



CAPTIVE WOMEN AND MANLY MISSIONARIES

Narratives of Women Missionaries in India

Caroline Lewis

IN 1860, the evangelical writer Maria Louisa Charlesworth wrote in support of British foreign missions to women in India:

The claim before us is, that we emancipate millions of captive women. Yet the work of emancipation is not, alone, the work of women. Havelock did not think it was—when he died in victory for captive women and children.... And shall any say that there is no moral chivalry in the brothers of our land? that they are only ready, when the sword is in their hand, to endure the self-denial that alone wins victory? that when physical energy is at rest, they cannot rise to the calm home endurance of self-sacrifice, in order to achieve the liberation of countless women and children, from a captivity more hopeless and more deathlike by far than that of Lucknow.... Will not Christian men draw back the darkening veil, and prove to the women of the East that ‘a BROTHER is born for adversity?’¹

Charlesworth’s tract utilised stories from the 1857 uprisings to add pathos and force to her polemic about the need to revive the evangelical project to Indian women. By using the captivity of white women in Kanpur as an analogy for the spiritual ‘captivity’ of Indian women and by goading Christian men to take up spiritual arms and recreate the ‘rescue’ mission of Sir Henry Havelock, she was evoking a set of well-established ideas about the gendered meaning of the Indian revolt. Although Charlesworth’s tract did little to challenge these assumptions, and the prose collapsed into predictable clichés about British men rescuing Indian women from behind the ‘darkening veil’, the uprisings of 1857 also produced more complex texts by British women missionaries, which were structured around the multiple gender roles played out by men and women. As Anna Johnston notes in her study of missionary writing during this period, texts

by missionary women are hard to come by,² yet the two accounts of 1857 that form the basis of this article are important for more than their rarity as sources. Not only do they problematise existing tropes about British women's experiences and understandings of 1857, undermining the idea of a shared British response to the revolt, but they also reveal a great deal about the woman missionary's sense of self and of mission at a time when the evangelisation of India was becoming an increasingly 'feminised' project. In terms of raw numbers of missionaries³ and the gendered inflection of the ideologies that motivated evangelisation to India,⁴ British women became the force that shaped the missionary project in India in the second half of the nineteenth century. As Jeffrey Cox points out in his study of the Church Missionary Society's mission in Punjab, 'The typical missionary in the late nineteenth century was not a male itinerant preacher but a female schoolteacher or administrator.'⁵ These women occupied a unique and sometimes ambivalent position within British colonial society, and their accounts provide a complex insight into how both their gender and their evangelicalism shaped their interpretation of the uprising.

In this chapter I explore two accounts of 1857 by British women missionaries. The first 'text', a series of letters that appeared in the *Female Missionary Intelligencer* in 1858, was written by Jane Goodenough, a woman missionary of the Female Education Society (FES)⁶ who ran an orphan school in Secundra. The letters were written during her time at Agra Fort from September 1857 onwards and reflect on her experiences of 'captivity' along with other members of the European community. Jane Goodenough was sent to north India in 1856 by the first foreign mission society in Britain to prepare single women for evangelical work overseas. At this stage in the progress of nineteenth century Protestant missions in Britain, the main foreign mission societies were closed to single women, although individual mission stations in India sometimes appealed to the FES for single women to augment their work. The number of single women missionaries sent to India was still small in the 1850s, but the FES also became an important source of direct funding for schools, orphanages and training institutions in India that subscribed to their aims. In 1853 they started a magazine to publicise their work. The *Female Missionary Intelligencer* was the first British women's missionary periodical and the venue for Jane Goodenough's letters about her experience of life in Agra Fort.

The second text is a book-length treatment of the history of missionary activity in north India by Mary Weitbrecht, the wife of a Church Missionary Society missionary in Burdwan. By the time that Weitbrecht wrote *Missionary Sketches in North India, with References to Recent Events* in 1858,⁷ she was already a celebrated writer on mission work in India and had strong interdenominational connections with foreign mission societies in Britain. In 1858, the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*,⁸ a national evangelical publication, commended the *Missionary Sketches* as a contribution to the missionary perspective on 1857 and reviewed it alongside Alexander Duff's celebrated account, *The Indian*

Rebellion: Its Causes and Results. Weitbrecht's status as a commentator on 1857 was augmented by her appearance alongside Duff in such a notable publication.

This chapter analyses the responses of Jane Goodenough and Mary Weitbrecht to 1857 and examines the ways in which gender roles were played out in their accounts. Stories of the captivity and violation of white women were central to British press constructions of the events of 1857, as was the role of British men as the protectors and rescuers of European women. Symbolic gender roles structured a variety of textual responses to 1857, including those studied here.⁹ Jane Goodenough narrated her story of 1857 through different versions of her identity as a woman and constructed a variety of roles for the white, male subjects at Agra Fort. Mary Weitbrecht put white women at the centre of victim narratives in her work in order to enhance and valorise the role of missionary men and Christian masculinity. Both writers used gender as a means of negotiating a sense of 'Britishness' and a sense of Christian selfhood during the uprising and its aftermath. I will also argue that these accounts of 1857 display an ambivalence about asserting a collective or 'shared' 'white response'.

The Eye of the Storm: Jane Goodenough at Agra Fort

The centrepiece of the *Female Missionary Intelligencer's* reporting of 1857 was a series of letters written by a woman missionary who was virtually imprisoned at Agra Fort with other white Europeans, native Christians and soldiers. Jane Goodenough's letters became the focus of the special 'Mutiny in India' section of the magazine, which lasted from January until May 1858.¹⁰ The letters recorded her experiences at Agra Fort from 1 September 1857 to 31 January 1858. There were other women missionaries who wrote short letters about their experiences for the magazine,¹¹ but Goodenough's account differed from those of the Calcutta- and Landour-based women, because of her proximity to iconic events in the uprising, and because her letters became an important source of 'information' for Mary Weitbrecht. Weitbrecht reworked the Agra Fort letters in her book-length review of missions and mission history in north India, which incorporated a carefully organised polemic about the causes of the 1857 uprising. Mary Weitbrecht's *Missionary Sketches in North India with Reference to Recent Events* ensured that Goodenough's account circulated beyond the limited ambit of the *Female Missionary Intelligencer*¹² and received notice in the national evangelical press.

As an immediate response to the unfolding of events near Delhi in 1857, Jane Goodenough's letters were very different from the more propagandist narratives found in Weitbrecht's *Missionary Sketches* of 1858. Even though the letters did engage with emerging narratives, rumours and discourses of 1857 from other

sources, her treatment of them was erratic, shifting and unsystematic. She began her letters to the female missionary public back in Britain with an initial assertion that she was, in many ways, not an authority on the events unfolding around her, and readers in Britain with access to newspapers were more likely to be knowledgeable about the uprisings:

As you are most likely better acquainted with the past and present state of this country than I am, shut up in this Fort, hearing nothing of what is going on around us, or, if a report spreads about any matter, afraid to believe it, if it be good, because we have been so frequently deceived.¹³

In her letter dated 20 October 1857 she retracted this position and argued that, ‘You seem to think that the accounts given of the terrible mutinies in India are exaggerated. I, for one, could almost wish they were; but alas! They are all too true.’¹⁴ The letters from October 1857 onwards began to emphasise Miss Goodenough’s authority as a commentator on events in India. Rumour, reports from friends, suspect military intelligence and domestic anecdotes were integrated into her letters, providing her with source material with which to counter reports that played down the scale and severity of the uprisings. She displayed little anxiety at this point about the veracity of her new sources, stating, for example, that, ‘[w]e hear, on good authority, that servants set fire to their masters’ houses and bungalows, carried off their property, and would, no doubt, have taken their lives.’¹⁵

The vilification of servants, evident in the previous extract, was a particular feature of her letters and central to Goodenough’s attempt to construct a story of blame. At one level, this feature of Goodenough’s narration conformed to aspects of an emerging public discourse, or ‘white response’, to the uprising. Satadru Sen and others¹⁶ have argued that accounts of 1857 became ‘domesticated’ and retold through the idiom of domestic drama. The account of servant insurrection in the colonial home was, for example, also repeated by Mrs Willing, a missionary woman in Landour, Himalayas, who wrote letters for the *Female Missionary Intelligencer* detailing her fears of domestic rebellion rather than her actual experience.¹⁷ Goodenough produced similar narratives of servants turning on masters, and of Indians violating the white family, using reports of servant ‘insurrection’ to enable her to cite ‘authoritative’ sources outside the confines of Agra Fort and to establish credibility as a commentator on the uprisings. However, in Goodenough’s version of 1857 as a domestic drama it is the British male and, more poignantly for her, the male missionary patriarch who is the particular victim of servant violation and disloyalty. She comments, ‘Have I not heard the jests and seen the impudent laugh of the servants of the friends of mine when the family was in the deepest affliction, when the kind and tender-hearted master lay dying on his bed—a missionary too, one who had made his dealings with his servants a matter of conscience, as too many do not!’¹⁸ By foregrounding

the vulnerable male missionary, Goodenough was making the point that he was different from other European men who often did not, in her view, treat servants appropriately. This early anecdote was prescient: as a narrator, Goodenough constantly veered away from establishing a univocal white, British perspective on the experience of 1857, however clichéd and derivative her narrative was in other respects. She was also interested in reporting stories of alleged male suffering and victimhood, which were repeated throughout the letters, and which inflected the gender focus of her narrative.

Jane Goodenough's response to the events of 1857 was shaped by a conflict between a sense of herself as a Christian subject and her sense of loyalty to other white Britons. The Christian and British 'selves' are most visibly in conflict when relating the treatment of native Christians and when describing herself in relation to British soldiers. In her letter of 1 September 1857, native Christians occupy a symbolically loaded position at the gates of Agra Fort, and are not permitted to enter, despite the efforts of missionaries, 'until the firing had begun in earnest'.¹⁹ Goodenough reports that both Muslims and Hindus victimised them and 'many native Christians were murdered; it is said that even children, not Christians, but having Christian names, were butchered by those Mahometans, so great is their hatred of the Christian religion'.²⁰ In spite of identifying Muslims as the main persecutors of the native Christians, those who denied them entry into the fort, namely the British authorities, are symbolically vilified. She wrote bitterly that '[n]otwithstanding all that had been said, done and written by different missionaries [t]he authorities would not listen. "Nothing would happen;" "No room at the Fort".'²¹ The implied criticism of the British authorities is brief but profound—symbolically, they turned away the Christian 'holy family' like the innkeepers of Bethlehem in the Christian nativity story. This moment of distance from the white, colonial authorities, and the sense of the narrator as a Christian rather than a white, British subject is one of several moments in the letters when the narrator's sense of her own 'subjecthood' and belonging during the uprisings is ambivalent and conflicted.

Another such moment of ambivalence and ambiguity came during a long, diary-like letter of 20 October 1857, when Goodenough described the arrival of Colonel Greathed's column from Delhi on the morning of 10 October 1857, and their entry into the fort. Her identification with a sense of Britishness cohered around this moment—she wrote that '[i]t was a glorious sight indeed; and then to think that these were the dear, brave men who had risked their lives and fought before Delhi to save us, as well as to punish the murderers of our countrymen and women.'²² Her descriptions of soldiers allowed for her momentary inclusion in the collective 'we' of life at Agra Fort. She referred constantly to 'our own soldiers'; 'our militia men', 'our little army', until the reader might suspect the playing out of an erotic rescue fantasy by men on horseback, particularly when she noted that '[o]ur European Lancers presented a grand spectacle, such handsome faces, and tall, fine men.'²³ At one level she communicated a sense

of belonging to a country whose subjects were under threat, when she wrote of the murders of her 'country' people; however, she also played out the role of a female subject, eulogising military masculinity and romanticising her gaze. Yet her sense of belonging to this imperial moment as the troops arrived at Agra Fort was undermined by her criticism of her fellow English. She described seeing the troops pass while she was at the bazaar and claimed that:

I wanted to cheer them, but I was not able to do so; I smiled a welcome which many returned; but I did feel sorry that no one cheered them. Ah, India is a cold country in this respect; not like dear, happy England! The tender, gentle sympathizing feelings of Englishmen undergo a great change here. I suppose that circumstances harden those fine feelings which exhibit themselves on an occasion similar to this at home. I remember how we cheered and welcomed the poor sufferers from the Crimea.²⁴

This extract foregrounded Goodenough's sense of difference from the Britons who might have cheered the troops 'at home' but did not do so in India. More importantly, she called into question the ability of the British in India to acknowledge the shared nature of 1857, at least in public. She asserted that 'the Englishman' was transformed and hardened by the imperial encounter, which rendered him a very different 'subject' from the public patriot back home in Britain.

Despite the ambivalences of the previous extracts, Goodenough's letters eventually constructed a narrative perspective on life in the fort which reaffirmed her sense of 'self' as a missionary and as a Christian. Goodenough ministered to sick soldiers at the fort's hospital, and her accounts of this work were published in the *Female Missionary Intelligencer* in April 1858. Her new role as a missionary nurse echoed that of Florence Nightingale during the Crimean War. Indeed, Goodenough had evoked the 'poor sufferers from the Crimea' in her earlier critique of the Englishman in India, and towards the end of her letters, she seemed to rehearse the role of the battlefield nurse so celebrated by Nightingale. Goodenough reflected that:

My work was to give the poor sufferers water or any little nourishment the medical men allowed them; to bathe their feverish heads with vinegar and water; and to keep their wounds wet with the latter; as also to keep away the flies, which swarmed there as in the time of the plague.²⁵

The 'poor sufferers', who were soldiers returning from the Crimea in an earlier extract, were now transformed into the European soldiers in her 'care'. Her account of her relationship with military masculinity, I would argue, was one that had been fashioned by reports about women as nurses during the Crimean War, where female heroism found a celebrated place on the battlefields of the 1850s. Goodenough's Christian and missionary 'self' was also re-established

by her treatment of those in her care. When an Irish Private was brought to the hospital dying of cholera, Goodenough administered wine and the chance to obtain mercy: 'I begged him to pray to Christ alone, not to the Virgin Mary, nor to the saints, as they could not help him.'²⁶ Each soldier, however British and white, was subject to the deathbed treatment that typified conversion narratives in missionary texts. Dying soldiers were asked by Goodenough and other missionaries within to consider the 'guilt and consequences of sin, and the plan of salvation by Jesus Christ'.²⁷ The narrative perspective on life within Agra Fort at the end of her account became more typical of missionary conversion narratives. The 'heathen' subjects at the close of her letters were often British soldiers, and Goodenough's attempts at their conversion restored the powerful sense of distance between her Christian self and these British 'others'.

Goodenough's account of 1857 in the *Female Missionary Intelligencer* concluded with a self-dramatisation of herself as a ministering angel to suffering men and a powerful reassertion of the missionary world view. The gender roles in her letters certainly shifted in form and meaning, encompassing both her identity as a woman being 'rescued' by the handsome soldiers, and those soldiers being 'rescued', in turn, by her nursing skills and offers of salvation. The reference in the letters to the Crimea, and Goodenough's interest in the relationship between women and soldiers, suggests that she fashioned her account to develop a role appropriate to a mid-nineteenth century woman in battle. Heroic self-representation was certainly a feature of other female missionary writing of the period,²⁸ but Goodenough's account is particularly interesting for its evocation of female autonomy in the business of women's work. Significantly, however, this emerging, and rather triumphalist, sense of female selfhood, however Christian and keen to save the souls of those she nursed, was problematic for Mary Weitbrecht. Her accounts of 1857 modified the self-dramatisation of Jane Goodenough, and re-inscribed her into a story of 1857 that foregrounded missionary masculinity and emphasised narratives of female victimhood.

Mary Weitbrecht: Missionary Manliness and 1857

During the summer of 1857, the celebrated missionary wife and writer Mary Weitbrecht was in England touring the auxiliary institutions of the *Female Education Society* and preparing to submit a report on them to the metropolitan steering committee in London. Mrs Weitbrecht, as she was known, was something of an authority on women missionaries, having published *Female Missionaries in India* in 1843.²⁹ Weitbrecht was married to a Church Missionary Society missionary who worked largely in Burdwan, Bengal, and her perspective on women's missionary work in the 1840s was 'drawn from her experience as

a missionary wife rather than as a single woman like Jane Goodenough. Mary Weitbrecht, despite her prolific output and varied missionary activities, was a pragmatist about women's work in India rather than an ideologue. Her *Female Missionaries in India* acknowledged the value and importance of British women and their outreach to Indian females, but it certainly did not advocate a separate missionary project to evangelise Indian women, or 'an exclusive female sphere of missionary activity'.³⁰ She did not theorise, at this stage, about the civilisational uplift of Indian women and their families through targeted women's missions but argued instead:

There is, I know, a diversity of opinion on the point of single ladies going out to India, to engage in mission work; but as in practice they do it, and as there are societies both in England and on the continent which are organized for preparing and sending them forth, it seems desirable to describe the character and qualities that should appertain to the female labourer, irrespective of her being married or otherwise.³¹

In her early writing, Weitbrecht saw women inflecting the work of Protestant missions with 'the affectionate heart of the sex successfully occupied in communicating that sympathy which it has been peculiarly in their power to afford'.³² Her ideas about British missionary women in India were driven by gender ideologies that were typical of mid-nineteenth century missionaries. Far from advancing ideas about British women working autonomously to uplift their 'Indian sisters',³³ Weitbrecht believed that British women missionaries could model appropriately gendered relationships within the Christian family:

How many husbands have found in their partners the wise counsellor, the encouraging fellow-helper, the calmer of his troubled spirit, the messenger of comfort, directing him to God, and assisting him in drawing down his blessing. Women, as missionaries, have afforded the most important examples of the happiness of domestic life, when regulated on Christian principles. What instruction have they given to the heathen, of the extreme folly of degrading females, as they are accustomed to do; and in the other hand, how often have they exhibited to the degraded partners of a brutal husband, the blessing of religious principle, in making them happy, useful and independent.³⁴

Mrs Weitbrecht's version of the place of a woman in missionary work shaped her response to the uprising of 1857. Her *Missionary Sketches in North India, with References to Recent Events* was a history of Protestant missions in the region; a polemic about the politics and providence of the uprising; and an attempt to re-establish the importance of missionary masculinity and the rightful place of the missionary man within the foreign mission enterprise. Unlike Jane Goodenough's letters, it is probable that Mrs Weitbrecht had access to public accounts of the

rape and violation of European women, and this focus on the vulnerability of white women was emotively written into one of her key chapters. Chapter Seven of the *Missionary Sketches* reported the effects of the uprisings on Calcutta. While careful to stress that missionaries were spared attack, the chapter assimilated reports and anecdotes about European women who escaped to Calcutta. She quotes directly from two letters that detailed the flight of women and children, and ends with an account of a British woman who fled violence to wander the jungle.³⁵ This British woman was rescued by Europeans but had apparently lost her mind and her memory. In spite of the fact that the account mentioned her husband's death, the suffering of the British female was foregrounded and constantly reiterated in Weitbrecht's retelling of British experiences in Calcutta.

Mrs Weitbrecht not only deliberately engaged with the emerging 'symbolic' narratives of 1857 as a violation of the white woman and her children, but she also re-fashioned Jane Goodenough's experiences at Agra Fort to 'restore' her to narratives of white, female suffering. Weitbrecht's rendition of Miss Goodenough's letters mentioned her work at the fort's hospital, but ended with a comment on Goodenough's failure to keep her mission school intact:

Poor Miss Goodenough was most disconsolate: her health suffered. Her interesting charge had no place of meeting, no school, no instruction. She felt sad as she met them and received their salaams, and thought of the happy days at Secundra, when they surrounded her a smiling, happy group, contrasting it with present sad trials.³⁶

Miss Goodenough was not rendered heroically as the lady with the lamp, ministering to sick soldiers, which was vital to her self-dramatisation in her letters. Instead, she was described as stranded at the fort, her health broken, and her missionary endeavours in ruins. This contrasted with the story of male missionaries inside Agra Fort. Unlike Miss Goodenough, we hear of the heroism of resourceful male missionaries who pitch tents, continue their work and provide 'a beautiful specimen of real devotedness'.³⁷ Instances of male missionary heroism inside the fort precede the comments about 'poor Miss Goodenough', and exemplify the constant focus on manly missionary activity, competence and bravery.

Missionary manliness was central to the *Missionary Sketches*. The work was a hagiographical account of the history of missions in north India, which dealt at length with the ideas and endeavours of celebrated male missionaries from William Carey to her own late husband, the Reverend John Weitbrecht of Burdwan. Her 'study' memorialised her husband, incorporating his words and accounts of his activities into her narratives; yet she also demonstrated a more general tendency to emphasise male endeavour in the missionary field, a

perspective that is central to her political response to 1857. In her introduction to *Missionary Sketches* she states quite clearly:

That crisis has now occurred, and all the sanguinary details connected with it are before the public. May it speak to this nation convincingly, and lead to another course of policy! May it lead Indian statesmen to see that their timid, time-serving plans will never ensure the respect or obedience of a people who are far too acute to be deceived by specious professions, and who, though untruthful themselves, honour the manly and straightforward Christian who carries out his religion in his actions, as much as they despise him who acts a contrary part.³⁸

The Missionary Sketches pitted ‘the manly and straightforward Christian’ against the implicitly *unmanly* British official whose cowardice denied the East India Company government the unique opportunity to make imperial and ‘manly’ subjects out of Indians. Weitbrecht asserted that Christianity alone could have prevented the 1857 uprisings, because in the business of empire building, ‘it remained for Protestant and Christian England to stand out alone, as a government intolerant of its own religion ... where conqueror and conquered should never know the bonds of brotherhood, by the sympathies and hopes of a common religion’.³⁹ One carefully schematised aspect of her argument was that imperial subjects were only created when ‘the seeds of moral obedience and social order are all in Christianity’.⁴⁰ Her account of the various mission fields of north India and the different methods of evangelisation employed suggested that only Protestant Christianity could penetrate deeply into such varied cultural, religious and social terrain. There was the constant implication throughout *The Missionary Sketches* that the East India Company government had limited social penetration. Weitbrecht’s journey around the mission fields of north India bore witness, in her view, to the wide ranging ‘success’ of missionary outreach to ‘tribal groups’, ‘high caste’ Indians, Muslims and Hindus. But there was little mention of Indian women, or reference to outreach work that specified them as a target group. Weitbrecht’s account of 1857 was about men’s work, and the centrality of the male missionary to revive a Christian–imperial project and make loyal Christian subjects out of Indian men.

Christian manliness and loyalty to Britain are made synonymous in the story of ‘Shamacharun Mukerjea’, a converted Brahmin from Calcutta, who was sent to London to study engineering. Not only was he able to ‘work diligently, bearing more manfully than many English youths would have done, the exposure to the chilling cold of winter’,⁴¹ but he was:

A Christian, and a man of courage, honour, and prudence, he was selected, when the present troubles broke out, as the most suitable person who could be found to take charge of the English ladies, when they were sent away on board the steamer from Allahabad to Calcutta, and he ensured their regard and

respect by his kind, gentle bearing, and the care and attention he shewed them on their voyage down the river.⁴²

The test, therefore, of both manliness and imperial loyalty during the events of 1857 was in the protection of British women on their journey to Calcutta. Weitbrecht's imperial vision of Christian manhood and her constant reference, as in the case of Shamacharun Mukerjea, to loyal native Christians had two distinct motives. As Catherine Hall's study of Baptist missionaries in Jamaica and England has argued, ideas about middle-class English masculinity and patriarchal relations within the family underscored much of the thinking behind the mid-nineteenth century missionary project. Christian masculinity was at the centre of an imagined domestic and political order, which was increasingly shaping middle-class culture in England, and which was being exported to the colonies by missionaries. Hall argues that the Baptist missionary project to Jamaica petitioned for emancipation in the belief that enslaved black men and women could be remodelled as English, middle-class Christians by missionaries.⁴³ Weitbrecht, therefore, was simply restating the contemporary missionary world view that put dependable, Christian men at the heart of the colonial order of things.

If Weitbrecht's foregrounding of men in the missionary project, and of their loyal converts, at the expense of women's work and outreach in India was in keeping with common missionary tropes, it also reflected a wider discursive agenda. *Missionary Sketches* was a response to '1857' as it was being constructed in the British press and in other public discourses, and Weitbrecht sought to counter arguments that missionaries were to blame. She incorporated 'anecdotes' of missionaries being spared attack, even in dangerous areas:

It would, indeed, have been very easy for some of those murderous hands, who must have been for months past wandering over the face of the country, to have attacked and annihilated these defenceless missionaries and their convert; and the fact that they have been left unhurt is a speaking one, declaring more loudly than anything else could, that the objects of vengeance have not been missionaries, not the religion that they preach. ⁴⁴

Providence was cited intermittently as a reason why missionaries and native Christians did not suffer more, but Weitbrecht pursued a more political point in her story of 1857. In general, the British official had obstructed important attempts at Christian education and pursued wrong-headed, anti-Christian policies that had failed to produce loyal Indian subjects. Much of her historical analysis of the causes of 1857 focused on the failure of the East India Company to support Christian education during the first three decades of the nineteenth century, and her narrative was shaped by a clear demarcation between the Orientalist bias of some of the administrators of that period and the clear, Christian vision of the early male missionaries in Bengal. The political and historical dimension to her work focused on a period of clear conflict in the history of

missionary and East India Company relations, which excluded female missionary activity.

Weitbrecht's account is significant for its vituperative attack on East India Company policy; its use of historical analysis in attempting to explore the causes of insurrection; and its attempt to construct a 'systematic' political response to 1857. That response, however, drew much of its historical force from the period when missionary work was an almost exclusively male endeavour, focusing on a period of particular conflict between male missionaries and the East India Company. Weitbrecht's use of gender in her stories of 1857 served her political argument, but in doing so, she manipulated Jane Goodenough's story to emphasise the heroism of male missionaries at Agra Fort, and she avoided discussions of missions to women and expunged the original author's sense of self as an autonomous female Christian and missionary.

Conclusion

The responses of Jane Goodenough and Mary Weitbrecht to the uprisings of 1857 share an attempt to recreate order. In her discussion of diaries written by six British women during the siege of the Lucknow Residency, Alison Blunt argues that women attempted to contain and manage the disruption of the colonial order in their domestic settings. The diarists in Lucknow, wives of British officers, 'played important roles in establishing and maintaining a class hierarchy in domestic and social terms'.⁴⁵ The reassertion of hierarchy and difference was a particular feature of the texts explored by Blunt. Both Goodenough and Weitbrecht reasserted the missionary world view in their texts, which maintained distance and a sense of separateness from other non-Christians. For both women, 1857 was not an experience they shared with other 'white Britons', and the differences between missionaries and other subjects in their narratives were central to building an evangelical narrative of the uprising and its aftermath. I have argued, however, that the key to understanding the responses of these two British women missionaries is their engagement with gendered self-representations in the case of Goodenough, and missionary masculinity in the case of Weitbrecht. They deployed 'gender' for very different purposes in their respective narratives, and Weitbrecht attempted to modify the more autonomous vision of female missionary endeavour that Goodenough created for herself. But both still drew on notions of the proper place of Christian men and women to explain what happened in 1857, and, in the writing of Mary Weitbrecht, to create an explanation of why it happened at all.

Notes and References

1. See Maria Louisa Charlesworth, *India and the East: or, A Voice from the Zenana* (London: Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday, 1860), pp. 9–10.
2. See Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800–1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), especially Chapter Two, ‘Gender, Domesticity, and Colonial Evangelisation’, pp. 38–44. Johnston discusses the issue of source material relating to the activities of missionary women (including wives) and texts written by women involved in foreign missions during this period.
3. See Susan Thorne, *Congregational Missions and the Making of an Imperial Culture in Nineteenth-Century England* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. 94–97. Thorne constructs an argument about the popularity of foreign missions among British women in the second half of the nineteenth century. Thorne argues for a connection between an increased belief in commerce as central to ideas of an imperial ‘civilising mission’ and the British missionary movement’s increased focus on women within the same period. See also Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), p. 81. Although Stanley is primarily concerned with contesting that there was a connection between imperialism and the popularity of foreign missions, he does discuss the gender basis of recruitment patterns within British foreign missions during the second half of the nineteenth century.
4. For a discussion of gender ideologies and colonial evangelisation in India see Chapters Two, Three and Four of Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, pp. 38–105. See also Steven S. Maughan, ‘Civic Culture, Women’s Foreign Missions, and the British Imperial Imagination, 1860–1914’, in Frank Trentmann, ed., *Paradoxes of Civil Society: New perspectives on Modern German and British history*, (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2003), pp. 199–222. Maughan argues that there was ‘a new focus on reforming the Indian home combined with the growth of imperial anxiety following the 1857 Rebellion to provide both a unique realm for women’s activity and a reinforced desire within the evangelical community to rebuild Indian society from the family upwards’. See Maughan, ‘Civic Culture’, p. 206. Theories about ‘civilisational uplift in India’ being achieved through the targeting of Indian women predated the mid nineteenth century. For a general discussion of this theory see Jane Rendall, ‘The Condition of Women, Women’s Writing and the Empire in nineteenth-century Britain’ in Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, eds, *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 103. Rendall describes how a stadial theory of civilisation was shaped by the idea of gender relations, and how women were interpreted as indicators of a country’s place in a hierarchy of civilisational progress.
5. See Jeffrey Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial Power in India, 1818–1940* (Stanford; CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 8.
6. I cite the abbreviation used at the time, Female Education Society or FES, in the text of the article, although the full, formal title of the society was the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East, and this fuller title is appropriate for bibliographical information.
7. See Mrs Weitbrecht, *Missionary Sketches in North India, with References to Recent Events* (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1858).
8. See, *The British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, Vol VII, (1858), p. 727.
9. See Jenny Sharpe, ‘The Unspeakable Limits of Rape’ in Williams and Chrisman, eds, *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993).
10. See the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, January 1858, p. 5.

11. There were other women who contributed letters to the *Female Missionary Intelligencer* on how the uprising affected them and their work in Alipore, Calcutta, Landour (Himalayas), and Bhagulpore. However, Miss Goodenough's account dominated the special 1857 section.
12. *The Female Missionary Intelligencer* had a circulation of about 1500 in 1857, according to the committee minute 2882 of 30th November 1857.
13. Jane Goodenough, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, February 1858, p. 20.
14. Jane Goodenough, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, February 1858, p. 26.
15. Jane Goodenough, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, February 1858, p. 26.
16. See Satadru Sen, *Mutiny's Children: Race, Childhood and Authority after Eighteen Fifty-Seven*. Paper presented to the 'Mutiny at the Margins' conference, Edinburgh University, July 2007.
17. *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, May 1858, p. 73. Mrs Willing's letter of 29th December 1857 details her domestic paranoia following a report, spread in Mussoorie, that the missionaries were to be massacred on Christmas Day. She claims that her head servant 'placed a curious, unknown dish before me of mince patties, swimming in tomato sauce, and told me that was "the cook's present." In vain I asked what they were. The children wished for some, and I followed the example at last, not without misgivings of treachery. Three days have since passed, and we are all well, through mercy.'
18. Jane Goodenough, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, February 1858, p. 27.
19. Jane Goodenough, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, February 1858, p. 22.
20. Jane Goodenough, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, February 1858, p. 23.
21. Jane Goodenough, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, February 1858, p. 22.
22. Jane Goodenough, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, March 1858, p. 37.
23. Jane Goodenough, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, March 1858, p. 37.
24. Jane Goodenough, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, March 1858, p. 37.
25. Jane Goodenough, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, April 1858, p. 49.
26. Jane Goodenough, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, April 1858, p. 51.
27. Jane Goodenough, *Female Missionary Intelligencer*, April 1858, p. 51.
28. See Jane Rendall, 'The Condition of Women', p. 110. Rendall discusses the 'heroic' element of women's missionary writing.
29. See Mrs Weitbrecht, *Female Missionaries in India* (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1843).
30. See Steven S. Maughan, 'Civic Culture', p. 207.
31. Weitbrecht, *Female Missionaries*, pp. 3–4.
32. Weitbrecht, *Female Missionaries*, p. 6.
33. See Alison Twells, 'Missionary Domesticity, Global Reform and "Women's Sphere" in Early Nineteenth-Century England', in *Gender and History*, vol. 18. no. 2, August 2006, pp. 266–284. Her introduction comments on the tensions between a growing feminist understanding by nineteenth-century women of the opportunities afforded by empire, and evangelicalism's focus on ideologies of women in the domestic sphere.
34. Weitbrecht, *Female Missionaries in India*, p. vii.
35. Weitbrecht, *Missionary Sketches*, pp. 91–101.
36. Weitbrecht, *Missionary Sketches*, pp. 460–461.
37. Weitbrecht, *Missionary Sketches*, p. 460.
38. Weitbrecht, *Missionary Sketches*, p. ix.
39. Weitbrecht, *Missionary Sketches*, p. 29.
40. Weitbrecht, *Missionary Sketches*, p. 40.
41. Weitbrecht, *Missionary Sketches*, p. 90.
42. Weitbrecht, *Missionary Sketches*, p. 90.
43. See Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830–1867* (Polity Press, Oxford, 2002). For a discussion of missionary ideas of manliness, see

in particular the 'Prologue: the Making of an Imperial Man', pp. 23–65, and Chapter One, 'The Missionary Dream 1820–1842', pp. 84–139.

44. Weitbrecht, *Missionary Sketches*, p. 116.

45. See Alison Blunt, 'Spatial Stories under Siege: British Women Writing from Lucknow in 1857', in *Gender, Place and Culture*, vol. 7, no. 3, p. 230.