



'SPIRITUAL BATTLEFIELDS'  
Evangelical Discourse and Writings of  
the London Missionary Society

Andrea Major

WRITING to the London Missionary Society (LMS) in January 1858, Rev. J. Bradbury of the Berhampore mission, Orissa, commented that 1857 had been a year 'of great and startling events. Seldom if ever have such dire calamities happened as those which have befallen India during the past few months, and never in any country were they less apprehended.'<sup>1</sup> The military and civil insurrection that swept north-west India in 1857 took Britain largely by surprise, shattering any sense of colonial complacency and forcing a renegotiation of the moral, ideological and practical basis of British imperialism. Despite retrospective impositions of cohesion and consensus,<sup>2</sup> immediate reactions to the uprising were fractured: a cacophony of conflicting voices that exposed the fragility of colonial identities and the many 'fault lines'<sup>3</sup> within the national imperial project. By tracing the shifting textual terrain of published and unpublished LMS missionary accounts of 1857–1858, this chapter will examine how immediate events, pre-existing agendas and embedded preconceptions were reconciled in a public evangelical discourse that intersected wider popular narratives of 1857. The evangelical response both diverged from and negotiated with other public discourses on the uprising, and tensions between missionary accounts and those of the popular press, the Houses of Parliament and East India House highlight the multivalent nature of the national response, while the fractures found within and between missionary accounts demonstrate that the 'public' evangelical discourse of the LMS was itself constructed out of a variety of sometimes conflicting individual narratives. By looking at these constituent elements we can, as Ranajit Guha suggests, 'examine those cuts, seams and stitches—those cobbling marks—which tell us about the material it is made of'.<sup>4</sup> This chapter will explore 'ruptures in the apparently seamless colonialist textual practice'<sup>5</sup> for

what they reveal about missionary attitudes to religious confrontation in 1857 and their position in relation to wider British nationalist/patriotic discourse/s. By doing so it aims to elucidate the complex cultural and political contexts in which British interpretations of 1857 were formed.

Missionaries were prolific writers, and although, as Anna Johnston points out, volume did not automatically ensure diversity,<sup>6</sup> the LMS archive contains a rich collection of letters from missionaries stationed across India. Extracts from these letters made up the main content of the LMS journal, the *Missionary Magazine and Chronicle*, a monthly publication running to some twenty pages, which also included reports of LMS meetings and lists of subscribers. The magazine, which cost 1d, had a circulation of 37,000 in 1887, although this would have been significantly higher in the 1850s. Missionary publications were 'the end result of a well oiled and efficient production machine'.<sup>7</sup> They were propagandist in nature, aimed at engendering ideological and financial support for missionary endeavours. As such, Johnston argues, published missionary writing conformed to an identifiable set of generic regulations, recycling trite narratives of evangelisation, where successes were lauded and failure rarely mentioned.<sup>8</sup> In the unprecedented circumstances of the uprising, this closely regulated pattern falters, allowing us to glimpse the seams of the carefully fashioned 'public' narrative, and the fractures between this and the unpublished texts. This is not to imply an artificial distinction between 'authentic' private, unpublished opinions and a synthetic, premeditated public discourse. Missionaries fashioned their private writings in the knowledge that they might be published—Rev. J.M. Lechler of the Salem mission said of his account of the uprising, 'I send you a letter, which you may use as you please'.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the *Missionary Magazine*, though choosing extracts selectively, usually reproduced passages verbatim.<sup>10</sup> The editing of original texts was typically by omission, albeit sometimes at the expense of context, rather than alteration. The choice of extracts, however, reveals the agenda informing the LMS's 'public' representation of events, while unpublished letters, though palpably self-conscious, provide glimpses of the conflicted reality of missionary experiences in 1857.

## Missionaries and India

The London Missionary Society was founded in 1795, when John Ryland and William Carey conceived the idea of a non-denominational forum, similar to the Anti-Slavery Society, through which both nonconformist and Anglican evangelists could cooperate to finance and coordinate missionary activity. It soon had missions in Africa, China, the South Seas and India, being by the mid-nineteenth century the 'largest evangelical institution peddling its spiritual wares in the arena of empire'.<sup>11</sup> By 1857, the LMS had missionary stations of

varying sizes in Calcutta, Benares, Mirzapore, Almorah, Autully, Bangalore, Bellary, Berhampore, Salem and Vizagapatam,<sup>12</sup> along with a large constituency of supporters and contributors in Britain.<sup>13</sup> In May 1857 the LMS reported that missionary endeavour had resulted in the establishment of 330 Christian churches and upwards of 100,000 Indians converts.<sup>14</sup>

Missionaries inhabit a conflicted space within the history of British imperialism, simultaneously representing both marginality and complicity. Frequently seen as peripheral to the economic and political projects of empire, missionary espousal of a transformative agenda that would remake indigenous societies in Britain's own likeness was contentious.<sup>15</sup> The East India Company (EIC), ostensibly committed to 'religious neutrality', viewed them with suspicion, fearing the impact of their religious enthusiasm even after their activities were legalised in 1813.<sup>16</sup> Recent historians like Brian Stanley and R.E. Frykenburg believe missionary motivation was distinct from imperial ambition, with the majority of missionaries not predisposed in favour of colonialism.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, despite their cultural racism, missionary engagement with local communities often made them vocal critics of imperial policy that infringed indigenous rights. They thus occupied an ambivalent position within colonial society, undoubtedly one of the 'dominant foreign groups' in an imperial polity,<sup>18</sup> but never completely integrated with Anglo-Indian society. The majority of missionaries came from the 'lower middle class' or 'skilled' working class,<sup>19</sup> and were constantly attempting to renegotiate their social status within the colonial context.<sup>20</sup> By the nineteenth century the vast majority were not wandering preachers or itinerants, but 'institution builders' ministering to established churches, schools and hospitals, with a tangible stake in colonial society.<sup>21</sup> Nor was their relationship with the civil authorities in India always antagonistic. Ian Copland depicts an ambivalent, but sometimes mutually supportive relationship, arguing that in the years before 1857, missionaries and the colonial state were moving closer together, collaborating on projects of English education, among other things.<sup>22</sup>

Missionary attitudes to Indian society were similarly complex. The ethnocentrism of the mission venture is reflected in an often-disparaging view of indigenous cultures. A new missionary to India, the LMS declared, must have 'a charity for the heathen which no experience of Hindu duplicity, indifference, ingratitude or moral degradation could diminish'.<sup>23</sup> The most defamatory missionary rhetoric was, however, usually saved for audiences in Britain and America,<sup>24</sup> whose financial contributions they needed to secure, and focused on the iniquitous influence of Hinduism and Islam as systems, rather than on any innate flaw in Indian humanity. The missionary project was, after all, based on the *potential* equality of man and the possibility for other races to be redeemed and raised from savagery to Christian civilisation. Indians were considered corrupted, but ultimately redeemable, children 'hurrying to eternity under the fearful oppression of a deadly system'.<sup>25</sup> Proselytisation and

conversion were certainly conflicted processes: missionary correspondences are replete with depictions of Sundered families, distraught parents, shattered marriages and internal struggles, which, although embedded in a providentialist framework, give a refracted glimpse of the trauma of the conversion experience. Rev. Edward Storrow of Calcutta, for example, reported of a convert: 'While residing with us, previous to his baptism, his steadfastness was sorely tried by the attempts of his friends, and especially of his father, to induce him to abandon his purpose; he himself wept bitterly to see his father weep, but his will remained firm.'<sup>26</sup> Although missionaries claimed to be religious voluntarists, the nature of the power relationship between white missionary and potential convert made this problematic, and some questioned both missionary tactics and the sincerity of Indian Christianity. Despite their overt ethnocentricity, missionaries were also often the most spatially proximate and accessible Europeans. Unlike colonial officials, who were not 'tied to local Indian society for their prestige, their social or psychological well-being, their livelihood or their view of themselves',<sup>27</sup> missionary identity was validated by their engagement with the local Indian community. They often provided important services like healthcare and education, as well as engaging theologically and philosophically with the converted or the curious. In this respect, Cox argues, missionaries existed in a zone of 'transculturation',<sup>28</sup> their encounter with Indian society being both fluid and multivalent.

## **Missionaries, Religion and Blame in 1857**

On 12 May 1857, unaware of events unfolding in India, members of the LMS convened for its 63rd Annual General Meeting. Optimism was high; India had not yet provided large-scale conversions, but rapid social progress and improving relations between missionaries and the civil authorities augured well.<sup>29</sup> The LMS still deplored EIC support for mosques, temples and Hindu festivals, its discrimination against Indian Christians and its refusal to disseminate Christian values, but it also acknowledged its improvements. They criticised the exclusion of Christianity from government schools, for example, but commended the spread of Western education as engendering a subtle shift away from 'superstition' that opened Indian minds to Christian influence. Society secretary Mr E.B. Underhill even declared that, though converts were few, missionaries in India had succeeded in influencing EIC policy on humanitarian issues like Sati and more generally. 'At the commencement of the present century,' he noted, 'British authority in India was exerted to the utmost to exclude the blessings of Christianity from the idolatrous Natives, and to perpetuate the monstrous evils under which they suffered, but in our time the administration of the Indian Government is enlightened, just and humane.'<sup>30</sup> He also noted the valuable

financial and ideological support the Society received from individuals of 'high rank and office' in India.

The outbreak of rebellion presented pressing practical and discursive problems. Not only did the violence endanger the physical welfare of LMS missions, debates surrounding it directly challenged the desirability of proselytisation, necessitating a re-articulation of the missionary venture. Hostility to the activities of men like Captain Wheler, opposition to missionaries themselves and the credence given to Indian fears of forcible conversion in parliamentary speeches by Disraeli<sup>31</sup> and Lord Ellenborough,<sup>32</sup> were deeply worrying for missionary societies that relied on public approval and support. 'We do not so much fear the Hindus and Mohammedans,' claimed Rev. Lechler, 'as we fear the spirit that made an appearance in the House of Lords.'<sup>33</sup> Emphasis on religious motivations for the uprising, and the accompanying focus on proselytisation and conversion, drew both on wider orientalist stereotypes about the religious fanaticism of Indians and on pre-existing discourses of blame—Sydney Smith, for example, had held missionaries, those 'little detachments of maniacs',<sup>34</sup> directly responsible for the Vellore Mutiny of 1806.<sup>35</sup> Hostility to their activities emphasised missionary marginality as they were made a convenient scapegoat for a beleaguered colonial state. It also, however, created a space for evangelical discourses to be projected outside their limited sphere of influence and intersect discursively with wider public and political narratives.<sup>36</sup>

From its first reference to the uprising, the *Missionary Magazine* was engaged in damage limitation. 'Various statements,' it declared, 'alike absurd and contradictory, have been put forth regarding the causes of the mutiny, and amongst other unfounded statements it has been alleged that the teaching and influence of missionaries has been in some way connected to the movement.'<sup>37</sup> Early missionary treatments of the revolt were dialogic in nature, engaging directly with wider public narratives that implicated missionaries, proselytisation and conversion in the revolt and attempting to absolve themselves of blame. Outright refutations, such as 'A Letter from An Old Indian', which called Lord Ellenborough's comments 'such nonsense',<sup>38</sup> were accompanied by descriptions of proselytising as a non-confrontational activity; in November 1857 the *Missionary Magazine* published an idyllic description of Rev. James Bradbury's itinerant tour in north India. 'Nothing occurred', the *Missionary Magazine* assured its readers, 'to betoken the approach of so terrible a convulsion, but on the contrary he was welcomed with the utmost courtesy and respect ... and his message was listened to with general attention, and evident interest, which may serve, among other innumerable facts, to show that Christian teaching has in no respect tended to bring about the catastrophe.'<sup>39</sup> It was keen to stress that supposed connections between missionary activity and revolt could not be maintained by dispassionate investigation; the main insurgents, sepoys and Muslims, constituted 'precisely that class of the native community that is least accessible by the missionaries'.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, as Rev. Coles of Bellary argued,

Christianity was most influential in Madras, the governor there being a well-known supporter of missions, yet that presidency had remained quiet.<sup>41</sup>

Both individual missionaries and the *Missionary Magazine* stressed that the symbols of Christianity were not specifically targeted. 'The rebellion', Rev. Dr Boaz of Calcutta declared, 'is not laid at the doors of the missions. The rebels have shown no enmity to missionaries as such, and if they have suffered it has been because they belonged to the European race.'<sup>42</sup> The *Missionary Magazine* editor reiterated this point, saying none of fallen missionaries 'were marked out for death on account of their being teachers of Christianity. On falling into the hands of the savage mutineers, they were regarded merely in the light of foreigners—as belonging to the hated race which they were bent on exterminating.'<sup>43</sup> As a discursive strategy, the emphasis on race rather than religion as determining victimhood allowed missionaries to separate themselves from the causes of revolt and realign with the wider colonial community. By emphasising the insurgents' desire to 'massacre all white faces',<sup>44</sup> they subsumed pre-existing fissures in the colonial polity into an inclusive cultural construction of race. Under ordinary circumstances 'whiteness' as a category 'was masked because it was seen as normal'.<sup>45</sup> In the context of the atrocities of 1857, whiteness was unmasked and became an ideologically loaded collective category that countermanded individual identities. Such racially motivated attacks manifested not specific grievances, but were symbolic of hostility to an entire civilisation.

In an inversion of later tendencies to overemphasise 'fanatical' religious motivations, early missionary accounts collapsed the distinction between religion and politics. 'It is evident from what is taking place all around us,' Rev. William Benyon remarked, 'that religious principle and religious feeling have nothing to do with the revolt ... it is of a political nature, of course mixed up, especially in the case of the Mohammedans, with the religious motive and principle.'<sup>46</sup> Similarly Rev. A.F. Lacroix of Calcutta believed, 'The struggle is daily becoming more and more a political one ... to which I should add a religious one too, which is always the case where Muhammedans are concerned.'<sup>47</sup> Muslim religious conviction was seen as inextricably implicated in a serious, if reactionary, political agenda—the restoration of a state of *Dar-ul-Islam*—rather than purely religious fanaticism or superstition. Lacroix called the insurrection the 'crescent against the cross',<sup>48</sup> thus historicising the confrontation by invoking the Crusades and an accompanying sense of providentialism, while simultaneously embedding the religious aspects of the confrontation in a wider political context. Hindus were not at this stage considered agents in the insurrection. 'The Mussalmans, and they alone, have originated this foul conspiracy', reported Rev. Sherring of Mirzapore, adding that 'there was scarcely a Mussalman of influence in all Northern and Central India who was ignorant of it.'<sup>49</sup> The Hindus, he claimed, when involved at all, were 'gulled' by the Muslims into rising against their rulers.<sup>50</sup> Locating culpability within the Muslim community coincided with popular British assumptions about 'rebel' Muslims and 'loyal' Hindus<sup>51</sup> and

drew on the pre-existing assumption that Muslims were ‘a restless race [who] would oppose every other government and religion except their own’.<sup>52</sup> It also allowed missionaries to distance themselves from the instigators of violence; Muslim converts to Christianity were few and mission work among them ‘but desultory’.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, by exonerating the Hindu community, missionaries could emphasise the beneficial impact of their work on those exposed to it. ‘The whole country, including all its wealth and respectability, is with us,’ reported Benyon, ‘that is the mass of the Hindoos, and they are the people with whom we, the missionaries, have had chiefly to do.’<sup>54</sup> Far from being a cause of revolt, the *Missionary Magazine* argued, missionary activity inculcated loyalty,<sup>55</sup> and ‘missionaries and the results of their labours, were never more highly appreciated by the most respectable and influential portion of native society in India than at the present moment’.<sup>56</sup>

Overt attempts to disassociate missionary endeavour from the unrest, such as the ones discussed above, are destabilised when read against missionary experiences on the ground. The vast majority of missionaries throughout India suspended public preaching and itinerating during the uprising, believing it ‘a danger to public peace’.<sup>57</sup> In an unpublished letter, Rev. Kennedy of Benares reported:

Since the end of May there has been no outdoor preaching, no preaching from the verandahs of friends or in our city chapels. The last time it was attempted by missionaries here, the people became much excited and there was danger of a riot. It was deemed prudent by the missionaries of the three societies to suspend the work for a season.... We have thought it well to avoid everything that could increase the existing complications. If we had preached in the usual way a fanatic might have attacked us from among our hearers and the consequences might have been very serious.<sup>58</sup>

Others complained of ‘threatening language’<sup>59</sup> directed at them and their Indian assistants and took measures to protect Indian converts, who were deemed vulnerable by virtue of their faith,<sup>60</sup> suggesting that despite their protestations, Christianity and proselytisation were considered incitements to unrest. When read against these unpublished concerns, the defensive agenda behind the ‘public’ missionary dialogue on causation and culpability is thrown into sharp relief.

## Re-emerging Providentialism

If the *Missionary Magazine* was clear about what the revolt was not, determining what it was proved harder. As with the wider national discourse, interpretations

varied. Significant fissures exist between the explanations of individual missionaries and the carefully edited public narrative, while the focus of the latter also shifted over time. Initially the *Missionary Magazine* cautiously highlighted the paucity of British officers and indiscipline within the Bengal army, simultaneously tempering criticism with patriotic praise for the 'prompt and energetic measures' taken by the authorities in India and the 'firmness and bravery' of the British troops.<sup>61</sup> Despite the previously ambivalent relationship between missionaries and the EIC, the LMS had always advised missionaries to disregard their own political inclination and 'manifest in their own conduct, and promote also in others, a sincere and affectionate respect to the Government and to the subordinate authorities it appoints'.<sup>62</sup> This was not always implemented, of course, resulting in slippage between LMS directives and individual missionary activities, but in 1857 the public discourse, at least, was firmly 'on message', with the *Missionary Magazine* eagerly awaiting the day 'when the cause of justice and humanity shall once more be vindicated and the revolted provinces shall again bow to the British Supremacy'.<sup>63</sup> The most pointed criticisms of the EIC found in the unpublished letters, such as Rev. Sherring's assertion that 'the whole administration of the country is radically unsound',<sup>64</sup> were conspicuously absent from the early published narrative. Instead published missionary letters focused on individual experiences and local events. Overtly patriotic, they repeatedly detailed relatively small European losses,<sup>65</sup> inflating enemy casualties to underline the superior prowess, and masculinity, of European troops. 'The sepoys have gained many advantages over little parties of unarmed men, women and children,' Rev. James Kennedy reported, 'but they have their first advantage yet to gain over European soldiers. Wherever there have been even a few English soldiers they have made a successful stand against the sepoys.'<sup>66</sup>

Evangelical responses to the uprising were constantly evolving, reacting both to new events and shifts within the wider national discourse. As Don Randall demonstrates, news of the actions of Nana Sahib at Cawnpore implicated high caste Hindus in the violence and focused British indignation on the 'piquant barbarities of Hindooism'.<sup>67</sup> LMS accounts mirror these trends.<sup>68</sup> As Rev. Benjamin Rice of Bangalore put it:

Although the Mohammedans have taken the lead in the revolt, yet it has to a large extent been a high caste Hindoo rebellion. No one ever expected Brahminism to descend from the position which it had held for ages without a struggle, and the present conflict may be the beginning of the end. That end, the utter downfall of Brahminical power and of Hindoo superstition, must come, and the sooner the better for this benighted, priest ridden, wretched country.<sup>69</sup>

Allusions to Brahminical complicity were embedded in a pre-existing missionary discourse that vilified them as guardians of an 'oppressive' religious

system. They also reflect a shift in textual strategy towards a more aggressive and overtly providentialist position that abandoned attempts to disassociate missionary activity from the insurrection, representing it instead as a traumatic, but necessary, corollary to the spread of Christianity in India. In sharp contrast to earlier accounts, Rev. Budden of Almora believed ‘the actors in the conspiracy are inspired by a fanatical enmity against everything Christian ... it appears like a desperate struggle—and we may hope the last—to extinguish by violence every ray of Christian and European light. Churches and schools and such places are the first to be burned down...’<sup>70</sup> Similarly, Rev. Colin Campbell of Bangalore commented:

I cannot agree ... that missionary efforts, and other efforts to spread Christianity in India, have nothing to do with the matter. I doubt not that there are many other causes at work, and that the principal ones may be those of a political nature; but it is clear that as a people we are hated for our Christianity, and we are both feared and hated on account of our persevering efforts to spread the Gospel among them.... It cannot be wondered at, therefore, that those whose interest or wish it is to keep up the old systems should take alarm at the progress everywhere made in educational and missionary efforts.<sup>71</sup>

Writing at the end of 1857, from stations not directly affected by the revolt, Budden and Campbell had had both time and space to realign the uprising with the evangelical agenda, claiming and capitalising on it discursively rather than disowning it. The confrontation was the bloody realisation of the metaphorical image of India as a ‘spiritual battlefield’<sup>72</sup> in the struggle between darkness and light. Evangelisation was ‘an onward movement’, Campbell declared, ‘which no created power can successfully resist. The people know this and the well disposed among them are glad of the prospect of the deliverance which it holds out to them, but the wicked and oppressors tremble at the consequences, and thoroughly hate all who help it forward.’<sup>73</sup>

Missionary efforts to discursively reclaim the uprising drew on a wider upsurge in evangelical attitudes, epitomised in Autumn 1857 by the rhetoric of the ‘Fast Day’ sermons.<sup>74</sup> These sermons were given on 7 October 1857, a day of ‘penitence’ on which the country, led by non-conformist and Anglican clergy, was encouraged to reflect on the ‘mutiny’ as a national chastisement. Although superficially self-effacing, this position assumed divine endorsement for the imperial project, casting the mutiny as a punishment for failing to fulfil heavenly expectations. Both published and unpublished LMS texts shared the assumption that the uprising was an act of God, although they portrayed it less as a chastisement than as a seismic upheaval through which He would transform India into a ‘field for our exertions such as we never had before’.<sup>75</sup> The *Missionary Magazine* foresaw that ‘out of this great trial will be evolved incalculable benefits, both social and religious, to the population of that country’,<sup>76</sup> facilitating the spread of ‘our religion, language and literature throughout the country’<sup>77</sup> and contributing to the extinction of Hinduism and Islam. ‘All the things I have

mentioned seem at first view to be calamities ...', Rev. R.C. Mather told the LMS in February 1858, after outlining losses of life and property, 'yet it is easy to perceive how it has all been working together for good, how all these events have been overruled for the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ.'<sup>78</sup> That Providence had spared the LMS missions from destruction underlined righteousness of the missionary venture,<sup>79</sup> while the preservation to British rule was a second chance to perform His will.<sup>80</sup> Settling the country in peace and prosperity under British rule, it was argued, was now inextricably linked to spreading Christianity.<sup>81</sup> Stability and security in India would not be achieved through the temporal coercion of 'the wickedness they cannot eradicate'.<sup>82</sup> It could only be guaranteed through Christian civilisation, which would pacify the country and ensure continued divine sanction for the imperial project.<sup>83</sup> The uprising was thus an opportunity—a call to action 'too powerful to be resisted, too urgent to admit delay'<sup>84</sup> and a means of 'rousing and stirring the minds of Englishmen' to the duty of proselytisation.<sup>85</sup> In February 1858 a special meeting of the LMS responded by proposing twenty new missionaries for India, at a cost of £5,000 passage and £6,000 per annum maintenance, of which £3,000 had already been pledged—a project which the beleaguered missionaries in India, desperate for both financial assistance and additional manpower, warmly welcomed.

Despite the increasing self-confidence of missionary rhetoric, the evangelical textual position was riven with contradictions. The uprising was represented simultaneously as a punishment for failure, proof of success and an opportunity for further action, while evangelical intentions were split between strident providentialism and cautious commitments to toleration, voluntarism and state neutrality. That these tensions were not fully resolved even within the limited sphere of the LMS public narrative reflects the extent to which the political/ideological climate impacted the missionary response, forcing a merging of providentialism and political rhetoric. Thus, while the LMS publicly blamed the uprising on 'the paganism of the so-called Christian government',<sup>86</sup> which, it claimed, obstructed enlightenment and shored up idolatry, it carefully denied seeking state involvement in proselytising activity. Similarly, while in February 1858 the *Missionary Magazine* published Rev. Colin Campbell's assertion that 'There is no system of religion so intolerant as the one we labour to introduce. It admits no rival and no associate. Its aim is to destroy Muhhamedanism and Hindooism in all its forms and reign absolute and alone',<sup>87</sup> only a month later it asserted that they stood 'not for the suppression of the religion of the people of India, but for freedom of the manifestation of our own religion.... Valuing religious liberty ourselves, we have no wish to see it violated in the case of the people of India.'<sup>88</sup> These glaring contradictions reflect the different discursive strategies needed to navigate a fissured ideological terrain. They are also symptomatic of an emerging political discourse within the missionary movement that addressed wider issues about the nature of the colonial polity and the relationship between state, evangelicalism and civil society.

Given the political climate, asking only for a 'fair field and no favour'<sup>89</sup> to seek voluntary conversion was prudent, although some still doubted missionary intentions. *The Times* in May 1858 carried an editorial reporting on a petition by evangelical societies asking for state neutrality in matters of religion in India, which parodied the upsurge in evangelical enthusiasm in the wake of 1857:

The missionaries who have returned from the South Seas will find themselves of small account, the oppressed Negro will be forgotten for this one season, even a Jewish convert will for the moment cease to be interesting. But Brahmins and fakirs, Hindoo widows, precocious neophytes won from the worship of Vishnu, or Mussulman gentlemen in the North Western Provinces who have expressed liberal opinions on religion, will be the principal characters in each speaker's string of anecdotes. In fact we must prepare for a very strong proselytising crusade in India.... We shall probably call down upon our heads some indignant oratory, but it is a duty to declare our conviction that the first efforts at conversion when the present disorders shall be over, ought to be cautious, well studied and made with a due regard to the political situation of the country.<sup>90</sup>

Such suspicions were not entirely unfounded, for while the LMS publicly and self-consciously avoided advocating anything but government neutrality, in unpublished letters some missionaries looked for more active intervention. 'If our rulers came out strongly in favour of Christianity,' Rev. Sherring declared:

I think the natives generally would be strongly impressed by it. It is in my opinion the duty of all who have any influence with the members of Parliament to exert that influence strenuously in regard to this important matter. With a religious government in India the progress of Christianity would I believe be immensely expedited.<sup>91</sup>

At the sixty-fourth Annual General Meeting of the LMS, Rev. Newman Hall complained of the India Board's declaration that India would continue to be governed in line with the 'ancient and traditional policy ... of absolute neutrality on matters of religion'—an announcement of 'dark significance and fearful import' in the eyes of the evangelists.<sup>92</sup>

## Talking About Atrocities

Despite missionary attempts to reclaim the uprising for the evangelical project, the violence that accompanied it represented a real threat to the missionary venture, practically and ideologically. Within India, the rebellion seriously impacted on mission finances. Prices were high, outside employment interrupted and unprecedented and expensive measures like the evacuation of

families necessary. Simultaneously, local sources of support were substantially diminished. 'Several of our best friends and most generous supporters have been most foully murdered', reported Rev. Boaz of Calcutta, '... others have lost all everyone, in some way or another, appears to have suffered, and the suffering and loss is so great that in many cases one man cannot help another.'<sup>93</sup> Under these circumstances there was little scope for contributions to charitable causes like missions, even when benefactors were still willing to help, which many were not. 'Local aid fails us in this season ...', reported Rev. James Kennedy, adding, 'our good friend Mr \_ continues his very liberal subscription, but it is evident he is well nigh ready to despair of the people. He has hitherto done much for them, and has been most hopeful of their improvement; but the recent wretched displays of fawning with the intention to destroy, of treachery in the face of the strongest obligations, of eagerness to shed blood even of benefactors, have quite sickened him and would lead him, if he could, to leave the country altogether.'<sup>94</sup> The impact of the uprising thus went beyond pragmatic issues, posing a real ideological threat to public support for mission activity. The 'mutiny' revealed the 'treachery, rapine and cruelty'<sup>95</sup> of Hinduism and Islam as religions, something that missionaries had long asserted was a 'powerful claim' on the evangelical community for the further 'diffusion of the Gospel among the myriads of these degraded and infuriated idolaters.'<sup>96</sup> In the context of the uprising, however, these characteristics could also alienate people from projects involving the welfare of 'the enemy'

Atrocity stories in particular were an ambivalent discursive terrain for the missionary movement. The emphasis on (largely imaginary) accounts of the rape and mutilation of British women in popular discourses on 1857 acted both to rally public sentiment against the metaphorical violation of the nation, and to mask the vicious acts of retributive justice with which the uprising was suppressed. Jenny Sharpe tells us that

The British army subsequently preserved the Bibighar with its dried blood and rotting remains, as a kind of museum for passing troops to visit... Thus began the mythic invention of the dying women's torments, as soldiers covered the walls with bloody inscriptions in the hands of the "ladies" directing their men to avenge their horrible deaths.<sup>97</sup>

Such stories emphasised the very characteristics of Hinduism and Islam that made their extinction desirable, but they also demonised the perpetrators as savage, inhuman and ultimately irredeemable, fundamentally challenging evangelical certainty about the potential spiritual equality and shared humanity of man. The *Missionary Magazine*, although referring with regret to the 'wanton barbarities'<sup>98</sup> of the mutineers, did not report the supposed atrocities in detail. Published letters do hint at the influence of rumours and imaginings—Rev. Dr Boaz, for example, reported that 'the stories that reach us from the mofussil are most heartrending and sickening. The details so far as

the women and children are concerned, are not fit for recital, they are the acts of demons and not of men'<sup>99</sup>—but do not dwell on these issues. This may in part reflect pious prudery, but it is also indicative of the need to omit damaging or rhetorically dangerous subject matter. As with all missionary narratives, the aim was 'to titillate and encourage, not appal and dishearten the metropolitan faithful'.<sup>100</sup> As a result, while atrocities were alluded to, there was a marked unwillingness to engage with the 'pornographic fantasy of rape'<sup>101</sup> that was informing wider popular discourses. Moreover, when atrocities were alluded to, they were depicted as resulting from the 'dehumanising' influence of Islam or Hinduism—'that combination of cruelty, falsehood and lust, which has ever been and must ever be the direst curse of India'<sup>102</sup>—limiting any implication of the inherent or irreversible evil of Indians as men. Rev. Budden of Almora, for example, commented that the atrocities made 'one blush for one's own nature, that can be capable of it',<sup>103</sup> simultaneously condemning the actions of the mutineers and reaffirming the shared humanity of the perpetrators. When read against the demonisation and dehumanisation of the rebels in the popular press, such subtle inflections and omissions are significant, representing a point of divergence from wider public discourses, as the constituent parts of the missionary narrative are refracted through the lens of a larger evangelical agenda.

Representations of violence were carefully discursively managed, with vilification of the insurgents often juxtaposed against compassion for suffering of local communities. 'Whatever our feelings may be,' Rev. Kennedy at Benares reported, 'we cannot but approve of punishment inflicted on the monsters who have disgraced humanity; but they cannot suffer without involving others in suffering. The community are suffering now to a mournful extent.'<sup>104</sup> Similarly Rev. Sherring of Mirzapore reported that '[f]lood of almost every description is approaching what it commonly termed famine price, and the destitution existing on every hand is frightful. . . . About 70 persons receive a small sum every morning in the mission compound, which is contributed by the station and of which I am almoner.'<sup>105</sup> He also reported that the local magistrate disbursed of his own accord upwards of £50 a month to the poor.<sup>106</sup> Sherring's account was published in the *Missionary Magazine* in February 1858, its emphasis on British benevolence helping to reassert the fundamental missionary aim of 'raising up' the unfortunate, reinstall ideas of 'Christian love' within the mutiny discourse and accentuate the superior humanity of the British. Significantly, more detailed, evocative and problematic accounts of Indian suffering, without British redress, such as some by Rev. Kennedy, were not included:

The unsettled state of the country has of course, here and elsewhere, paralysed trade. Thousands of weavers and artisans of every description have been thrown out of employment, and to add to their troubles, with the district on which we are most dependent for food in the hands of the rebels, grain is at famine prices. The wretchedness is extreme. . . . Many are pawning everything they possess for food. Not a few respectable men have become beggars. I am told that there are

women now performing manual labour out of doors, who had never previously ventured from the privacy of their homes. In this district cultivation is generally carried on, but over the country there has been much less than usual and there is too much reason to apprehend great scarcity. God graciously avert the fearful calamities, which appear impending over this people!<sup>107</sup>

British actions, though 'just and necessary', added to the trouble of the local community. In an unpublished letter he reported the daily, summary hangings that were taking place in the vicinity:

The very severe measure employed by the authorities have struck terror into the hearts of the evil disposed. Punishment has followed closely on the heels of the crime. The ordinary courts are shut up and martial law prevails. The gibbet has, I must acknowledge, become for a time a standing institution here, and scarcely a day has elapsed for weeks that some have not been executed. This procedure is so unlike our ordinary course that it has taken the people by surprise, and whatever opinion may be entertained regarding its propriety, not a doubt can exist that it has done much to frighten men bent on mischief. Within the last fortnight there has been the most marked improvement, and to terror alone it is attributable.<sup>108</sup>

Adding in a later letter that

[i]t was hoped that the execution of so many plunderers and murderers would have thoroughly terrified evil-doers into peaceable conduct. The effects of this dreadful procedure was to some extent beneficial. It is acknowledged on all hands—I have heard it mentioned by several natives, that several of the men who have been hung have been long the terror of their neighbours, and that their execution has made a good riddance. A number have been hung, however, who hitherto have been deemed very respectable men—landholders and other influential persons.<sup>109</sup>

The tenor of his accounts reflect the tensions between overarching discourses of national retribution, pragmatic, if distasteful, necessities, and discomfort with the potential victimisation of an innocent Indian population. 'When I think of the sufferings of our own countrymen,' Kennedy lamented 'and look at the same time at the sufferings of the children of the soil, I often feel as if a horror of great darkness were falling on my spirit.'<sup>110</sup>

## Indian Christians

Indian Christians often fell victim both to persecution by the insurgents and the general hardships faced by the Indian community. Their marginality in terms of both British and Indian support networks left them extremely vulnerable.

'The native Christians are fully alive to the danger of their position,' reported Rev. Sherring, 'for they together with the missionaries are the objects of repugnance to the sepoy.'<sup>111</sup> Several missionaries reported rumours that insurgents threatened to destroy all Christians;<sup>112</sup> Rev. William Buyers of Benares even advised his Indian Christians to leave the mission station and lose themselves in the bazaar to avoid massacre by the rebels.<sup>113</sup> Of course, insurgent hostility towards Indian Christians was predicated on their status as 'collaborators' with the imperial regime as well as their adherence to an alien faith; Rudrangshu Mukherjee argues that at Cawnpore the rebels designated all Europeans and Indian loyalists Christians, irrespective of their actual religion.<sup>114</sup> From the missionary perspective, the carefully selected experiences of Indian converts in 1857 represented a valuable discursive tool. Reports of the courageous defence of Indian Christians by their missionary brethren, as epitomised by CMS missionary Mr French's refusal to enter the Agra fort until reluctant commanders also allowed Indian Christians shelter,<sup>115</sup> as well as shared experiences of persecution and of faith, were used to remind the reader of the sincerity and benevolence of the missionary project. Rev. James Kennedy reported that missionaries had not left Benares because '[f]or us to flee at present would be to send a panic among the native Christians, to surprise our friends and delight our enemies, and to bring dishonour on our Master's name.'<sup>116</sup> Rev. William Buyers' account reveals that although in the initial panic, Benares missionaries left the Indian Christians to find their own shelter in the city, while they took refuge with other Europeans in the Mint, subsequently they arranged with the Christians that in case of a further attack they too should take shelter behind the British guns. In the absence of immediate danger, they remained with them in the mission station, performing prayer meetings and Sunday services as usual amid the excitement. At the Mint, Kennedy later reported, 'All the Europeans, East Indians and many of the native Christians [were] huddled together in the greatest confusion imaginable.'<sup>117</sup> Rev. Sherring, of Mirzapore, took many of his Indian congregation with him to the relative safety of Benares when fighting broke out near the station, an action that earned him the approbation of his fellow missionaries.<sup>118</sup> The missionaries were not always able to help their congregation, however: 'Our native Christians have suffered greatly from these disturbances', reported Kennedy.

Our poor people have been dismissed, and with food at exorbitant prices, they are in great distress. We help them as we can, but we know not what to do. They were improving greatly in their circumstances, and this cessation in their employment is a great check to them.<sup>119</sup>

The uprising did create some opportunities for Indian Christians. Rev. Dr Boaz reported the use of Indian Christian volunteers on night patrols in Calcutta,<sup>120</sup> while both Sherring and Kennedy advised their converts to join the 'Native Christian Military Corps' which was formed at Benares. Sherring

considered it a significant opportunity for young men without families. 'In two ways the formation of the corps will do good,' he reported.

It will help the government in the first place, which is beginning to perceive the egregious folly of trusting absolutely to the fidelity of the heathen and Musselman classes, and of neglecting the Christian class, which is bound by every consideration to be faithful to a Christian government. And then secondly, they themselves, the Christian class, will be raised in station and importance.<sup>121</sup>

It was hoped that the establishment of the corps indicated the end of discrimination against Indian Christians in the army and police force, and examples of their service were used to underpin LMS demands for more favourable conditions for Christianity in India. Rev. Sherring awaited the day when 'a Native Christian officer marches a band of Native Christian Sepoys to the house of God on a Sabbath day',<sup>122</sup> although he also revealed a more pragmatic reason encouraging converts to join, saying, 'my expenditure will be diminished by the amount of the pay of the men who have left.'<sup>123</sup>

Beyond calls for less discriminatory government practices, the primary discursive utility of the persecution of Indian Christians was the affirmation it afforded of their religious sincerity. Rev. R.C. Mather, for example, commented at the special meeting of February 1858, 'There has been a general unbelief as to the Christianity of the natives; but the events which have taken place have demonstrated that it is a genuine Christianity after all. We have now had out martyrs in India.'<sup>124</sup> He then went on to list in detail the Indian Christians who had undergone ridicule, torture and even death without renouncing their faith, thus invalidating the common reproach that they 'only became Christians for their bread'.<sup>125</sup> Of course, the pages of the *Missionary Magazine* had long been filled with 'sentimental images of the sacrificial deaths of missionaries and their families'.<sup>126</sup> In 1857–1858 this pre-existing pattern was adapted to include Indian Christians, although tales of Indian Christian martyrs were also embedded in a wider conversion narrative. Missionaries were obsessed with the fear of 'backsliding' native converts and death 'in the faith' was widely represented as the ultimate consummation of the conversion experience. Rev. James Kennedy, for example, recounted the tale of an Indian Christian from Futtypore who had

fallen in with some sepoy who had seen him at Futtypore and recognised him as a Christian. They called on him to deny Christ and made him large promises, but he said he would rather die than renounce his Lord and Saviour. On hearing this they hacked him in the most cruel manner with their swords and left him for dead. . . . All about his head, neck and arms, there were the marks of the fearful gashes, the wounds his cruel enemies had inflicted.<sup>127</sup>

The man had lost his hand and had only survived the ordeal because some low-caste Hindus took him in. When Kennedy saw him, however, he was near

death. In Kennedy's narrative he is made a symbol for an idealised version of Indian Christianity—staunch, loyal and sincere, but also simple, acquiescent and undemanding. Of course, while tales of heroism and martyrdom are recorded in the pages of the *Missionary Magazine*, they are entirely narrated through the white missionary voice. They provide no record of Indian Christians' own attitudes to the uprising, or accounts of those who may have adapted, concealed or renounced their faith as circumstances required. Thus despite the overt praise for Indian Christians' stoicism and fidelity, as figures in the missionary text they remain ciphers, representative of the ideal 'native convert' but shorn of agency, complexity or voice.

## Conclusion

Although the immediate aftermath of the revolt was accompanied by an upsurge in missionary enthusiasm, several scholars, including Catherine Hall, Anna Johnston and Thomas Metcalf, have pointed to the negative impact that the 'Mutiny', together with the Morant Bay rebellion in Jamaica (1865), had on public attitudes about the potential of other races to achieve Christian civilisation.<sup>128</sup> Catherine Hall, for example, notes that ideas of racial difference solidified, for while the evangelical community defended Christian blacks in Jamaica, there was little concern over the persecution of Hindus and Muslims in 1857–1858.<sup>129</sup> Public hostility towards Indians engendered in 1857 represented a major ideological challenge to the missionary movement going forward. In its carefully constructed representation of events, the LMS narrative displays a keen awareness of shifting public attitudes and the need to deploy different textual strategies in order to limit the negative impact of the uprising and keep wider evangelical opinion engaged with the missionary enterprise in India. Such self-conscious constructions reflect both the apprehensions of the missionary movement and the growing fissures between their version of evangelical imperialism and wider public interpretations of the colonial project. Jeffrey Richards, for example, suggests that after the uprising the evangelical impulse faltered, its ethos being transferred to the secular aspects of empire building, while missionary activity became less theologically driven and smaller, more tightly focused, societies emerged that concentrated on 'good works' like healthcare and education and on specific communities and problems.<sup>130</sup>

The uprising provided an opportunity for the amplification of evangelical values of stoicism, faith and vigour. 'It has been a season for great humiliation, for much prayer, for energy of character, for courage and for decision,' reported Rev. Sherring of Mirzapore, 'Personally I can say that I have found it good to be afflicted and to be in trouble and danger.'<sup>131</sup> Endurance for the Lord's sake was central to a sense of missionary identity. Missionaries were, as a matter

of principle, among the last to send away their women and children, often doing so only at the insistence of the civil and military authorities; a position that reflects evangelical fortitude, the familial basis of the Christian household and the relative permanence of missionary life in India compared to the more transient experience of soldiers and administrators. Although missionaries were non-combatants, the published accounts emphasise the everyday acts of courage undertaken in pursuit of their calling. Rev. James Kennedy, for example, reported that he had resumed work at the school, saying, ‘We the missionaries are the only Europeans who have ventured into the city unarmed for the past four months ... not a finger has been raised to touch us, though the people have now and then stared at us, as if wondering at our temerity.’<sup>132</sup> That said, both public and private missionary accounts provide at best an ambivalent textual terrain for those seeking the exposition of a coherent ‘muscular Christian’ identity. While Anna Johnston suggests that missionary publications were predicated entirely on the representation of success—‘missionaries figures are almost exclusively heroic, long suffering and do not experience religious doubts, debilitating diseases or personal crises’,<sup>133</sup> this is only partially true in the context of 1857. The worst crises of conscience, cases of physical and mental debilitation and financial and organisational retrenchments were largely purged from the public narrative, existing only in the unpublished letters. The death of Mrs Buyers from dysentery during the outbreak at Benares is briefly lamented, but the subsequent emotional breakdown of her husband is not adverted to.<sup>134</sup> No mention is made of Mrs Kennedy’s return to England with her children, or the palpable pain that the parting caused her husband. The loneliness expressed by Rev. Sherring at Mirzapore<sup>135</sup> and the jitters of Rev. Edward Storrow in Calcutta also receive no mention.<sup>136</sup> Similarly, while the need for increased subscriptions are emphasised, the impact of limited funds—closed schools, severed employment and increasing debts—are omitted,<sup>137</sup> as are the repeated missionary reproaches about their lack of money and manpower.<sup>138</sup> That said, even the published missionary letters, especially those from affected stations like Benares and Mirzapore, reflect the constant state of apprehension in which they existed during the uprising and are replete with expressions of fear, discomfort, alarm and concern for the welfare of loved ones. Such examples allow us glimpses of a missionary experience of 1857 that is more diverse and textured than the carefully controlled narrative of muscular Christianity that Johnston implies. It also highlights the tensions between self-image and immediate circumstances. While, in many cases, remaining at their posts allowed missionaries to assert both their commitment and their masculinity, their helplessness in many situations could also lead to a sense of impotence and even feminisation. In an unpublished letter Mr Owen, for example, recalled how, while besieged in the fort at Agra, missionaries had been holed up with the women and children while the other men went out to fight.<sup>139</sup> While emphasising that he kept his revolver ready to protect the women, his spatial location destabilises his own assertions of masculinity.

If missionary experiences during the uprising undercut evangelical stereotypes of the missionary hero, the confrontation also underlined the combustibility of aggressive proselytising attitudes and techniques. As Susan Thorne points out, the period after 1857 saw a 'feminisation' of the missionary movement, evinced both through the increasing number of British women becoming missionaries and a growing emphasis on 'domestic' issues—in India epitomised by the 'zenana' missions—and a 'softer' approach based around families, homes and schools.<sup>140</sup> Such developments, though not directly attributable to the uprising, may reflect a shift in attitude and policy away from 'muscular Christianity', with its association with the 'ideologically charged and aggressively poised male body'.<sup>141</sup> Within the LMS, the conclusive victory of education over itineration can be dated from the post-1857 period, for although, as Ian Copland has shown, missionary interest in education long predates the uprising,<sup>142</sup> it is only in the 1860s that it replaces itineration. The move away from aggressive public preaching and towards the more structured, formalised and sanitised environment of the classroom and the hospital may reflect, in part, the fears of an uncontrolled and hostile local society instilled by the events of 1857, as well as an emerging commitment to the need to pacify and 'civilise' before Christianising and to avoid aggressive or confrontational methods. Missionary rhetoric absolving their activities from blame notwithstanding, the shift towards less confrontational methods reflects changed rhetorical and strategic attitudes that can only be fully understood in the context of the hostility evinced towards proselytisation in 1857. In the aftermath of the rebellion, Rev. Sherring of Mirzapore, for example, reported that though public preaching had been resumed,

I think of trying a new plan in regard to the instruction of the heathen. It is this: instead of spending only two or three hours in the bazaar, I think of passing a good part of the day, so as to have intercourse by private conversation as well as by public preaching with the people.... Much may be done in the lazy familiarity of personal intercourse which perhaps could not be affected by public harangue. Now that the rebellion has instituted a new order of things in the relations of the government to the people, it is a good opportunity for us missionaries to try new schemes in the prosecution of our great work.<sup>143</sup>

The challenges of the mutiny, while perhaps not changing the direction of the missionary 'master narrative', did force a renegotiation of the ideological and practical terms of missionary endeavour, and the relationship between this and civil society, which would continue throughout the late nineteenth century. The ideological, practical and discursive problems posed by the uprising are apparent within, but not limited to, the immediate narrative of 1857. Moreover, the fissures and fractures that are made apparent in this narrative highlight the extent to which seemingly organic evangelical discourses were the products

of careful construction, serving predefined agendas, responding to immediate ideological challenges and deploying different discursive strategies at different moments and for different audiences.

## Notes and References

1. London Missionary Society Archives, Council for World Mission Archive, SOAS, London (hereafter LMSA), Bradbury, Berhampore, 6 January 1858.
2. Ainslee Embree suggests that by the 1880s a national consensus had emerged in which the 'Mutiny' was depicted as originating with intransigent Indian elites, whose social, cultural and economic dominance was threatened by benevolent British reforms. Religious and caste grievances were stripped of their political and economic dimensions and incorporated into an imperial narrative that delegitimised the uprising by portraying its participants as reactionary, credulous or fanatical. Ainslee Embree, *India in 1857: The Revolt against Foreign Rule* (New Delhi: Chanakya Publications, 1986).
3. To use Jeffrey Cox's phrase. Jeffrey Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial Power in India, 1818–1940* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002).
4. Guha, cited in Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800–1860* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 64.
5. Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 8.
6. Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 4.
7. Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 7.
8. Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 7.
9. LMSA, Lechler, Salem, 4 August 1857.
10. Johnston refers to the 'shocking liberties' taken with missionary letters and the many 'ink and lead corrections' that obscure the original hand, but I found the letters relating to 1857 showed relatively few signs of revision. Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 33.
11. McClintock, cited in Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 16.
12. I have retained the spelling of place names used at the time, although of course many have now been updated or changed.
13. See L. Kitzan, 'The London Missionary Society and the Problem of Authority in India', in *Church History*, vol. 40, no. 4 (1971), pp. 457–473, for more on LMS history.
14. *Missionary Magazine and Chronicle* (hereafter MM), June 1857, p. 142.
15. See Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination 1830–1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), for an excellent discussion of the missionary attempts to transplant early nineteenth century gender ideologies and social and familial norms to the colonial context.
16. Missionaries were very conscious that some regarded them as 'visionaries or fanatics'. See MM October 1857, p. 226.
17. See, for example, Brian Stanley, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Mission and British Imperialism in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (London: Apollon, 1990); R.E. Frykennurg, 'Christian Missions and the Raj', in Norman Etherington, ed., *Missions and Empire* (Oxford: OUP, 2005).
18. See Ranajit Guha, 'On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India' (1982), in Vinayak Chaturvedi, ed., *Mapping Subaltern Studies and the Postcolonial* (London: Verso, 2000), p. 7.
19. See Stuart Piggin, *Making Evangelical Missionaries, 1789–1958: The Social Background, Motives and Training of British Protestant Missionaries to India* (London: Sutton Courtney Press, 1984) for more on the social background of missionaries. Their official counterparts were usually from

- the landed gentry or old professions. See Bernard Cohn, 'The British at Benares: A Nineteenth Century Colonial Society', in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 4, no. 2, (1962). The lowly origins of many missionaries did not go unremarked: 'If a tinker is a devout man', commented Sidney Smith, 'he infallibly sets off for the East'. Cited in Andrew Porter, 'Religion, Missionary Enthusiasm And Empire', in A. Porter ed., *The Oxford history of the British Empire*, vol. 3, (Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 228.
20. Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 16.
  21. See Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines*, introduction, for a detailed discussion of both the historiography on and reality of the relationship between missionaries, the colonial state and colonial society in India.
  22. Ian Copland, 'Christianity As An Arm Of Empire: The Ambiguous Case Of India Under The Company, c. 1813 –1858, *The Historical Journal*, vol. 49, no. 4 (2006), pp. 1025–1054.
  23. MM June 1858, p. 148. Such attitudes were not unique to missionaries, of course; the majority of Britons viewed Indians as 'an inferior race, totally different from ourselves in their moral character' and their time in India as a form of 'moral exile' Cohn, 'The British at Benares', p. 172.
  24. See, for example, the different ways in which missionaries discussed sati in publications intended for Britain or India. Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions. The Debate on Sati in Colonial India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 121–158.
  25. 'Extension of Missions in British India', MM March 1858, p. 58.
  26. Edward Storrow, 'Additional Fruits of Christian Instruction in the Calcutta Institution', MM August 1857, p. 183.
  27. Cohn, 'The British at Benares', p. 169.
  28. Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines*.
  29. 'Sixty-third Annual General Meeting: India', MM June 1857, pp. 138–142.
  30. 'Sixty-third Annual General Meeting: India', MM June 1857, p. 138.
  31. In his speech to the House of Commons on 27 July 1857, Disraeli was careful to stress that it was not missionary activity alone that caused hostility, but 'the union of missionary enterprise with the political power of the Government.' Cited in Embree, *India in 1857*, p. 13.
  32. The former governor general blamed Indian unrest on the belief that government officials in India actively supported missionary activity.
  33. LMSA, Lechler, Salem, 4 August 1857.
  34. 'ART. IX. Considerations on the Policy of communicating the Knowledge of Christianity to the Natives in India', *Edinburgh Review*, vol. 12, no. 3 (1808), p. 173.
  35. See *Edinburgh Review*, 12, (1808), pp. 151–181. Smith's attack on that occasion is referred to in MM June 1858, p. 129.
  36. Missionary society publications had limited circulations, catering for a niche market and lacking the national coverage of the mainstream press. Although they usually remained bounded by their own textual agendas, they did sometimes pick up issues that overlapped with the mainstream press. Missionary debates on Sati in the 1810s and 1820s and their coverage of the Morant Bay rebellion in Jamaica in 1865 are just two examples of evangelical incursions into 'national' discourses.
  37. 'India: the Revolt of the Native Troops', MM August 1857, p. 182.
  38. This letter, originally printed in *The Times* on 20 July 1857, was reprinted in MM October 1857, pp. 224–226.
  39. 'Missionary Itinerancy in Bengal', MM November 1857, p. 247.
  40. Rev. J.B Coles, 'Letter dated 10th October', MM December 1857, p. 268.
  41. Rev. J.B Coles, 'Letter dated 10th October', MM December 1857, p. 268.
  42. Rev. Dr. Boaz, 'Letter dated July 18th', MM October 1857, p. 222.
  43. 'India', MM November 1857, p. 242.

44. Rev. M.A. Sherring, 'Letter dated 3rd September', MM November 1857, p. 243.
45. Catherine Hall, *White, Male and Middle Class. Explorations in Feminism and History* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992), p. 212.
46. Rev. William Benyon, 'Letter dated 24th August', MM November 1857, p. 246.
47. Rev. A.F. Lacroix, 'Extract from a letter dated 17th June', MM September 1857, p. 203.
48. Rev. A.F. Lacroix, 'Extract from a letter dated 17th June', MM September 1857, p. 203.
49. Rev. M.A. Sherring, 'Letter dated 3rd September', MM November 1857, p. 243.
50. Rev. M.A. Sherring, 'Letter dated 3rd September', MM November 1857, p. 243.
51. See E.I. Brodtkin, 'The Struggle for Succession: Rebels and Loyalists in the Indian Mutiny of 1857', in *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 6, no. 3 (1972), pp. 277–290.
52. Rev. William Benyon, 'Letter dated 24th August', MM November 1857, p. 244.
53. Rev. William Benyon, 'Letter dated 24th August', MM November 1857, p. 247.
54. Rev. William Benyon, 'Letter dated 24th August', MM November 1857, p. 246.
55. 'Extension of Missions in British India', MM March 1858, p. 45.
56. 'India', MM November 1857, p. 242.
57. Rev. A.F. Lacroix, 'Letter dated 9th September', MM November 1857, p. 244.
58. LMSA, Kennedy, Benares, 22 September 1857.
59. MM November 1857, p. 247.
60. For more on this see below.
61. MM September 1857, p. 202.
62. Cited in Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 76.
63. MM December 1857, p. 263.
64. LMSA, Sherring, Mirzapore, 4 January 1858.
65. See, for example, 'India: The Progress of the Insurrection', MM September 1857, p. 205.
66. LMSA, Kennedy, 30 June 1857.
67. Don Randall, 'Autumn 1857: The Making Of The Indian "Mutiny"', *Victorian Literature and Culture* (2003), p. 9.
68. See, for example, LMSA Kennedy, 20 July 1857.
69. Rev. Benjamin Rice, 'Letter dated 23rd September', MM December 1857, p. 267.
70. J.H. Budden, 'Letter dated 3rd August', MM December 1857, p. 263.
71. Rev. Colin Campbell, 'Letter', MM February 1858, p. 28.
72. 'Extension of Missions in British India', MM March 1858, p. 59.
73. Rev. Colin Campbell, 'Letter', MM February 1858, p. 28.
74. For a detailed discussion of the significance of the Fast Day for British perceptions of the Uprising, see Randall, 'Autumn 1857'.
75. Rev. J. Kennedy, 'Letter dated 22nd September', MM December 1857, p. 266.
76. 'India', MM November 1857, p. 244.
77. Rev. William Benyon, 'Letter dated 24th August', MM November 1857, p. 246.
78. 'Extension of Missions in British India', MM March 1858, p. 49.
79. 'Sixty-fourth General Meeting', MM June 1858, p. 125.
80. 'Sixty-fourth General Meeting', MM June 1858, p. 149.
81. 'Extension of Missions in British India', MM March 1858, p. 42.
82. 'Sixty-fourth General Meeting', MM June 1858, p. 146.
83. 'Extension of Missions in British India', MM March 1858, p. 42.
84. 'Sixty-fourth General Meeting', MM June 1858, p. 129.
85. 'Extension of Missions in British India', MM March 1858, p. 46.
86. 'Extension of Missions in British India', MM March 1858, p. 49.
87. MM February 1858, p. 28.
88. 'Extension of Missions in British India', MM March 1858, p. 43.
89. 'Extension of Missions in British India', MM March 1858, p. 43.

90. *Times*, 4 May 1858, p. 9.
91. LMSA, Sherring, Mirzapore, 4 January 1858.
92. 'Sixty-fourth General Meeting', MM June 1858, p. 141.
93. Rev. Dr. Boaz, 'Letter dated July 18th', MM October 1857, p. 222.
94. Rev. J. Kennedy, 'Letter dated 22nd September', MM December 1857, p. 265.
95. 'Sixty-fourth General Meeting', MM June 1858, p. 148.
96. 'Extension of Missions in British India', MM March 1858, p. 41.
97. Jenny Sharpe, 'The Unspeakable Limits of Rape' in Williams and Chrisman, eds, *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), p. 228.
98. 'India: The Progress of the Insurrection', MM September 1857, p. 202.
99. Rev. Dr. Boaz, 'Letter dated July 18th', MM October 1857, p. 222.
100. Bronwen Douglas, cited in Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 34.
101. Sharpe, 'The Unspeakable Limits of Rape', p. 235.
102. 'Sixty-fourth General Meeting', MM June 1858, p. 140.
103. J.H. Budden, 'Letter dated 3rd August', MM December 1857, p. 263.
104. LMSA Kennedy, Benares, 19 October 1857.
105. Rev. M.A. Sherring, 'Letter dated 17th November', MM February 1858, p. 26.
106. Rev. M.A. Sherring, 'Letter dated 17th November', MM February 1858, p. 26.
107. LMSA, Kennedy, Benares, 22 September 1857.
108. LMSA, Kennedy, Benares, 30 June 1857.
109. LMSA, Kennedy, Benares, 13 July 1857.
110. LMSA, Kennedy, Benares, 30 June 1857.
111. LMSA, Sherring, Benares, 23 June 1857.
112. See for example MM October 1857, p. 222.
113. MM September 1857, p. 204.
114. Rudrangshu Mukherjee, 'Satan Let Loose upon Earth: The Kanpur Massacres in India in the Revolt of 1857', in *Past and Present*, vol. 128 (1990), p. 116.
115. See MM March 1858, p. 53.
116. LMSA, Kennedy, Benares, 20 May 1857.
117. Rev. J. Kennedy, 'Extract from a Letter dated 12 June', MM September 1857, p. 205.
118. See Rev. James Kennedy, 'Letter dated 22nd April', MM July 1858, p. 161.
119. MM December 1857, p. 265.
120. Rev. Dr. Boaz, 'Letter dated July 18th', MM October 1857, p. 222.
121. Rev. M.A. Sherring, 'Letter dated 3rd September', MM November 1857, p. 243.
122. Rev. M.A. Sherring, 'Letter dated 17th November', MM February 1857, p. 26.
123. Rev. M.A. Sherring, 'Letter dated 3rd September', MM November 1857, p. 243.
124. 'Extension of Missions in British India', MM March 1858, p. 51.
125. 'Extension of Missions in British India', MM March 1858, p. 51.
126. Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 66.
127. MM March 1857, p. 51.
128. See Hall, *Civilising Subjects*, p. 284.
129. Hall, *Civilising Subjects*, p. 54.
130. Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 18.
131. Rev. M.A. Sherring, 'Letter dated 17th November', MM February 1857, p. 26.
132. Rev. J. Kennedy, 'Letter dated 22nd September', MM December 1857, p. 265.
133. Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 7.
134. See LMSA, Kennedy, Benares, 3 September 1857 and Kennedy, Benares, 19 October 1857.
135. LMSA, Sherring, Mirzapore, 6 October 1857.
136. Storrow's sudden desire to return to England, 'on account of his health', was put down by a fellow missionary to his being 'much alarmed by the disorders of the country' LMSA, Mullens, Bhowanipore (Calcutta), 8 August 1857.

137. See, for example, LMSA, Kennedy, Benares, 13 July 1857; Kennedy, Benares, 22 September 1857.
138. Kennedy, for example, in an unpublished section of a published letter commented, 'I do not wish to blame anyone, I do not believe our directors are to blame, but I must be allowed to state the obvious fact that our missions in Northern India are weaker than those of any other society.' LMSA, Kennedy, Benares, 22 April 1858.
139. LMSA, Owen, n.d.
140. Cited in Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 26.
141. Catherine Hall, cited in Johnston, *Missionary Writing*, p. 40.
142. Copland, 'Christianity As An Arm Of Empire'.
143. LMSA, Sherring, Mirzapore, 4 January 1858.