest threats to emancipation. Although the necessity for Peel's removal from office featured as a central issue in O'Connell's letter to Sir Henry Parnell in 1815, William also came under censure. In order to ensure better relations between Irish Catholics and the administration, 'Gregory *must* go,' O'Connell urged. 'He is in the constant habit of using foul language of the Catholics and upon a system of conciliation he could not remain here with propriety.'[35] Ten years later, O'Connell bitterly noted that few things had changed in Ireland. '[T]his country has been governed for the last twenty years,' he wrote, 'by the triumvirate of Lord Manners, Laurin and Gregory, and they still continue to govern.'[36]

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[34] W. Gregory to Peel, 19 March 1817, EU MSS 624, Series II, Box 9, Folder III.
[35] Daniel O'Connell to Sir Henry Parnell, 13 June 1815, in Daniel O'Connell, *The correspondence of Daniel O'Connell, 1815 – 1823*, ed. Maurice O'Connell (7 vols., Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1972), II, 49.
[36] O'Connell to the Knight of Kerry, 28 May 1827, in O'Connell, *The correspondence of Daniel O'Connell, 1824 – 1828*, III, 316. For other references to Gregory, see O'Connell to Richard Newton Bennett, 26 September 1827, in O'Connell, *The correspondence of Daniel O'Connell, 1824 – 1828*, III, 344; O'Connell to Pierce Mahony, 28 [and 29] March 1829, in O'Connell, *The correspondence of Daniel O'Connell, 1829 – 1832*, IV, 35.

III.

These three figures help to illustrate the ambiguous position of many Irishmen in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century empires. Corroborating Craig Bailey's contention that Irish networks were maintained throughout the empire and that some form of Irish 'identity' could be useful, Robert Gregory and George Macartney's correspondence demonstrates how Irishmen travelling to India made use of connections in order to secure introductions or positions. Francis Perry, for instance, eagerly sought Gregory's advice in 1775 on the possibility of enrolling his nephew into the Company, since Perry's brother had been a Company employee. Several decades later, Gregory himself expressed the wish that his grandson would soon be enrolled in the EIC college.[37] Macartney, on the other hand, maintained connections in India long before his appointment to Madras and had actively sought to further the EIC careers of various acquaintances. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland's political agent wrote to Macartney as early as 1770 to inform him that he had successfully secured a cadet's post for a Mr. Daniel McNeill. Macartney also supported an EIC lieutenancy application from Joseph Macartney (possibly a nephew or relation), who wrote to him in the same year to express his gratitude.[38] This network extended to India itself, where Macartney continued to promote his Irish friends. In January 1782, he sought permission to introduce a young EIC official to John Macpherson, recalling his own introduction to William Hawkins through a mutual acquaintance. 'We shall be able I hope,' he confided, 'to do well for him in a little time.' A similar request was made to John Day in August, following the arrival of an Irish lawyer. Macartney phrased his request in the context of a previously successful introduction, which demonstrates the extent of Irish colonial connections at the time.[39]

The previous chapter on land settlement policies showed how contemporary opinion was fiercely critical of absentee landlords, who were thought to facilitate a system of peasant abuse and oppression. Despite residing in India for several years and subsequently having their primary residences in England, Robert Gregory and George Macartney both remained Irish landlords. What is more, they remained actively involved in the management of their

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[37] Francis Perry to R. Gregory, 16 February 1775, EU MSS 624, Series I, Box I, Folder I; R. Gregory to W. Gregory, 15 August 1810, EU MSS 624, Series I, Box I, Folder IV.
[38] Thomas Allen to Macartney, 19 January 1770, Bartlett, *Macartney in Ireland 1768 – 72*, 79; Joseph Macartney to Macartney, 28 February 1770, *Ibid.*, 269.
[39] Macartney to Macpherson, 11 January 1782, Macartney, *The private correspondence of Lord Macartney*, 21; Macartney to John Day, A.G. in Bengal, 6 August 1782, *Ibid.*, 198.

respective estates, which gives credence to recent scholarship contesting the widespread reports of abuse on the lands of absentee landlords. Along with seeking advice regarding EIC enlistment, Francis Perry commented on Gregory's frequent absences in recent years because of his greater involvement with the managing of his property in Co. Galway. A memo written in William Gregory's hand substantiates this interest, listing Robert's numerous personal papers relating to land purchases, tenant leases, mortgages owed, and fines levied in his name.[40] Macartney also adopted a pro-active role throughout the same period, receiving updates on tenant business from his estate agent Robert Waller. While this correspondence refutes historical accusations of disinterested landlords, one particular letter from 1770 remains difficult to interpret. 'There appeared to me,' Waller noted, 'a design in the tenants to obtain the ground at an undervalue and I believe others had the like expectation.'[41] This certainly shows that Macartney, at least, chose not to leave the running of his estates entirely up to middlemen. Nevertheless, Waller's observation clearly alludes to the common stereotype of the dishonest Irish tenant seeking to take advantage of their landlords. Without further information, it remains difficult to properly interpret this remark. Were the tenants truly attempting to knowingly undervalue land to purchase it at a reduced priced? Or is this indeed one of the cases in which landlords, or possibly merely middlemen, inflated the price of land for profit?

Both men also showed themselves to be amateur historians, illustrating the extent to which the early modern public took an interest in historical narratives. It is particularly significant that both chose to focus part of their interests on Irish or Indian history. Towards the end of his tenure in Irish office, Macartney produced a lengthy treatise on the history of Irish land revenue policies, which included sections on general Irish history and Macartney's personal observations on debates surrounding early modern Irish historiography. In keeping with the pro-British histories of Chapter I, Macartney dismissed pre-Norman Irish history as little more than antiquarian fancy for which contemporary politicians would have little use. His discussion of the Norman Conquest also betrays his romanticised view of imperial possibilities and was upheld as an exemplar for productive nations in his own time. The account also contains several inconsistencies, which possibly reflected his personal experience in office. In one instance, he likened the Norman lords' activities to 'the romantic

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[40] Perry to Gregory, 16 February 1775, EU MSS 624, Series I, Box I, Folder I; 'A list of [illegible] sent to my father,' [undated], EU MSS 624, Series I, Box I, Folder VIII.
[41] Robert Waller to Macartney, 6 May 1770, Bartlett, *Macartney in Ireland 1768 – 72*, 151.

conquest of Naples by Tancred and his Norman friends in the century before; such signal success shews [sic] what valor and elevation of mind can accomplish and that nothing is too difficult for the daring of heroic virtue'. Macartney backtracked almost immediately, however, in his description of the seventeenth-century earl of Strafford's maligned reputation, claiming that scholars should not accept individuals' portrayals of historical events without question.[42] Since this statement contradicts his earlier mythologized version of the Norman Conquest, one suspects that his own experience with the Irish press might have influenced his sudden change in attitude.

One of Marcartney's primary reasons for dismissing the historiographical debates over the true nature of ancient Ireland was his contention that Ireland, regardless of its past situation, was a subject nation in the late eighteenth century. Discussions of Irish history should, as a result, be restricted to those relevant to its present state of affairs. In other words, the purpose of history was not merely to understand past events, but rather a way to understand and contextualise contemporary society. Macartney's description of Ireland provides a useful summary for his broader imperialist views of the British role in colonial societies. 'Of what consequence then,' he asked,

> is it to the ancient Irish or the later settler whether their country was conquered or not; they are all equally subject to Great Britain and enjoy her protection, every individual feels the genial influence of her liberty and as an individual, claims every privilege which she can bestow. (...) the safety, the interest of the parent and protecting state, which all its subjects are equally bound to cherish and promote is the only object.[43]

In this passage, Ireland's identity is reduced to that of a state dependent on Britain and Macartney seems to distance himself from his country of origin. There is little sense, here, of Craig Bailey's contention that Irish middle classes actively sought to make use of both Irish and British identities. Instead, Macartney's Ireland was in an entirely submissive position to a stronger and more enlightened nation – for the wording implies that it is *Britain* which brought equality to Ireland.

Macartney's refusal to even entertain a debate over the nature of ancient Ireland was at odds with his interest in Indian history. In that case, the exalted quality of ancient India

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[42] George Macartney, *An account of Ireland in 1773*, BL Kings MS 106, fol. 8, and more generally 4 – 9, 14 – 15.

[43] *Ibid.*, fols. 73 – 74. This sentiment is not unlike the parent-child relationship between Hindu rulers and subjects described by William Robertson in Chapter I.

was singled out for particular praise, reinforcing his earlier endorsement of an historical approach based on contemporary politics. Quite simply, it was not politically expedient to recognise or praise Ireland's pre-Norman history, since it did not fit with Macartney's imperialist views. His claim that the question of pre-Norman Irish civility was irrelevant to present politics was not entirely accurate: the entire foundation myth of English settlement in Ireland was based on the argument that the Gaelic Irish were savage brutes. Until the end of the seventeenth century, it was not uncommon for pro-British histories and texts to uphold the necessity of continued English intervention as the sole means of preventing the degeneration of the native Irish. In comparison, one of the central arguments for greater British intervention in India was the stranglehold of Muslim invaders on a previously flourishing and enlightened Hindu civilisation. Writing to Laurence Sulivan on the subject in 1782, Macartney openly declared himself eager to rectify the stagnation of contemporary Indian society and 'contribute to reinstate this country in its former glory'.[44] Robert Gregory, on the other hand, had an interest both in ancient and more recent Indian history. One particular box in Robert's private papers included several excerpts of documents on India, transcribed by Robert. These included a speech given by Lord Clive in the House of Commons on 3 March 1772, a manuscript study of an ancient Indian pagoda and its inscriptions, a translated extract of a letter written from the Rajah of Jodhpur to Aurangzeb, as well as an account of the activities of Hyder Ali in the Carnatic.[45] Finally, a poem written in his hand, dated 12 May 1808, used a pair of bracelets found in the River Shannon and supposedly from the personal collection of Tipu Sultan of Mysore as a medium to muse on the existential question of man's attempt to trace the exotic origins of history. A note accompanying the poem noted that these bracelets had been uncovered several years before and put on display; antiquarian scholars had unanimously declared the bracelets to have been taken during the siege of Seringapatam in 1799. Robert, however, rejected this Eastern association and used the opportunity to write a small treatise on the merits of the British Isles, arguing, among other things, that Anglo-Saxon and Danish lords had also worn such bracelets.[46] While most other documents in that particular box merely constituted

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[44] Macartney to Laurence Sulivan, 28 January 1782, Macartney, *The private correspondence of Lord Macartney*, 183.

[45] 'From Lord Clive's speech in House of Commons, 30 March 1772,' 2 fols.; [Untitled and undated document in Robert Gregory's hand on pagodas], 1 fol.; 'Extract of letter from the rajah of Jodhpur to Aurangzeb,' 1 fol.; and [Untitled and undated document in Robert Gregory's hand on Hyder Ali's activities in the Carnatic], 4 fols., in EU MSS 624, Series II, Box 18, Folder VII.

[46] Poem signed Dublin, 12 May 1808, EU MSS 624, Series II, Box 18, Folder III.

transcriptions, this last poem clearly struck a chord with Robert, since he chose to engage with it in a novel way.

More generally, Robert Gregory's private papers also contain numerous handwritten quotes that suggest a familiarity with many celebrated eighteenth-century historians. These transcribed passages provide useful insight into the types of sources that Robert was familiar with and which would have informed his views on empire. Citations from David Hume described the characteristics of civilised nations, as well as a need for the education and reformation of uncivilised ones. Also included were notes from Voltaire, both on the benevolent nature of the British government and – rather interestingly given his son William's later antipathy towards Catholicism – a section from the author's *The philosophical dictionary* entitled 'On the principle of universal toleration in religion.' Robert's personal notebook also contained lengthy passages from histories of India, which covered subjects from the Mughals and the Mahrattas, to Hyder Ali of Mysore.[47] These final entries covered a broad range of geographical interests in India and represented a list of the greatest threats to British interests in the subcontinent throughout this period. They render it evident that in addition to reading theoretical works such as those of Hume and Voltaire, Robert kept himself well-informed on Indian affairs long after he returned to Europe. It is also quickly apparent that unlike Macartney, Robert had little interest in Irish history. Indeed, the unsigned poem contains the only reference to Ireland in that section of his private papers – and it was only used as a springboard to discuss the history of Anglo-Saxons and Danes. Conversely, Macartney's primary historical focus was Ireland.

It is likely that these two men's historical interests were shaped by their careers. Robert resided in India for twenty years and remained heavily invested in Indian affairs throughout his later life as a private merchant and EIC director. As a vocal imperialist, Macartney sought to emphasise Ireland's subordination to a greater entity of which he sought to be a part. This, according to Thomas Bartlett, caused a great deal of friction with the Irish Parliament, which contrastingly sought more autonomy from Britain. His application for the governorship of Madras was purely motivated by financial considerations, rather than any

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[47] See the untitled section of handwritten notes by Robert Gregory, EU MSS 624, Series II, Box 18, Folder VIII; Robert Gregory personal notebook, EU MSS 624, Series I, Box I, Folder 18.

genuine interest in the country.[48] Thus Macartney's interest in Irish history reflected a politicised nature of history in order to justify current government policies.

In spite of the fact that Robert Gregory and Macartney both had more liberal politics than William Gregory, all three men supported highly repressive government methods in times of crisis and expressed the opinion that only shows of greater force could quell moments of violence. In response to Warren Hastings' reaction to the rebellion of the zamindar Cheyt Singh (probably the Cheit Singh from Chapter V), Macartney shrewdly noted that 'an insurrection quelled adds to the authority of government'.[49] Evidently, strong governments were expected to make shows of force to assert their power over colonial subjects. Almost thirty years later, Robert Gregory voiced similar sentiments in an indignant account of a mutiny by EIC officers. Given the recent violence, he was strongly of the opinion that from that point onward, only high-ranking military officials should be appointed governor generals of the EIC and, moreover, invested with 'every power'.[50] These endorsements of colonial violence reinforce points discussed in the legal chapter on highway banditry. A state's ability – or lack thereof – to control violence among its subjects was often viewed as a reflection of its genuine power. Additionally, while existing laws had to be upheld, they could also be modified by the colonial state in order to better answer contemporary issues. The fact that two men who otherwise emerge from the record as noticeably liberal individuals would sanction authoritarian forms of government is noteworthy. While neither of them explicitly mentions his motivations, it is tempting to suggest that their Irish backgrounds could have contributed to this attitude. The list of frequent Irish rebellions in distant and more recent history, often with disastrous consequences, would certainly have suggested to them that violent outbreaks were best answered through equal or greater shows of force.

Through his position in office, William Gregory often advocated for the implementation of repressive measures, though this is perhaps less surprising given his implacable anti-Catholicism. Attempting to resurrect the insurrection bill in 1813, William petitioned Peel by collecting a petition signed by local magistrates and maintained that the bill represented an essential tool for the re-implementation of order and stability. Despite the pronouncement by the Attorney and Solicitor General, William argued that magistrates

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[48] Bartlett, *Macartney in Ireland*, xliv – xlv; Sutherland, 'Lord Macartney's appointment,' 529.
[49] Macartney to Hastings, 3 November 1781, Macartney, *The private correspondence of Lord Macartney*, 120.
[50] R. Gregory to W. Gregory, 15 August 1810, EU MSS 624, Series I, Box I, Folder IV.

lacked sufficient judicial powers and were consequently ineffectual in combating the segments of discontent in the general population. The situation in Ireland, he claimed, had devolved to a state of utter chaos in which subversive societies had abrogated enormous powers over the lower classes. 'It may appear presumptuous,' he finally concluded, 'to contend with the attorney & solicitor general, that the white boy act [targeting agrarian societies] does not give equal authority to the magistrates, as the insurrection act; certainly not, it does not give the power of domiciliary visits, which enables the magistrates to keep at home every suspected person.'[51]

While all three men did support selective moments of suppressive measures, William's attitude stands out because of the fact that it was invariably directed against the lower-class Irish – who were predominantly Catholic. Macartney's and William's differing views on Catholicism are worth comparing because they illustrate the complex religious situation that persisted in late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century Ireland. On the one hand, Macartney demonstrated that certain segments of Anglo-Irish society had grown more tolerant towards their Catholic counterparts. At the same time, William expressed the enduring fear of Catholic subversion, as well as the extent of the threat that this represented at the end of the century. These striking differences can, in part, be explained by generational differences. Robert Gregory and Macartney grew up in a period of relative stability – while previous rebellions might have coloured their views on appropriate government reactions to violence, they nevertheless did not live through any of these rebellions. On the contrary, William was a relatively young man at the outbreak of the 1798 Rebellion, which sent a significant shockwave through the country by pitting not only Catholics against Protestants, but Scots against the English, and radical Protestants against more moderate ones.[52] In addition to witnessing the rebellion, William was directly exposed to its consequences through his work collecting the rebellion depositions. As such, his outlook can be described as more reactionary, having witnessed a sudden renewal of sectarian conflict. In a sense, his reaction can be contextualised as a response to a 'new' Catholic threat. These disparities in attitudes towards Catholicism between the two generations remind historians of the need to critically examine past claims of religious toleration in late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century Ireland, as well as the erosion of the so-called Catholic threat.

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[51] W. Gregory to Peel, 1 December 1813, EU MSS 624, Series II, Box IX, Folder II.
[52] S.J. Connolly, *Divided kingdom: Ireland 1630 – 1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 483.

William Gregory's obsessive fear of continued Catholic resistance in the early 1800s provided a striking contrast to the views displayed by Macartney in the 1770s on the religious and political state of Ireland. Macartney devoted a notable amount of attention to the history of the penal laws and fiercely criticised their impact on Irish society. According to his self-published treatise, they 'form[ed] the most compleat [sic] code of persecution that ingenious biggotry [sic] ever compiled'.[53] At the same time, Macartney firmly supported the argument that Protestant countries should implement laws that would regulate and control their Catholic populations. Describing these laws as a necessary means to protect the 'true' religion, Macartney's beliefs provide a unique glimpse into the extent and limitations of Protestant toleration towards Irish Catholics. What distinguished the Irish penal laws from the ones introduced in England was the fact that they were enforced as an overt method of oppression and persecution by the Irish Parliament. In comparison, England had successfully introduced laws in a just and equitable way.[54] The phrasing of this passage is significant. Macartney spoke passionately about the levels of persecution in Ireland, which he equated with despotic forms of government. At the same time, his stance towards Catholicism retained an element of ambiguity. While he expressed sympathy for Irish Catholics, he still depicted England's successful implementation of measures against Catholics as a victory in the larger struggle against Catholicism. The difference lay in the lack of explicit discrimination. Lastly, his support for the repeal of the penal laws also had a practical element: Catholics would never see themselves as productive contributors in society if repeatedly excluded. As far as Macartney was concerned, the government could not 'make every subject of the state as usefull [sic] as possible' when it deliberately alienated Catholics and did not afford them the same treatment as their Protestant neighbours.[55] It is worth noting that while he was not as vocal as Macartney, Robert Gregory also echoed many of his beliefs and, in contrast to the hard line attitudes of his son, criticised the isolationist tendencies of Irish Protestants.[56]

In contrast to this desire for the better integration of Irish Catholics, William Gregory's official correspondence reveals the paranoia still felt among many government officials, often bearing striking similarities to Protestant convictions of an enduring Catholic threat following the 1641 Rising. In 1812, for example, a highly disgruntled William

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[53] BL Kings MS 106, fol. 27.
[54] *Ibid.*, fols. 28 – 29.
[55] *Ibid.*, fol. 31.
[56] Jenkins, *Sir William Gregory of Coole*, 9 – 10.

complained to Peel about the supposed lack of transparency exhibited by high-ranking Catholic leaders, who were apparently all engaged in political activities. He concluded his letter with the dire prediction that no settlement could ever be reached with Irish Catholics, who seemed to be preparing some sort of vague attack or series of demands. There would, according to William, be no possibility of negotiations when that time came. Only 'unconditional' terms would be accepted by these agitators. Similarly, one year later William continued to warn Peel of the dangerous situation in Ireland, which remained under danger of an imminent threat.[57] William, therefore, constantly saw possible threats in any Catholic activity.

These differing outlooks on Catholicism provide insight into the ambiguities of religious issues in late eighteenth-century Ireland. Specific members of the Protestant elite such as Macartney and Robert Gregory adopted lenient attitudes towards Irish Catholics, arguing for their greater integration into Irish society. Conversely, many senior government officials continued to view Catholicism as a severe threat to the state. Macartney's and William Gregory's views in particular can be seen as broader reflections on different attitudes towards the nature of the colonial state throughout the period. Through his writings, Macartney strongly advocated for the inclusion of Catholics, something not permitted with the continued existence of the penal laws. Such laws, he argued, maintained this segment of the population in a submissive state. Inclusion, rather than alienation, would ensure the better running of the state. William, in opposition, supported highly reactive and repressive measures through assurances that growing Catholic confidence would represent a significant threat to Irish Protestants. The near-hysterical tone in which he wrote to Peel about an incendiary Catholic article in 1823 promoting the violent resurgence of Irish Catholicism attests to his unbending belief in the need for continued suppression. In response to an earlier question from Peel related to the Catholic clergy's potential efforts to dismiss the prophecy found in the article, William's outlook was remarkably grim. 'I have not communicated with any intelligent person, in any of the disturbed countries, who does not think that a belief in this prophecy and an anxious expectation of its fulfilment, maddens the sanguinary fury of the insurgents, and that the priesthood, tho' they dare not openly encourage them to a belief,

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[57] Private,' W. Gregory to Peel, 28 November 1812; W. Gregory to Peel, March 1813, *Letters from W. Gregory 23 Sept – 9 April 1813*, BL Add. MS 40195, Peel Papers vol. XV, fols. 11a – 11b, 212b – 213a.

yet so far from discouraging, that they connive at the circulation of the extracts.'[58] William, as mentioned previously, was still a young man at the outbreak of the 1798 Rebellion and it is possible that his opinions were shaped by this first major episode of renewed sectarian violence in over a century. The Catholic emancipation movement did gain support among members of Anglo-Irish society in the last decades of the eighteenth century and did grow both in numbers and in influence. However, portions of the Protestant population remained openly hostile due to experience such as the Rebellion.

This chapter began with a discussion of Craig Bailey's work on middle-class Irish migration to various parts of the eighteenth-century British empire. One of Bailey's primary contentions is that these migrants did not chose a British sense of identity to the detriment of their Irish heritage; instead, Irish links were embraced and used in order to further political and social careers. Given the lack of information provided in the wills, it is difficult to judge whether this was indeed the case for the men mentioned in the first section of this chapter. While he does not entirely conform to this schema, George Macartney's case illustrates many of the arguments put forward by Bailey regarding the complex nature of Irish experiences of the empire. Macartney's network of Irish acquaintances in Madras bears witness to the connections that were forged, and maintained, by Irishmen in India. He also demonstrated an interest in following developments in different parts of the empire during his career. At the same time, he always spoke of himself in British terms throughout his correspondence and seemed to strongly identify with an imperialist-based sense of duty. Following a treaty signed with Scindia in 1782, he argued that a complete overhaul of the EIC system was required if Britain wished to retain its hold on India, especially taking into consideration 'our losing so much in other parts of the world'.[59] Despite this interest in external issues, he remained more ambivalent with regards to his own country. Macartney's disdain for Irish office was well-known and his disinterest in Irish politics, in spite of his position in government, was commented upon by the Prime Sergeant-at-law John Hely-Hutchinson.[60]

Nevertheless, Macartney did occasionally display some form of attachment to Ireland as well. It remains a well-known fact that Macartney actively petitioned for foreign postings throughout his tenure in the Irish administration, even though advised to abandon such efforts

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[58] 'Confidential,' Gregory to Peel, Dublin, 11 April 1823, *Correspondence with W. Gregory, 1819 – 1830, 1835*, BL Add. MS 40334, Peel Papers vol. CLIV, fols. 40a – 41a. See also W. Gregory to Peel, 31 March 1823, 33a – 32a, and 33a for the clipping of Signior Pastorini's prophecy.

[59] Macartney to Macpherson, 12 June 1782, Macartney, *The private correspondence of Lord Macartney*, 47.

[60] John Hely-Hutchinson to Macartney, 3 July 1773, Bartlett, *Macartney in Ireland*, 240.

on more than one occasion by the Under-secretary to the Lord Lieutenant.[61] Paradoxically, his self-published treatise from 1773 betrays an in-depth knowledge of Irish land settlement history, current agrarian practices, and religious history. Around the time of the 1798 Rebellion, he deplored the domestic situation in a letter to Richard Wellesley and sought more news from Europe. He also openly advocated for a union between Ireland and Britain, although he regretfully acknowledged that the political situation rendered it impossible at that time. '[W]ithout a union,' he notably confided in Wellesley, 'how vague and loose is the connection of Ireland and England.'[62] Yet Macartney's earlier treatise made it clear that he genuinely believed in the necessity for this connection. According to this earlier document, Ireland could *only* be defined in relation to Britain:

> [U]nder whatever predicament it may be considered, [it] is and ought to be subordunate [sic] to and dependant upon Great Britain. In this vast empire on which the sun never sets, and whose bounds nature has not yet ascertained, one great superintending and controuling [sic] dominion must exist somewhere.[63]

Given the lack of additional information, it remains difficult to gauge the attitudes of the Irishmen and woman found in EIC wills from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. In particular, there is no reliable indicator of their association either to Britain or Ireland. The records do show that many Irishmen had Indian female companions as well as natural children, the latter of whom were often left sizeable bequests. Soldiering was also clearly a popular choice among many Irish families, and numerous references to dispersed family members attests to the mobility of the Irish throughout different parts of the empire. The survival of private papers in collections and official correspondence makes it easier to draw conclusions about the opinions of the more elite social classes. Members of the Anglo-Irish elite such as Robert Gregory and Macartney enthusiastically embraced the project of empire, which represented opportunities for personal and political advancement. Both men also created British senses of identity for themselves throughout their careers. Robert traded privately in India for twenty years, apparently survived the Black Hole of Calcutta (his son discovered the one object – a gold watch – that he retained from the episode following his death), and returned to England (not Ireland), where he became

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[61] For example, Thomas Waite to Macartney, June 1769, Bartlett, *Macartney in Ireland*, xxiii.

[62] Macartney to Wellesley, 5 October 1798, *Correspondence of Lord Mornington with the East India Company*, BL Add. MS 37278, Wellesley Papers (series II), vol. V, fol. 312.

[63] BL Kings MS 106, fol. 74.

involved in British politics and eventually became an EIC director.[64] Macartney served British interests in Ireland and India, among other countries, and frequently distanced himself from any Irish association by referring to himself in letters as 'an honest man and a good Englishman'.[65] At the same time, both men were part of extensive Irish networks in India designed to help further the careers of fellow Irishmen. Returning briefly to Craig Bailey's case study of the barrister William Hickey, it was Robert Gregory who bore the expenses for Hickey's Calcutta appointment, due to the intercession of their mutual friend William Cane. Cane, incidentally, was also directly responsible for the appointments of two other Irish lawyers in this period. Macartney also became friendly with Hickey's set while visiting Calcutta, having known Hickey's father during his university years in Dublin.[66] Both men kept estates in Ireland, and according to various correspondence, maintained some involvement in their management. William Gregory, on the other hand, represented a new wave of Anglo-Irish society whose opinions were shaped by the upheavals of the 1798 Rebellion. The first major act of serious sectarian strife in over a century, the rebellion had a significant effect on the Anglo-Irish who remained in Ireland, alarming many of them into adopting reactionary and hostile attitudes towards the concept of religious toleration.

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[64] Describing the contents of a chest belonging to Robert, William notes 'a good watch the only valuable article left in the possession of R. Gregory after Calcutta was taken anno 1756 & the English put into the black hole, by the nabob of Bengal Surajud Dowla.' 'In the small trunk marked R.G. in the iron chest at Coole.' EU MSS 624, Series II, Box I, Folder 19.

[65] Macartney repeats verbatim his description of himself as 'an Englishman' to Burke in a second letter dated 18 October of the same year. Macartney to Burke, 30 August 1782, Macartney, *The private correspondence of Lord Macartney*, 114, 205.

[66] Bailey, *Irish London*, 142 – 143, 148.

Conclusion

A comparison of early modern and eighteenth-century Ireland and India reveals commonalities between different British colonies through similar sets of patterns that appeared during points of crisis or acquisition. While imperial practices and attitudes may have generally evolved, or been refined, to suit specific contexts, they were noticeably similar in Ireland and India over both time and space. Significantly, based on the data collected in this study, the networks of people who travelled back and forth between these places also contributed to the emergence of a more global class of imperial citizens. Two such careers lace this conclusion. Robert Gregory, one of the case study subjects from Chapter VI, began his career as a private merchant in India, where he amassed a considerable fortune through trade that later permitted him to purchase an Irish estate, become an elected member of the English parliament, and, finally, an EIC director.[1] Meanwhile, the Irish-born merchant Michael Hogan represents a potent example of a truly global careerist, seamlessly transitioning from imperial to private service and back while also illustrating the geographical and social mobility of the Irish. Throughout his career, Hogan served as a seaman and midshipman in the British Royal Navy (1780 – 1784), where he enlisted the help of Brigadier Charles O'Hara, who was connected to his aunt Mary and a friend of Charles Cornwallis. Eventually awarded a British Navy ship in India by Cornwallis's brother, Hogan later owned and captained trade ships between India, China, Southeast Asia, and Europe between 1790 and 1795. Once more directly involved with the British administration, he transported Irish convicts to New South Wales on board the *Marquis Cornwallis* (1795 – 1797), rendered infamous due to his severe treatment of mutinous convicts, and in later life became an American ambassador.[2] Irishmen (and later women) who made the journey to other colonial sites such as India or Australia frequently took on many personas. Robert Gregory and Michael Hogan are but two examples of the fluid nature of imperial identities, as well as the ways in which colonial subjects could profit from imperial expansion. They also tie Ireland and India together, suggesting a less typological separation of colonies, either by way of settlement and trade, or national futures.

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[1] For a brief summary of Robert Gregory's entry into politics, see J.G. Parker, 'Robert Gregory (1729? – 1810),' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (https://libsta28.lib.cam.ac.uk:2090/10.1093/ref:odnb/63508).

[2] Mary Hogan's relationship with Charles O'Hara remains unclear, as does the extent of O'Hara's aid towards Michael Hogan. Introductory notes, and William Hogan notes on sea voyages of Michael Hogan [undated], *Michael Hogan family papers, 1791 – 1908, privately held*, SLNSW ML MSS 7359 (01), 1, 365; Michael H. Styles, *Captain Hogan: seaman, merchant, diplomat on six continents* (Fairfax Station, Virginia: Six Continent Horizons, 2003), 19 – 20, 56 – 57.

This comparison of British experiences in Ireland and India breaks down the traditional differentiation of 'first' and 'second' empires, as well as the differentiation between different types of religious conflicts (both within Christianity and between Christianity and other religions) and colonial encounters. Admittedly, on the surface, a more common comparison might seem to be the one between Ireland and the North American settlements, as indeed several historians of early modern Ireland have previously done. Nicholas Canny, Annaleigh Margey, and Andrew Hadfield, for instance, are among those scholars who have jointly considered the Irish plantation programmes with the later plantations of Virginia. Likewise, British historians of the period such as David Armitage frequently situate Ireland and North America within the broader sphere of an 'Atlantic' empire throughout their work.[3] However, such distinctions between the 'Atlantic' and 'Asian' empires are increasingly challenged by scholars drawing connections between the two spheres. Calling for the end of separations drawn between colonies presumed to have imperialist and commercial origins, Philip Stern invites 'historians to break out of rigid analytic categories and to appreciate the multiplicity, flexibility, and diffusion of individuals, institutions, and ideas that defined early modern history'.[4] P.J. Marshall also draws connections between late eighteenth-century India and America, given the conjunction of increased British activity on the subcontinent and the American Revolution – followed by the loss of the American colonies in 1783. Challenging the traditional historiography that separates Atlantic and Asian considerations, Marshall's main purpose is to 'brin[g] what it is conventional to keep apart,' and to demonstrate how different attitudes and practices in America and India occurred simultaneously over a period of several decades, rather than consecutively.[5] More recently, historians including Jane Ohlmeyer and Craig Bailey have bridged the divide between the Atlantic and Asian portions of the empire through detailed

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[3] For a sample of writings, see Nicholas Canny, 'The permissive frontier: social control in English settlements in Ireland and Virginia 1550 – 1650,' in *The westward enterprise: English activities in Ireland, the Atlantic, and America, 1480 – 1650*, eds. Kenneth R. Andrews, Nicholas P. Canny and Paul Edward Hedley Hair (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1979), 17 – 44; Annaleigh Margey, 'Representing colonial landscapes: early English maps of Ulster and Virginia, 1580 – 1612,' in *Reshaping Ireland, 1550 – 1700: colonization and its consequences, essays presented to Nicholas Canny*, ed. Brian Mac Cuarta (Dublin: Four Courts, 2011), 61 – 81; Andrew Hadfield, 'Irish colonies and the Americas,' in *Envisioning an English empire: Jamestown and the making of the North Atlantic world*, eds. Robert Appelbaum and John Wood Sweet (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 172 – 191. More generally, David Armitage, *The ideological origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (eds.), *The British Atlantic world, 1500 – 1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).
[4] Philip J. Stern, 'British Asia and British Atlantic: comparisons and connections,' *The William and Mary Quarterly, Third Series* 63:4 (2006): 695, 698.
[5] P.J. Marshall, *The making and unmaking of empires: Britain, India, and America c. 1750 – 1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1; more generally see the introductory comments, 1 – 12.

studies of imperial careerists such as the Irishman Gerald Aungier, who served as a seventeenth-century governor of Bombay, or the London-born attorney William Hickey.[6]

Historically, scholars have hesitated to compare colonies such as Ireland and India, partially given the temporal differences between phases of British occupation, but primarily given their traditional respective classifications as colonies of settlement and trade. This latter distinction has now been at least partially discredited through the works of Philip Lawson and Philip Stern, who trace elements of sovereign doctrines in EIC Indian politics as far back as the seventeenth century in spite of the Company's undeniable mercantile origins.[7] Additionally, Ireland and India share certain commonalities not found in contemporary colonies such as the Americas.

Throughout the early modern period, one notable justification for the legitimisation of empire was the value associated to settled and agricultural societies. In an attempt to distance themselves from earlier Spanish imperial enterprises in America, which were characterised by violent military conquest, the seventeenth-century British, French, and Dutch reframed their own endeavours as the occupation of previously unoccupied lands. The British in particular drew significant inspiration from John Locke's two-part definition of occupation as a) the seizure of land, combined with b) subsequent attempts to reform the land. Based on this definition, they argued that the indigenous peoples of North America (and later Australia) did not truly own or occupy the land. By extension, such land was readily available for European colonisation. Significantly, this argument was not used in Ireland, where an English presence long predated the American settlements, but where more serious attempts at colonial expansion were undertaken roughly contemporaneously. Nor was the argument later used in India. Though never explicitly voiced, the realities of British imperial justifications were quite different from their traditional doctrines in both cases. The definition of occupation was only changed at the Berlin Conference of 1884 – 1885, in an attempt to include Africa into the orbit of possible imperial expansion. As a result, the concept of 'territorial sovereignty rather than property as its object' was only introduced in the African context.[8] However, this

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[6] Jane Ohlmeyer, 'Ireland, India and the British empire,' *Studies in People's History* 2:2 (2015): 172; Craig Bailey, *Irish London: middle-class migration in the global eighteenth century* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), see Chapter IV, 122 – 156.

[7] Philip Lawson, *The East India Company: a history* (London: Longman, 1993); Philip J. Stern, *The company-state: corporate sovereignty and the early modern foundations of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

[8] Andrew Fitzmaurice, *Sovereignty, property and empire, 1500 – 2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 28, and more generally 3 – 4, 7 – 8, 25.

merely brought to the forefront an approach that the British were already practising in Ireland and India. The comparative study of two such diverging colonies provides a broader understanding of the ways in which networks of people, ideas, and objects flowed from one imperial node to another. While there are limited explicit links between Ireland and India during this period, there are numerous connections that allow scholars to think abstractly about selected topics such as land and legal measures that bind the two together.

By adopting a heuristic and thematic interpretation of British colonialism, this study blurs the distinctions between metropole and peripheries by triangulating the networks of connections between Britain, Ireland, and India. The thematic emphasis of each chapter serves to incorporate early modern and nineteenth-century experiences with global history, addressing the history of emotions, law, material culture, economy, and politics to present a more layered interpretation of British responses to colonial challenges. Moreover, these themes highlight the anxieties that permeated colonial endeavours, which were constantly reinforced through stereotypes and often aggravated by a lack of local knowledge. The chapters also engage with the various histories of theoretical constructs pertaining to hybrid identities and Britishness, imperial expansion and power relationships, criminality and surveillance.

One of the main themes to emerge from the various chapters was the intersection of religion with colonial perceptions and identities. At the same time, the chapters illustrate the ways in which the latter frequently adhered to religious demarcations but were also crafted in response to political and personal needs. In Ireland, confessional vocations and struggles eventually split the population along a Catholic and Protestant divide. Additionally, religious identities were one of the factors that excluded the Irish from the umbrella classification of 'Britishness'. While the English, Scots, and Welsh retained national interests and loyalties, they were united in their mutual understanding of Ireland's different status among the countries of the British Isles. This distinction manifested itself in different ways among Irishmen and woman: while some celebrated a separate Gaelic past, others sought to associate themselves more closely with a sense of British identity, while others yet actively courted appointments generated by empire without emulating this sense of British identity. Pro-Gaelic historians from Geoffrey Keating and Hugh MacCurtin to the late eighteenth-century antiquarians such as Sylvester O'Halloran and Charles Vallancey proudly detailed the ancient and scholarly history of the Gaels. In doing so, they were promoting the notion of a common Gaelic culture proper to the Irish Gaelic and the Old English; this group, notably, was

Catholic. Conversely, while significant portions of pro-British accounts were employed to fiercely deny the validity of ancient Irish history, authors such as Sir John Temple and Richard Cox also devoted substantial attention to more current events, which invariably focused on the differences between Irish Catholics and Protestants. In the later eighteenth century, many members of the Anglo-Irish classes sought to further distance themselves from their Irish origins by courting imperial appointments and political positions which rendered them more actively involved in British imperial affairs.

A prime example, Sir George Macartney, frequently and vocally maintained his desire to be perceived as British rather than Irish, in spite of his sympathetic stance towards Catholic emancipation. William Gregory, the son of the EIC director Robert Gregory, also made his allegiance clear throughout his tenure as undersecretary to the Lord Lieutenant, taking any opportunities available to spy on Catholic activities throughout the country. Obsessively fearful of religiously-motivated agitation, his correspondence renders it clear that he considered himself entirely separate from the majority Catholic population of Ireland. And yet Irishmen and women also made use of their Irish connections when it was politically or financially expedient. Both Robert Gregory and Macartney operated within Irish networks during their times in India, seeking to provide support to new arrivals. Moreover, Macartney frequently solicited information about his home country, though his personal stance towards it remained ambiguous. Other Irishmen still sought to carefully curate their image when abroad, but nevertheless consistently identified themselves as Irish. Returning to the merchant and captain Michael Hogan, it becomes clear that for the most part, Irishmen who openly sought to identify with a British sense of identity were usually more self-conscious members of the Anglo-Irish elite such as Macartney, who sought political career advancement in the machinery of empire.

Little is known of Hogan's early life other than the fact that he was born to Catholic parents in Co. Clare. The information that does exist, however, indicates that he came from a family deeply entrenched in the web of empire. Michael's oldest brother enlisted in the British Army upon the death of their father and Michael himself joined the British Navy at the age of 10 years (though rolls listed him as 12 years of age) before finding work in 1789 with one of the most important merchants of Bombay.[9] In letters concerning his time spent as captain of the transport ship *Marquis Cornwallis*, Hogan routinely displayed significant

[9] Styles, *Captain Hogan*, 7 – 8, 9, 11 – 12, 23.

animosity towards his passengers for the specific reason that they were Irish. 'When I engaged to carry such cargo as I have now, particularly my own,' he wrote to Messrs D. Scott & Company in December 1795, 'I conceive I had no right either to expect pleasure or comfort.' While seeking reimbursement for additional expenses incurred during the journey, Hogan later remarked to the Royal Navy commissioners that he had spent '7 months of the most disagreeable service that ever man was engaged on, carrying the worst of all orders of human beings, Irish convicts'.[10] Though Hogan's letters render it clear that part of his antipathy was against the fact that his passengers were convicts, it is also evident that a significant portion of his antagonism was directed at their Irishness. At the same time, his use of the words 'my countrymen' is also significant, since he made no effort to disassociate himself from the convicts. Whereas men like George Macartney or William Gregory saw a clear advantage in identifying not as Irishmen, but as British men, in specific circumstances such identifications do not appear to have been of benefit to less wealthy Irish individuals. Hogan's Irishness does not seem to have translated into a network of Irish acquaintances in India (his wife was of British and Portuguese descent), but neither did it impede his progress outside of the political and administrative world.[11]

In the Indian context, British officials insistently divided the population along religious lines to suit their own political agendas. British histories of India insisted on quasi insurmountable differences between the Hindu and Muslim inhabitants of the subcontinent as a way of negatively portraying Muslims. In the eighteenth century, Hindus were invariably described as victims of an oppressive foreign force, feeding into contemporary British arguments of their civilising mission and justifications for further imperial expansion. Transportation lists of Indian convicts throughout this period also reveal the extent to which religion became an intrinsic part of an individual Indian's identity. Irish convicts were rarely described physically in transport lists and their religion was usually only implied from legal records such as the courts martial following the 1798 Rebellion. In contrast, one of the key descriptors for Indian convicts was their religion. As seen in Chapter III, British officials often insisted on lists identifying the exact ratio of Hindu and Muslim prisoners on each ship.

[10] Copy of letter from Michael Hogan to Messrs. D. Scott & Company, Cape of Good Hope, 16 December 1795; Copy of letter from Michael Hogan to the honorable commissioners for victualing his majesty's navy, London, between 18 and 26 August 1797,' SLNSW ML MSS 7359 (01), 60, 75.
[11] On Frances Hogan, see the series of genealogies prepared by her son William. 'Richardson genealogy prepared by William Hogan, 1853;' 'Notes of William Hogan about Michael Hogan in his early years, 2 November 1854;' 'Notes of William Hogan on Richardsons, 1859,' 'Notes prepared by William Hogan on Richardsons, sometime after 1863,' *Ibid.*, 374, 376, 377, 379.

At the same time, certain Persian authors such as Ghulam Hussain Khan Tabatabai purposefully strove to negate such religious distinctions and sought instead to promote the idea of a unified Hindustan confronting the foreign EIC. This did not, however, translate into a perceptual shift among the British, who persisted in insisting on religiously-demarcated identities. Both at the micro and macro level, religious identities were used to further British expansion and activities on the subcontinent. In spite of the fact that convict transportation lists clearly indicate that dacoits and thugs could be either Hindu or Muslim, the British increasingly began to associate such forms of banditry with Islam in the early nineteenth century. On a very local level, then, officials were generating corroborations for their more widespread claims of Muslim despotism, cruelty, and oppression throughout India. The merging of Hindu and Muslim elements to dacoity and thuggee also served to render the entire local populations suspect, just as the association between tories, jacobitism, and eventually Catholicism in general did the same thing in Ireland.

Finally, religion was also used as a form of punishment, or at the very least a form of deprivation, in contexts such as the penal colonies or in the wake of violence. Catholicism does not appear to have been deliberately used to punish Irish convicts in New South Wales, as they were free to observe the tenets of their faith. That being said, the publication of official regulations in contemporary newspapers indicate that they were actively monitored. Furthermore, their ability to practice their faith was predicated on certain conditions, such as reporting suspicious behaviours among their co-religionists. In addition, Catholics were denied priests, as can be seen from numerous references in the correspondence of convicts such as Michael Hayes. Pleas were also sent back to England for the dispatch of a priest to the colony, since it was believed to be the only way of controlling the troublesome Irish. The obvious implication of such pleas echoed sentiments found in pro-British Irish histories according to which Irish Catholics were governed by their clergymen. With regards to Indian transportation, the simple fact of sending convicts overseas was thought to already represent a significant blow to their religious beliefs. Orientalist assumptions about the Hindu concept of *kala pani* meant that Indians were thought to break caste through their enforced journey across the ocean – in spite of the fact that British officials were perfectly aware that not all convicts were Hindus. The Governor of the Straits Settlements in the 1820s also expressed the desire to use religion as a weapon against what he referred to as 'lower classes' of convicts by denying their right to participate in religious festivals.

The one significant way in which religious identity was treated differently in Ireland and India was through the question of land settlement policies. Focused on establishing a solid and efficient revenue collecting system in Bengal, British officials were primarily concerned with creating recognisably British forms of property ownership through their investment of zaminars' rights. As a result, they do not appear to have favoured either Hindu or Muslim land owners. The relatively new nature of their administration resulted in steadfast attempts to court the loyalty of indigenous landed elites. In comparison, the two waves of land confiscations that took place in seventeenth-century Ireland had a distinct religious element. While Protestant owners were also dispossessed of their lands during the Cromwellian transplantation programme, Catholics were undeniably the primary target of these policies. As a result of the programme, the bulk of Irish land passed from Catholic to Protestant hands, setting in motion the sequence of events that led to the creation of the eighteenth-century Protestant ascendancy. Even those Catholics who were able to maintain their lands subsequently endured further pressures in the 1700s because of the penal laws imposed around the turn of the century. Given these laws, many Catholic landowners or their children converted to Protestantism to keep their lands intact. Diverging from the later Indian land ownership reconfigurations, Ireland represents one example where the British actively sought to transform the denominational landscape of property ownership.

Different forms of identity in Ireland and India represented ways of classifying colonial peoples and creating various forms of counter-culture against colonial rule. Nevertheless, they were all created or amplified through the establishment of different power relations between the British and their subjects. Each chapter from this study illustrates diverse ways in which these power relations were configured and reconfigured throughout the early modern period and the eighteenth century as the British grappled with territorial and administrative expansion, as well as various forms of subaltern resistance. Both in Ireland and in India, power relations were central to British claims of sovereignty and had significant repercussions for the reconfiguration of territory, social classes, and colonial representations. As a further matter, the chapters draw attention to the similar patterns that surfaced in discrete imperial locales concerning claims to sovereignty, reflecting the influences and the flow of ideas between colonies.

The late eighteenth-century British histories of India mirrored previous early modern English attempts to insert themselves into the historical narratives of their subjects, glossing over moments of violent conquest to emphasise a stable transition of power to English, and

later British, rule. Specific religious groups were also demonised throughout these accounts to lend credence to British accusations of rebellion, subversion, and deceitfulness among their Irish and Indian subjects. The narratives that emerged about such groups had the dual result of generating a sense of paranoia among British officials as to the reliability of colonial subjects and of facilitating legal measures undertaken to counter perceived threats from such groups. The Catholic dimension to toryism and the 1798 Rebellion, despite Protestant participation in both, as well as the sinister religious connections that were quickly associated with thuggee, rendered both groups enemies of the administration. Significantly, such groups were seen to challenge the power relations set up by the British in colonial spaces. Through their claims to sovereignty over Irish and Indian territories, the British were implicitly laying claim to their ability to police, regulate, and protect these spaces from internal and external threats. Behaviours that contravened the social norms established by the British were perceived as highly problematic, because the initial British inability in both cases to stop the flow of violence could be interpreted as manifestations of their inability to successfully impose their authority. Swift and harsh punishments such as transportation overseas and sentences of hard labour represented attempts to redress the hierarchical power claimed by the British over the Irish and the Indians. Colonial governments appropriated the right to confiscate individual liberties in the name of social stability.

The reconfiguration of colonial territories, as well as land settlements and property ownership that took place in both locales further reinforced British claims to sovereignty. Though met with considerably more success in Ireland than in Bengal, land reconfigurations were symbols of British disregard for alternative modes of property ownership and attempts to mould each place towards conformity with Britain. Earlier English efforts to replace the Gaelic system of noble titles in the sixteenth century through surrender and regrant had already begun the process of anglicising Irish landholding systems. The two series of transplantation programmes following the 1650s paved the way for the Protestant ascendancy, which ensured the governance of the Protestant Irish minority. Meanwhile, British attempts to firmly establish a clearly-defined landowning class in Bengal also resulted in a closer adherence to British notions of property ownership that echoed the Irish case. Added to this was the implementation of tightly regulated taxation systems in Ireland and India, which had obvious financial motivations, but which additionally reinforced British claims to authority over these territories.

Material culture was equally co-opted into displays of sovereignty through propagandistic efforts to shape domestic British perceptions of Ireland and India. Upheld as objective and truthful objects, maps purported to show the continuous expansion of Britain in different imperial spaces and often celebrated British victories through annotations that further emphasised British military vigour. Territory in general, then, was used as a way to claim sovereignty through its visual depictions. While maps did not necessarily reflect the geopolitical situations on the ground, they did reflect the ways in which colonial administrators wanted to *think* about land. The outward expansion of geographical boundaries presented in maps could be seen as obvious markers of imperial success in the colonies. Illustrations of colonial landscapes and buildings had similar propagandistic functions since they regularly depicted comparisons between British (read as civilised) influences in colonial settings against indigenous (read uncivilised or moribund) peoples, buildings, and landscapes. Yet at the same time, these visual representations also betrayed imperial uncertainties in spite of their bold claims, which hinted at efforts from British officials towards self-persuasion. Only through such triumphalist or stereotypical depictions could they justify the righteousness of imperial expansion to themselves.

The exploration of the mid-level position of Irishmen and women in India further complicates these imperial power relationships, demonstrating how different degrees of sovereignty could operate in the same context. The case of the merchant Michael Hogan proves that individual Irishmen could achieve significant levels of personal success in India despite lacking previous family privilege or wealth. Having married the daughter of a wealthy British trader, Hogan amassed enough money to purchase his own trading vessel. A letter sent by Hogan in 1791 to Messrs Forbes Shephard and Company requesting a loan of 35,000 rupees for future trade activities between India and China revealed that he obtained the vessel for 115,000 rupees. This represented a considerable sum, particularly when compared to the bequests left in EIC wills. The artillery major Daniel Butler left 5,000 rupees in trust for twenty-four months in case of the arrival of his brother to India, while the wealthy Jacob Camac left 10,000 rupees to his companion Mariam nissa Kow. Meanwhile, the total bequest left by Daniel O'Brien to his children and stepchildren amounted to 19,500 rupees.[12] As mentioned in Chapter VI, EIC wills were, for the most part, not representative of rank-and-

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[12] Copy of letter from Michael Hogan to Messrs Forbes Sheppard & Company, Calcutta, 19 September 1791, SLNSW ML MSS 7359 (01), 1; Daniel Butler, 23 June 1784, *BW 1784 – 1786*, BL IOR L/AG/34/29/5, index 1784, entry 37; Jacob Camac, 22 February 1781, IOR L/AG/34/29/5, index 1785, entry 86; Daniel O'Brien, 23 November 1796, *BW 1796 – 1797*, BL IOR L/AG/34/29/10, entry 53.

file Irishmen, but rather the middle class and minor gentry. Irishmen like Hogan or indeed Robert Gregory, who returned to Europe as a nabob after twenty years in trade, were able to prosper in India. While frequently the subjects of stereotypes or prejudice in their homeland or England, the Irish were able to advance at least to some level in the social hierarchy established in India.

Additional research on ordinary Irish soldiers and sailors would provide greater insight into their social position throughout the empire, while more work on non-elite Irishmen such as Michael Hogan would generate a better understanding of Irish attitudes towards empire. Was a British sense of identification mostly reserved for members of the Anglo-Irish elite who sought appointments through imperial expansion? Did Irishmen and women from less privileged backgrounds maintain the networks commonly found in elite Indian circles, or those forged through necessity by Irish convicts segregated in the penal colony of New South Wales? Seamen, soldiers, convicts, and free settlers left Ireland for a variety of different reasons, and with vastly diverse motivations. A greater degree of cross-geographical comparisons into their imperial experiences would enable historians to gain a more rounded vision of Irish imperial participation and further shift the historiography away from traditional depictions of Ireland purely as a victim of empire or an equal and complicit coloniser.

Anxiety is the last significant theme to cut across the various chapters of this thesis. The commemoration of particularly violent events in Irish and Indian history, such as the 1641 Rising and the Black Hole of Calcutta, resulted in a general atmosphere of distrust against local inhabitants. Pro-British histories of Ireland frequently discussed at length the numerous rebellions that had taken place over the centuries, as well as the reprehensible authority that Catholic priests seemed to hold over the population. In the Indian case, the histories favoured long descriptions of Mughal character studies that were upheld as proof of the treachery and untrustworthiness of Indian rulers. In addition, while the British continuously sought to increase their knowledge of colonial spaces, ignorance still prevailed in certain domains. Such ignorance, in turn, generated increased anxiety among British officials who were often unable to properly interpret events on the ground. As in the cases of toryism, dacoity, and thuggee, this often led to severe reactive measures. Discussing the information panic that arose around the phenomenon of thuggee in the early nineteenth century, for instance, C.A. Bayly's *Empire and information* notes that etymological and linguistic barriers played important roles in early investigations of thuggee led by Thomas

Perry, the magistrate of Etawah. While Perry successfully obtained confessions from thug suspects, Bayly stresses that '[t]he word meant little more than "cheat" and was not clearly identifiable with the term "Phansighar" or strangler which appears in some earlier and indigenous accounts.'[13] Colonial delinquents such as dacoits, thugs, and tories challenged the social order imposed by successive British administrations and threw their authority into question. The anxiety that arose from this situation explains the high number of individuals, for instance, who were transported overseas at the end of the eighteenth century, and especially in the Irish case frequently without solid evidence. The British ability to at least give the *appearance* of maintaining full control over their subjects justified such extreme means.

Anxiety also played a role in the careful monitoring of property ownership in Ireland and India, as well as depictions of these spaces. The enforcement of British landowning and property rights was certainly an expression of sovereignty and superiority over pre-existing Irish and Indian forms. At the same time, it also inserts itself into the constant efforts by the central administrations to categorise and monitor their territorial acquisitions. The late eighteenth-century drive to determine whether zamindars were truly landowners reflected the greater British concern to 'understand' its colonies, without which knowledge officials would not have sufficient information to properly govern. Repeated comments regarding the deceitful nature of Irish tenants and Indian zamindars were also symptoms of a general sense of distrust. Zamindars were routinely accused of committing fraud by pocketing portions of the rent revenue owed to the administration and of deliberately skewing tax documents to hide their ill-gotten gains. Irish tenants were not in a position to gain substantial wealth from rent revenues, but they were conversely thought to manipulate the system in order to avoid paying high rents or sabotage lands toward the end of their tenure to render them unprofitable for the next tenant.

Anxiety can be further observed in visual representations of colonial territories through images such as maps. While cartography did, on the one hand, represent an explicit claim to sovereign authority over the represented territory, in contraposition it invariably drew attention to examples of incomplete colonial knowledge, or unconquered territories. James Rennell's map 'The peninsula of India from the Krishnah river to Cape Comorin'

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[13] C.A. Bayly, *Empire and information: intelligence gathering and social communication in India, 1780 – 1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 174 – 175.

(1788) primarily emphasised the extent of the kingdom of Mysore, whose ruler Tipu Sultan was a longstanding British enemy allied to the French.[14] In Chapter V, Irish maps such as the eighteenth-century one by Daniel Beaufort were shown to highlight those areas of Ireland considered worthy of consideration and development. Western portions such as Connaught and Galway had noticeably less detail and gave the appearance of being virtually cut off from the remainder of the island. While this does provide a good indication of the administration's priorities at the time, it is also possible to suggest an additional layer of interpretation: no matter the level of knowledge amassed, or the limits of administrative authority extended to further territories, there would always be gaps outside of British control.

At the same time, the chapters of this study also underline instances in which British experiences in Ireland and India differed, whether based on context, geography, or ideological beliefs. While there are notable parallels between British reactions to toryism and dacoity or thuggee, the explicit political dimension of toryism provided an added threat in the Irish context. Social delinquency represents another aspect in which British policies differed. By the end of the eighteenth century, Indian transportation was primarily restricted to individuals who had committed violent crimes which usually included murder and/or theft. Vagrants, on the other hand, were to be detained and fined, possibly even sentenced to short periods of labour, but never transported. The crimes of Irish convicts, on the other hand, ranged from petty theft to highway banditry, murder, and kidnapping – all of which, according to the English common law, were classified as felonies. The length of sentences was often similar, but the entire tone of early penal settlements in Southeast Asia and New South Wales differed dramatically. Whereas Irishmen and women were segregated and not always provided with the necessities to practice their faith in the penal colony, they were never barred from practice. Conversely, the orientalist beliefs of British officials in India regarding concepts such as *kala pani* meant that religion became part of the whole process of punishment. To cross the waters – a necessary consequence of transportation overseas – was thought to render the punishment worse than death.

The reconfiguration of land settlement policies also had noticeable differences. While such policies represented attempts to produce the same type of loyal and landed elites in each area, these efforts were met with considerably greater success in Ireland. Surrender and regrant was not a measure introduced to Bengal, though it could be suggested that the

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[14] James Rennell, 'The peninsula of India from the Krishnah river to Cape Comorin 1788,' BL Maps *52415.95.

intention behind the investiture of hereditary rights on the zamindars would have the same effect of binding them to the administration. There is also the simple fact that a large segment of the Catholic landowning class was replaced by a Protestant one in the seventeenth century, whereas no attempts were made to replace Bengali landholders with British ones (though many Bengali landlords were rendered bankrupt through these policies). Regarding material culture, finally, different needs in Ireland and India resulted in different artistic results. Until the early 1800s, the threat of a French invasion via Ireland remained a persistent fear for the Irish administration. Hence the production of extensive and detailed studies of the eastern Irish coast such as those by Major Charles Vallancey. In this militarised context, knowledge of each cove, harbour, and small town or village along the coast was deemed necessary and vital information. A French invasion threat was considerably less likely in India. Rivalry with the French certainly did spur on British expansion, and French allies such as Tipu Sultan of Mysore represented substantial dangers. Yet Great Britain itself would never be in danger of falling into French hands regardless of what outcome took place on the subcontinent. The commemorative art that grew in popularity throughout the eighteenth century also speaks to some of the different ideological approaches in each colonial sphere. By the end of the 1700s, the British chose to employ a more conciliatory style with Ireland against the impending backdrop of the Act of Union which came into effect in 1801. This explains why the ceiling paintings in Dublin Castle, for example, highlight the supposed benefits introduced to Ireland through English occupation, and why they carefully depict the peaceful coexistence of Britannia and Hibernia. Such was not the case in India, where victories against longstanding enemies such as Tipu in the 1790s increased territorial expansion and different racialized views resulted in highly militaristic images that lauded British strength, martial valour, and accomplishment.

According to Marc Bloch, uncovering differences between societies is one of the most profitable outcomes of comparative history. For it is through the consideration of differences that what he refers to as the 'original' quality of each is made apparent.[15] This is certainly true, but at the same time the investigation of differences through comparative history also renders those elements in which there are similarities all the more striking. Connected history represents yet another tool which illustrates the flow of ideas between geographically remote places and the networks that operated alongside one another, sometimes passing through

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[15] 'Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes (1928),' in Marc Bloch, *Histoire et historiens*, ed. Étienne Bloch (Paris: Armand Colin, 1995), 107.

Britain before reaching other colonial territories, and sometimes bypassing the imperial centre entirely. Early modern and eighteenth-century Ireland and India were quite distinct in many respects, not least the temporal time spans in which the establishment of a British presence took place. Nevertheless, comparing two such disparate areas of the empire allows historians to break down the boundaries of Atlantic and Asian, settlement and trade, religious and ethnic divisions. It highlights significant patterns that emerged in both places regarding British attitudes towards empire and colonial subjects, as well as the practices undertaken to implement British rule. Dominated by the same persistent anxieties, British officials frequently reacted to similar challenges in ways that went beyond local considerations.

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