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978-1-107-13515-4 - The 1857 Indian Uprising and the British Empire

Jill C. Bender

Excerpt

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## 1 Introduction

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In the early morning hours of August 6, 1857, the governor of the Cape Colony and high commissioner of South Africa, Sir George Grey, awoke to find that a ship had arrived with urgent news from India.<sup>1</sup> The sepoys, Grey was informed, had mutinied. But the dire news did not end there. Not only had the Indian soldiers mutinied, but they had marched to Delhi, seized control of the town, and were “daily receiving large reinforcements” from the surrounding country.<sup>2</sup> Much of northern India, it seemed, was up in arms against British power, and the governor of Bombay sought assistance before the situation worsened. Twenty-five years later, Grey could still recall his initial alarm that the rebellion posed “a great danger” to the British Empire as a whole, and that the proper response would necessitate “instantaneous changes in every part of South Africa.”<sup>3</sup> Grey, the most senior colonial official in southern Africa, recognized that the impact of the 1857 uprising would not be confined to India.<sup>4</sup>

Grey was not alone. Ireland’s *Nation* reported in July 1857: “The latest intelligence from India has struck terror throughout the length and breadth of the British dominions.”<sup>5</sup> From Ireland to New Zealand, the revolt unnerved colonial officialdom. The commanding military officer of New Zealand’s imperial forces argued that the “onslaught” would affect not only India, but also “the interest of the nation at large.” It

<sup>1</sup> There is some dispute as to just how early Grey was awakened. In 1933, Arthur N. Field printed a letter written by Grey some twenty-five years after the uprising. In the letter, Grey recalled that the letter from India had been placed in his hands at 4 a.m. Years earlier, however, the *Timaru Herald* claimed that Charles Rathbone Low’s *The History of the Indian Navy* had reported that Grey did not receive the news until 8 a.m. See Arthur N. Field, “Did Sir George Grey Save India?” *The Mirror* (October 1933), 27; *Timaru Herald*, October 11, 1892.

<sup>2</sup> Western Cape Archives and Records Service (hereafter WCARS) GH 39/9, Lord Elphinstone to Sir George Grey, June 29, 1857.

<sup>3</sup> Sir George Grey, quoted in Field, “Did Sir George Grey Save India?” 27.

<sup>4</sup> See also the National Archives (hereafter TNA) CO 48/383, Sir George Grey to H. Labouchere, August 7, 1857.

<sup>5</sup> *Nation*, July 4, 1857.

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was a revolt that “every British subject” had “an individual interest in suppressing.” And, local difficulties aside, New Zealand had a “bounden duty” to respond.<sup>6</sup>

In England, the MP for Hertfordshire (and future Colonial Secretary), E. B. Lytton, sought to capture the severity of the situation by comparing it to the recent Crimean War. The “war” in India, he explained to his constituents, “is not, like the Russian war, for the assertion of an abstract principle of justice, for the defence of a foreign throne, or for protection against a danger that did not threaten ourselves, more than the rest of Europe.” Instead, he argued, “it is for the maintenance of the British Empire. It is a struggle of life and death for our rank among the rulers of the earth.”<sup>7</sup> Britons throughout the empire did not dismiss the 1857 Indian rebellion as a distant crisis, with no immediate implications. Rather, they recognized the uprising as an imperial crisis, with widespread repercussions.

This book, too, acknowledges the 1857 Indian uprising as a conflict with empire-wide consequences, and traces its ramifications across Ireland, New Zealand, Jamaica, and southern Africa. In doing so, this study seeks to “decenter” the empire, demonstrating that London, although important, was not always at the center of activity.<sup>8</sup> In response to the uprising, Britons throughout the empire debated colonial responsibility, methods of counter-insurrection, military recruiting practices, and colonial governance. Even after the rebellion had been suppressed, the violence of 1857 continued to have lasting effect. The fears generated by the uprising transformed how the British understood their relationship with the “colonized” and shaped their own expectations of themselves as “colonizer.” Placing the 1857 Indian uprising within an imperial context reminds us that methods of colonial rule were developed neither in one location nor by one individual, and the flows of information from one colony to another played a crucial role in shaping imperial practice.

### India and 1857

Unrest among the sepoys of northern India, which had been apparent for months, erupted in rebellion on May 10, 1857, when troops stationed at Meerut turned against their European officers. Within twenty-four

<sup>6</sup> Archives New Zealand (hereafter ANZ) G13 2/21, Colonel R. H. Wynyard to Governor Thomas Gore Brown, October 3, 1857.

<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Kalikinkar Datta, *Reflections on the “Mutiny,” Adharchandra Mookerjee Lectures, 1964* (Calcutta University Press, 1967), 51.

<sup>8</sup> The term “decenter” is adopted from Durba Ghosh and Dane Kennedy, eds. *Decentring Empire: Britain, India and the Transcolonial World* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2006).

hours, the mutineers had marched the thirty-six miles to Delhi, taken control of the city, and secured the support of additional regiments. The mutineers' capture of the former capital of the Mughal Empire was as much a symbolic success as a military victory. Upon their arrival in the city, the mutineers declared the aged heir to the Mughal throne, Bahadur Shah Zafar, to be the emblematic leader of the uprising.<sup>9</sup> The rebellion spread from Delhi – both demographically and geographically – as peasants, artisans, laborers, and others joined the fighting.<sup>10</sup>

The rebels, who often outnumbered the small British garrisons, experienced considerable success during the early months of the uprising. Most famously, in June 1857, the European garrison at Cawnpore surrendered to their Indian opponents with the understanding that all survivors would be permitted safe passage to Allahabad via the Ganges.<sup>11</sup> The rebel commander, Nana Sahib, and his followers ambushed the Europeans as they were boarding the boats, however, killing nearly all of the men and taking approximately two hundred women and children captive. Two weeks later, as British troops approached, the rebels killed the women and children and deposited their remains in a nearby well.<sup>12</sup> The events at Cawnpore immediately went down in the annals of the British Empire as a striking example of Indian barbarity. For example, Surgeon A. D. Home was still *en route* to India when he received word of the killings. On board ship, anchored off the coast of India, he reported that the massacre was “uppermost in everyones [*sic*] mind.” Two months later, he had the opportunity to visit the scene, concluding that “Altogether, it had a most saddening effect on one to think that our shame was still unavenged.”<sup>13</sup> Throughout the empire, the Cawnpore massacre provided the British the impetus for retribution and seemingly justified the already growing use of brutal force.

<sup>9</sup> For a detailed account of the rebellion as it occurred in Delhi, see William Dalrymple, *The Last Mughal. The Fall of a Dynasty: Delhi, 1857* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007).

<sup>10</sup> Although the majority of the violence occurred in the northern Indian Gangetic plain and central India, recent scholarship has suggested that the rebellion also reached parts of the east and north. Biswamoy Pati, “Introduction: The Nature of 1857,” in *The 1857 Rebellion*, ed. Biswamoy Pati (Oxford University Press, 2007), xiii.

<sup>11</sup> Throughout this study, I have used nineteenth-century British place names for continuity across colonial sites.

<sup>12</sup> There is a considerable literature on Cawnpore alone. For example, see Rudrangshu Mukherjee, “‘Satan Let Loose upon Earth’: The Kanpur Massacres in India in the Revolt of 1857,” *Past and Present* 128 (August 1990), 92–116; Barbara English, “The Kanpur Massacres in India and the Revolt of 1857,” *Past and Present* 142 (February 1994), 169–178; Rudrangshu Mukherjee, “The Kanpur Massacres in India in the Revolt of 1857: Reply,” *Past and Present* 142 (February 1994), 178–189.

<sup>13</sup> Wellcome Library, Royal Army Medical Corp Muniments Collection, RAMC/268, Box 28, Diary of Anthony Dickson Home, surgeon, 90th Foot.

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The 1857 Indian rebellion was recognized at the time (and remembered) as an extraordinarily violent conflict during which both sides committed horrific atrocities.<sup>14</sup> For the British, the Cawnpore massacre was often at the center of these memories, as many argued that it exemplified the cruel tendencies of the sepoys – illustrating “all that an Indian imagination could conceive of horrible bestiality.”<sup>15</sup> The British, for their part, destroyed entire villages rumored to have ties to the rebels. They hanged Muslims with pork stuffed into their mouths and forced Hindus to lick the bloodstains from various sites, including the Bibighur at Cawnpore. Additionally, British troops blew mutineer-rebels from guns – a method of punishment that not only made identification difficult and decent burial nearly impossible, but also demonstrated British control over Indian bodies.<sup>16</sup> As Frederick Sleight Roberts, a young subaltern at the time of the uprising, noted: “The death that seems to have the most effect is being blown from a gun. It is rather a horrible sight, but in these times we cannot be particular.”<sup>17</sup> Indeed, British officials would require other Indians to watch the execution by cannon. Sprayed with the blood and bone of the killed individual, the message was not lost on observers. According to the memoirs of Esther Anne Nicholson, the practice “seemed at the time a somewhat cruelly severe sentence, but probably those in authority were even then aware that a dangerous spirit of disaffection was wide-spread among the native troops throughout India and considered it necessary to make an example to overawe others.”<sup>18</sup> While the atrocities committed at the hands of the Indians allegedly reflected the barbaric nature of the colonized, those committed by the British were explained as purely reactive and the only legitimate way to reestablish control.

With the fall of Delhi in September 1857, the tides began to turn in Britain’s favor. During the following months, British authorities took Bahadur Shah Zafar captive and hanged twenty-one of his sons for their

<sup>14</sup> Kaushik Roy, “Combat, Combat Motivation and the Construction of Identities: A case Study” in Crispin Bates, gen. ed., *Mutiny at the Margins: New Perspectives on the Indian Uprising of 1857*, 7 vols., vol. IV, *Military Aspects of the Indian Uprising*, ed. Gavin Rand and Crispin Bates (New Delhi: Sage, 2013), 26–31; Francis Robinson, “The Muslims of Upper India and the Shock of the Mutiny,” in *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia* (Oxford University Press, 2000), 138–155.

<sup>15</sup> Wellcome Library, Royal Army Medical Corp Muniments Collection, RAMC/268, Box 28, Diary of Anthony Dickson Home, surgeon, 90th Foot.

<sup>16</sup> T. A. Heathcote, *The Indian Army: The Garrison of British Imperial India 1822–1922* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1974), 87.

<sup>17</sup> Frederick Sleight Roberts to his mother, June 11, 1857, in Frederick Sleight Roberts, *Letters Written during the Indian Mutiny* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1924), 12.

<sup>18</sup> Esther Anne Nicholson, “An Irishwoman’s Account of the Indian Mutiny,” ed. Anthony Bishop, *The Irish Sword* 9 (1969): 39.

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involvement in the uprising. Following the recapture of Delhi, the British were free to focus their efforts on regaining control of Lucknow, where Europeans and loyal Indians were under siege in the British Residency. Although assistance arrived in September, British troops did not successfully evacuate the Residency until November, and the city itself remained in rebel hands until March 1858. Regardless, the November relief of Lucknow persuaded the British that they had regained the upper hand and they shifted their attention from suppressing the uprising to rebuilding British control. Officially, the British declared the fighting over in July 1858; sporadic guerrilla warfare, however, continued to challenge their power.

After the rebellion had been suppressed, many Britons were consumed by questions of what had gone wrong in India. The realization that the sepoys, “all thought so faithful and true,”<sup>19</sup> had rebelled against their European officers shocked many and elicited widespread discussion and debate on why the uprising had occurred and how future rebellions might be avoided. Initially, many blamed the unrest on British plans to distribute the Enfield rifle among Indian regiments. First manufactured in 1853, the Enfield rifle represented a technological improvement. To simplify the loading process, the bullet and powder had been combined into a single paper cartridge, one end of which was coated with grease to protect the cartridges from the elements and improve the loading process. To load the gun, a soldier had to bite off one end of the cartridge, pour the powder into the muzzle, and then push the bullet down into the barrel. As the manufacturers reportedly used beef or pork tallow to grease the cartridges, this loading process posed a problem for both Hindu and Muslim soldiers. For Hindus, any contact with beef fat would result in pollution; Muslims, on the other hand, were strictly forbidden to eat pork.<sup>20</sup> The uprising, many authorities argued, began in response to these religious insults and any civil revolt that followed was nothing more than the effect of mob mentality.

The cartridge affair provided a convenient explanation for the rebellion, one that did not openly challenge the legitimacy of British colonial control or validate Indian unrest. Still, questions emerged regarding the East India Company, and its military practices and methods of administration came under scrutiny. The Company, critics argued, had become

<sup>19</sup> Frederick Sleight Roberts to his father, General Abraham Roberts CB, May 22, 1857, in Roberts, *Letters Written during the Indian Mutiny*, 6.

<sup>20</sup> Kim A. Wagner, *The Great Fear of 1857: Rumours, Conspiracies, and the Making of the Indian Uprising* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2010), 27–32; Daniel R. Headrick, *Power over Peoples: Technology, Environments, and Western Imperialism, 1400 to the Present* (Princeton University Press, 2010), 260–261.

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so complacent in its rule that military authorities had taken the sepoys for granted and failed to maintain a disciplined military or civil base. As a result, by 1857, the Indian Army was rumored to consist of discontented sepoys under the incompetent leadership of “gout-ridden invalids of seventy.” Similarly, the Company’s administrative rule in India had become increasingly “impersonal and remote.”<sup>21</sup> According to Frederick Sleight Roberts, Company officials rarely left the boundaries of Calcutta and lacked any knowledge of those individuals under their control.<sup>22</sup> The very decision to issue the Enfield rifle in an environment ripe with unrest showed little awareness of the Indians’ beliefs or their growing discontent.

In the aftermath of the rebellion, colonial authorities expressed concern that the Enfield rifle was only one demonstration of the Company’s lack of cultural awareness. Beginning in the 1820s, the Company had introduced legislative measures designed to reform Indian economic and social practices and introduce policies of Anglicization; the reform impulse increased under the leadership of Lord Dalhousie during the 1840s and 1850s. Following the uprising, these reform measures were subjected to significant criticism as colonial authorities argued that Company interference in Indian social practices and customs had encouraged unrest. Similarly, support for Christian missionaries also waned. Initially, the Company had discouraged efforts to proselytize directly to the Indians, arguing that such practices would disrupt or damage commercial interests and trade relations. Revisions to the East India Company charter in 1813 and again in 1833 relaxed Company policy, however, and ended many of the restrictions on missionary activities.<sup>23</sup> By 1857, missionaries and the colonial state had begun to collaborate on reform projects.<sup>24</sup> As a result, when the uprising erupted in 1857, European missionaries found themselves subject to blame. For those skeptical of the missionary enterprise and reform impulse, the 1857 Indian uprising appeared an inevitable rejection of Christianity. Indians were cast as religious fanatics, who missionaries had pushed toward a conversion for which they were not yet prepared. In doing so, the missionaries had destroyed the trust established between the British and their Indian subjects. As James Graham, a member of the Commissariat, explained to

<sup>21</sup> Philip Mason, *A Matter of Honour: An Account of the Indian Army, its Officers and Men* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), 313.

<sup>22</sup> Frederick Sleight Roberts to his mother, August 28, 1857, in *Letters Written during the Indian Mutiny*, 51.

<sup>23</sup> Andrew Porter, “Religion, Missionary Enthusiasm, and Empire,” in *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, vol. III, *The Nineteenth Century*, ed. Andrew Porter (Oxford University Press, 1999), 230–231.

<sup>24</sup> Ian Copland, “Christianity as an Arm of Empire: The Ambiguous Case of India under the Company, c. 1813–1858,” *Historical Journal* 49, 4 (2006), 1025–1054.

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his sister in July 1857: “Yes, my dear Sarah, know yourself and let all your friends know that by your subscriptions to missionaries you are purchasing the murders of your friends and relations.”<sup>25</sup>

Whether one pointed to the cartridges, the military, the East India Company, or the missionaries to explain the uprising, many concluded that the British knew little about their Indian subjects. These interpretations revealed a “gap in knowledge” between the Company and Indian society. As Tony Ballantyne has argued, it quickly became “clear to most British that the rebellion represented a failure to understand the native mind.”<sup>26</sup> In response, authorities introduced a series of political, economic, and military changes designed to strengthen British control and diminish the possibility of another uprising. Politically, the Government of India Act (1858) abolished the East India Company and consolidated control in the hands of the Crown. After 1857, a Crown viceroy took the leadership position once held by a governor-general. Additionally, a member of the British cabinet acted as secretary of state for India and exercised control over Indian affairs, effectively replacing the Company’s board of directors.

On the ground in India, South Asians became increasingly eligible for low-level government positions, allowing them to be involved in the functioning of the state – particularly at the local level. It was thought that having Indian input into policies would minimize future chances of rebellion. Economically, the British moved toward a system of direct taxation and land policies favorable to landlords and cultivators. Militarily, the Crown assumed control of the Company’s regiments and established a new Indian Army, officered entirely by Europeans. Furthermore, the British took control of the artillery, increased the number of European regiments, decreased the number of Indians in the army, and shifted their recruiting efforts to regions that had remained loyal to the British. Socially, the changes reflected British distrust of the Indians and an effort both to improve surveillance of and avoid intervention in Indian cultural practices.<sup>27</sup> Many of these changes were announced throughout India

<sup>25</sup> James Graham to his sister, Sarah, July 29, 1857, in A. T. Harrison, ed. *The Graham Indian Mutiny Papers* (Belfast: Public Records Office of Northern Ireland, 1980), 74.

<sup>26</sup> Tony Ballantyne, “Information and Intelligence in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century Crisis in the British Empire,” in *Endless Empire: Spain’s Retreat, Europe’s Eclipse, America’s Decline*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy, Josep Maria Fradera, and Stephen Jacobson (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 172.

<sup>27</sup> Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*, 3rd edn (London: Routledge, 2011), 80–81; Clare Anderson, *The Indian Uprising of 1857–8: Prisons, Prisoners and Rebellion* (London: Anthem Press, 2007), 13. See also Thomas R. Metcalf, *The Aftermath of Revolt: India, 1857–1870* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964). For changes to the military specifically, see David Omissi, *The Sepoy and the Raj: The Indian Army, 1860–1940* (Houndmills: Macmillan in association with King’s College London, 1994); Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race*



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via the Queen's Proclamation (1858), in which the British also assured their South Asian subjects that they were not looking to enlarge their territorial holdings and would uphold the rights and customs of India's traditional leaders when administering the law.<sup>28</sup>

Conventionally, the historiography of 1857 coalesced around questions of causation. Britons – often with ties to either the Company's civil or military administration – began to pen histories of the uprising before the fighting had even come to an end. These first interpretations reflected existing debates regarding methods of colonial rule in India: many of the Company's civil administrators insisted that the uprising had been a mutiny, while military authorities often argued that the insurrection reflected widespread discontent.<sup>29</sup> According to Gautam Chakravarty, the first Indian histories of the uprising veered little from these early British accounts and provided the authors with a means to express their loyalty to the colonial government.<sup>30</sup> With the growth of Indian nationalism during the late nineteenth century, this changed. In particular, in 1909, V. D. Savarkar published his controversial work, *The Indian War of Independence, 1857*, which depicted the uprising as an organized, nationalist movement.<sup>31</sup> Although banned in India almost until independence, Savarkar's book sparked additional nationalist accounts, and the “mutiny

*and Masculinity in British Imperial Culture, 1857–1914* (Manchester University Press, 2004).

<sup>28</sup> Parliamentary Papers (hereafter PP) 1908 (324) LXXXV, *East India (proclamations). Return to an address of the Honourable House of Commons, dated 9 November 1908; copies of the proclamation of the King, Emperor of India, to the princes and peoples of India, of the 2nd day of November 1908, and the proclamation of the late Queen Victoria of the 1st day of November 1858, to the princes, chiefs, and people of India, 2–3.*

<sup>29</sup> For more on this debate, see Gautam Chakravarty, “Mutiny, War, or Small War? Re-visiting an Old Debate,” in *Mutiny at the Margins*, vol. IV, *Military Aspects of the Indian Uprising*, 135–146. For examples of early British histories of the uprising, see Charles Ball, *The History of the Indian Mutiny: Giving a Detailed Account of the Sepoy Insurrection in India; and a Concise History of the Great Military Events which have Tended to Consolidate British Empire in Hindostan*, 2 vols. (London and New York: The London Printing and Publishing Company, [1858–1859]); Sir John William Kaye and G. B. Malleon, *Kaye's and Malleon's History of the Indian Mutiny of 1857–8*, 6 vols. (London and New York: Longman's Green, 1898–1899).

<sup>30</sup> Specifically, Chakravarty points to Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's *Asbab-e-Bagawat-e-Hind (Causes of the Indian Rebellion)*, Dorabhoy Franjee's *The British Rule Contrasted with its Predecessors*, and Sambhu Chandra Mukherjee's *The Mutinies and the People*, which were all published within two years of the rebellion. This Indian compliance shifted first with the publication of Rajanikanta Gupta's *Sipahi Juddher Itihasa*, written between 1870 and 1900, and more notably with the publication of Savarkar's *The Indian War of Independence, 1857* in 1909. Chakravarty, “Mutiny, War, or Small War? Re-visiting an Old Debate,” 135–136.

<sup>31</sup> Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, *The Indian War of Independence, 1857* (Bombay: Phoenix Publications, [1947]).



or war” debate continued to define histories of the uprising well into the twentieth century.<sup>32</sup>

Following the event’s centenary, the 1857 uprising became a subject of sustained academic attention. Historians shifted their focus from narrative accounts of the uprising to its impact, examining the lasting implications for British rule in India.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, with the development of the Subaltern Studies project, scholars moved our understanding of the rebellion from a story told through the filter of Company and military archives to one that includes local sources such as land revenue and judicial records, vernacular sources, and newspapers.<sup>34</sup> The subject also captured the attention of literary and cultural studies scholars, who have addressed the cultural impact of the rebellion, recognizing its implications for notions of gender, race, popular culture, and British identity.<sup>35</sup>

Much of this research has revealed the diversity of those involved and shaped by the events of 1857–1858. With the renewed interest in imperial history, scholars have also begun to explore the colonial and global dimensions of the uprising. In various articles, chapters, and collected volumes, they have assessed the response to 1857 in Ireland, southern Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Russia, Singapore, the Caribbean, and continental Europe. Most recently, drawing inspiration from the Subaltern Studies project, the multi-volume *Mutiny at the Margins* has sought to invoke marginality historiographically, geographically, and socially.<sup>36</sup> Of the series’ seven volumes, the second engages the most directly with the intentions of the “new imperial history,” especially the assertion

<sup>32</sup> For example, S. N. Sen, who was commissioned by the Indian government to write a history of 1857 in time for the event’s centenary, concluded that the uprising had begun as a mutiny before widening into a political revolt. See Surendra Nath Sen, *Eighteen Fifty-Seven* (Delhi: Publications Division Ministry of Information & Broadcasting Government of India, 1957).

<sup>33</sup> Metcalf, *The Aftermath of Revolt*; C. A. Bayly, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780–1870* (Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>34</sup> For an example, see Gautam Bhadra, “Four Rebels of Eighteen-Fifty-Seven,” in *Selected Subaltern Studies*, ed. Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Oxford University Press, 1988), 129–175.

<sup>35</sup> Alison Blunt, “Embodying War: British Women and Domestic Defilement in the Indian ‘Mutiny’, 1857–8,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 26, 3 (2000), 403–428; Jenny Sharpe, “The Unspeakable Limits of Rape: Colonial Violence and Counter Insurgency,” in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A reader*, ed. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (Harlow: Pearson Education, 1993), 221–243. Similarly, historians have also examined the impact of 1857 on notions of popular culture. Recently, for example, Christopher Herbert and Gautam Chakravarty have turned to the genre of the “Mutiny” novel, debating whether the publications reveal growing British jingoism or discomfort with imperial expansion. See Chakravarty, *The Indian Mutiny and the British Imagination*; Christopher Herbert, *War of No Pity: The Indian Mutiny and Victorian Trauma* (Princeton University Press, 2008).

<sup>36</sup> Bates, gen. ed. *Mutiny at the Margins*.

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that Britain and its colonies be studied within one analytical frame. Although the chapters define marginality in a variety of ways (including, class, religion, national identity, and race), most focus on Britons, Indians, or Eurasians in Britain and India. As a result, the volume effectively reveals the “bidirectional impact and dialogic nature” of imperialism, but misses the multi-directional connections so crucial to the mid-nineteenth-century British imperial project.<sup>37</sup>

Other scholars have begun to consider the uprising’s reverberations in multiple colonial sites. In particular, studies of Indian migration and transportation have provided insight into the rebellion’s widespread social and economic repercussions. For example, Clare Anderson has turned to the uprising as a window into “the nature and meaning of incarceration in colonial north India.”<sup>38</sup> Although her primary focus is penal practices on the subcontinent, she also examines the outcry that arose among Singapore’s European population in response to proposals to transport convict-rebels to the Straits Settlements.<sup>39</sup> Ultimately, Anderson concludes, colonial authorities opted to establish a penal colony in the Andaman Islands. Similarly, Marina Carter and Crispin Bates have revealed a variety of responses to the proposal to disperse the suspected mutineers throughout the British Empire. The 1857 uprising, they point out, coincided with an increase in global sugar prices and colonial authorities were as likely to view the convict-rebels as cheap labor than to see them as a threat to colonial security. The resulting debates and diverse responses, Carter and Bates argue, demonstrate the “influence of local interests over empire-wide concerns.”<sup>40</sup>

These studies and others have provided a fascinating glimpse into the widespread suspicion surrounding Indians in the wake of the uprising.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, as Kim Wagner and D. K. Lahiri Choudhury have demonstrated, fear continued to shape colonial practices in India during the second half of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth.<sup>42</sup> All of

<sup>37</sup> Andrea Major and Crispin Bates, “Introduction: Fractured Narratives and Marginal Experiences,” in *Mutiny at the Margins*, vol. II, *Britain and the Indian Uprising*, ed. Major and Bates (New Delhi: Sage, 2013), xix.

<sup>38</sup> Anderson, *The Indian Uprising of 1857–8*, 2. <sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 107–117.

<sup>40</sup> Marina Carter and Crispin Bates, “Empire and Locality: A Global Dimension to the 1857 Indian Uprising,” *Journal of Global History* 5, 1 (March 2010), 73.

<sup>41</sup> See Rajesh Rai, “The 1857 Panic and the Fabrication of an Indian ‘Menace’ in Singapore,” *Modern Asian Studies* 47, 2 (March 2013), 365–405.

<sup>42</sup> Kim Wagner, “‘Treading upon Fires’: The ‘Mutiny’-Motif and Colonial Anxieties in British India,” *Past and Present* 218 (February 2013), 159–197; D. K. Lahiri Choudhury, “Sinews of Panic and the Nerves of Empire: The Imagined State’s Entanglement with Information Panic, India c. 1880–1912,” *Modern Asian Studies* 38, 4 (2004), 965–1002.