

Empire after Globalisation

Revisiting the accounts pertaining to the East India Company's annexation of Awadh in 1856 reveals the similarity of many arguments that persist even at the beginning of the 21st century. It is clear that the formula 'democracy at home, despotism abroad' is perfectly applicable today in the context of realist discourses of national interest, that the liberal evangelical creed of taking democracy and human rights to backward cultures is still a potent ideological drive, and that even the instrumental use of ideological rhetoric for realist imperialist ends remains entirely available, as seen in the case of Iraq. But the question is whether people of occupied countries will accept the renewed state of colonial tutelage.

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I

In this paper, I will try to answer two questions. One, is the US imperial project today an expected outcome of the process of globalisation that has taken place in the world in the last two decades? Two, is this empire compatible with democracy? The two questions are closely connected.

But we can only answer these questions in the shadow of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's analysis of *Empire*.¹ That ingenious and influential book has proposed a way of looking at the new global order as necessarily imperial and, at the same time, necessarily democratic. Let us review that proposal before we move into our discussion.

Hardt and Negri speak of two logics of sovereignty within the modern political imagination. One is the transcendent sovereignty of the nation state, demarcated over territory, located either in a sovereign monarchical power (à la Hobbes) or a sovereign people (à la Rousseau). Its logic is exclusive, defining itself as identical to the people that constitutes a particular nation state as distinct from other nation states. Its dynamic is frequently expansionist, leading to territorial acquisitions and rule over other peoples that are known in modern world history as imperialism. The second logic is that of the immanent sovereignty of the democratic republic, located, they argue, in the constituent power of the multitude (as distinct from the people) working through a network of self-governing institutions embodying multiple mechanisms of powers and counter-powers. The logic of immanent sovereignty is inclusive rather than exclusive. Even when territorialised, it sees its domain as marked by open frontiers. Its dynamic tendency is towards a constantly productive expansiveness rather than the expansionist conquest of other lands and peoples. Germinating in the republican ideals of the US constitution, the logic of immanent sovereignty now points towards the global democratic network of Empire.²

It is necessary to point out that even in their description of the historical evolution of the US as an immanent Empire, Hardt and Negri acknowledge that there were closed and exclusive boundaries. First of all, it was possible to conceive of the expansive

open frontier only by erasing the presence there of native Americans who could not be imagined as being part of the supposedly inclusive category of the constituent multitude. That was the first inflexible border. Second, there were the African-Americans who were, as Hardt and Negri point out, counted as unequal parts of the state population for purposes of calculating the state's share of seats in the house of representatives but, of course, not given the rights of citizens until the late 20th century. The latter became possible not by the operation of an open frontier expanding outwards but rather by the gradual loosening of an internal border through a pedagogical, and indeed redemptive, project of civilising, i.e., making citizens.³ Hence, even in the paradigmatic case of the US as an immanent Empire, there was always a notion of an outside that could not be wishfully imagined as an ever-receptive open space that would simply yield to the expansive thrust of civilisation. This outside consisted of practices (or cultures) that were resistant to the expansion of Empire and thus had to be conquered and colonised. As with all historical empires, there are only two ways in which the civilising imperial force can operate: a pedagogy of violence and a pedagogy of culture.

From this perspective, one has to see the US myth of the melting pot as not one of hybridisation at all, as Hardt and Negri would have it, but rather as a pedagogical project of homogenisation into a new, internally hierarchised, and perhaps frequently changing, normative American culture. In this respect, the US empire is no different from other empires of the modern era for whom contact with colonised peoples meant a constant danger of corruption: an exposure to alien ways that could travel back and destroy the internal moral coherence of national life. Hence, the pedagogical aspect of civilising has only worked in one direction in the modern era – educating the colonised into the status of modern citizens; never the other way, as in many ancient empires, of conquerors allowing themselves to be civilised by their subjects. It is hard to see any evidence that the US empire is an exception to this modern rule.

Hardt and Negri also make the argument that since the new Empire is immanent and inclusive, and its sovereignty de-territorialised and without a centre, the forms of anti-imperialist

politics that had proved so effective in the days of national liberation and decolonisation have become obsolete. Anti-imperialist nationalism, grounded in the transcendent reification of the sovereign people as actualised in the nation state, can now only stand in the way of the global multitude poised to liberate itself in the ever-inclusive, hybrid and intrinsically democratic networks of Empire.⁴ Most readers have found this to be perhaps the least persuasive argument in *Empire*. But the point that needs to be made here is that although the transcendent and territorialised idea of sovereignty located in an actual people-nation is a predominant performative mode in most third world nationalisms, the immanent idea of a constituent power giving to itself the appropriate machineries of self-government is never entirely absent. Indeed, just as the 'people' can be invoked to legitimise exclusive, and often utterly repressive, national identities held in place by nation state structures, so can it be invoked to critique, destabilise and sometimes to overthrow those structures. One might even say that the relative lack of stable institutionalisation of modern state structures in postcolonial countries – a matter of persistent regret in the political development literature – is actually a sign of the vital presence of this immanent notion of a constituent power that has still not been subdued into the banal routine of everyday governmentality. Think of an entire generation of Bengalis who went, from the 1930s to the 1970s, imagining themselves first as part of an anti-colonial Indian nationalism, then as part of a religion-based Pakistani nationalism, and finally as a language-based Bangladeshi nationalism, reinventing itself every time as a new territorial nation state and yet, surely, remaining, in some enduring sense, the same constituent power giving itself the institutions of self-rule. If immanence and transcendence are two modes of sovereign power in the modern world, it is hard to see in what way the US constitution has a monopoly over them.

If Hardt and Negri's claim of a self-identity between the new globalised networks of production, exchange and cultural flows and the new immanent, de-territorialised and centreless Empire is false, then there is no obvious reason why the globalisation of the recent period should have led to what is now widely seen as a US imperialism. In other words, it is still reasonable for me to ask my first question. Further, if the global Empire has not made anti-imperialist national resistance entirely redundant, it is also reasonable for us to ask the second question: is Empire consistent with democracy, both at home and abroad?

I

Let me attempt to answer the two questions.

The fact that several features of what is called globalisation today are not unprecedented in the history of the modern world has been remarked upon by many commentators.⁵ It has been pointed out that there was a significant phase of globalisation at the end of the 19th century leading up to first world war. Large amounts of capital were exported from Europe to many parts of the world, especially to North and South America and to the British and French colonies. In fact, scholars have argued that the rate of export of capital at the end of the 20th century was actually lower than that at the end of the 19th. Capital exports were disrupted by first world war and did not pick up again until the last two decades of the 20th century. The historical pattern of international trade is similar to that of capital exports. Trade expanded through all of the 19th century until first world war

and then contracted in the middle of the 20th century. It began to grow again from around 1975. As far as migration is concerned, as distinct from mere travel, more people migrated to and settled down in other countries in the 19th century than did at the end of the 20th. Of course, in the matter of communications, needless to say, the volume, range, density and speed of global communication today are far superior to those in the 19th century. Nevertheless, it is beyond doubt that the period from the 1880s to first world war saw a major process of globalisation comparable to that at the end of the 20th century. In fact, much of the celebration over globalisation in the 1990s was the result of a comparison with the situation in the middle of the 19th century rather than with that at the end of the 19th.

The latter half of the 19th century was also the high noon of imperialism. Britain was the predominant world power, but its hegemony was challenged when France, Germany, Russia, the US and Japan began their scramble to acquire colonies in the last remaining territories of the world in Africa, central Asia and the Pacific. The idea of empire was popular in western democracies and politicians like Joseph Chamberlain in Britain and Theodore Roosevelt in the US made their careers by championing an expansionist, morally aggressive, imperial cause. Their arguments were a combination of strategic geopolitics and progressive social engineering. Joseph Chamberlain, for instance, on a visit to Egypt in 1889, reminded British officials there that their ancestors "had not been ashamed to peg out claims for posterity, thereby creating that foreign trade without which the population of Great Britain would starve". Some years later, defending Frederick Lugard's policy of keeping Uganda under British control, he said: "Make it the interest of the Arab slave trader to give up the slave trade, and you will see the end of that traffic. Construct your railway and thereby increase the means of traffic and you will take away three-fourths, if not the whole, of the temptation to carry on the slave trade."⁶ The fiercely competitive scramble for colonies by the big powers was a major condition for the outbreak of first world war.

Colonialism of this kind came to an end in most of the world in the two decades following second world war. There was, on the one hand, rising popular support in colonised countries for the anti-colonial movements. When the French and the Dutch reoccupied their colonies in south-east Asia after the defeat of Japan in second world war, they were met by armed popular resistance. The Dutch soon gave up Indonesia. In Indochina, the French withdrew in the mid-1950s, but, of course, the region was soon engulfed in another kind of conflict. The nationalist armed resistance became victorious in Algeria in the early 1960s.

In the British colonies, the transfer of power to nationalist governments was generally more peaceful and constitutionally tidy. It is said that this was because the liberal democratic tradition of politics in Britain ultimately made it impossible for it to sustain the anomaly of a despotic colonial empire and to resist the moral claim to national self-government by the colonised people. By acquiescing in a process of decolonisation, it was asserted, British liberal democracy redeemed itself. The claim has been recently celebrated once more by Niall Ferguson in his *Empire*, intended as a manual of historical instruction for aspiring American imperialists.⁷

Of course, alongside the question of the moral incompatibility of democracy and empire, another argument had also come to dominate discussions on colonialism in the middle of the 20th century. This was the utilitarian argument, often attributed to the

so-called Manchester school of economic thinking, which claimed that the economic benefits derived from colonies were far outweighed by the costs of holding them in subjection. By giving up the responsibility of governing its overseas colonies, a country like Britain could secure the same benefits at a much lower cost by negotiating suitable economic agreements with the newly independent countries. However, not every section of ruling opinion in Britain took such a bland cost-benefit view of something so sublime and noble as the British imperial tradition. Conservative governments in the 1950s were hardly keen to give up the African colonies, and when Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal in 1956, Britain and France decided to intervene with military force. It was American pressure that finally compelled them to pull back. By then, it had become clear that the future of British industry and trade were wholly dependent on the protective cover extended by the US dollar. The decolonisation of Africa in the 1960s effectively meant the end of Britain as an imperial power. The cost-benefit argument won out, leaving the moral reputation of liberal democracy largely in the clear.⁸

The UN, as it emerged in the decades following second world war, was testimony to the historical process of decolonisation and the universal recognition of the right of self-determination of nations. It was living proof of the universal incompatibility of democracy and empire.

The declared American position in the 20th century was explicitly against the idea of colonial empires. The imperialist fantasies of Theodore Roosevelt at the beginning of the century soon turned into the stuff of cartoons and comic strips. Rather, it was an American president, Woodrow Wilson, who enshrined the principle of self-determination of nations within the framework of the League of Nations. After second world war, US involvement in supporting or toppling governments in other parts of the world was justified almost entirely by the logic and rhetoric of the cold war, not those of colonialism. If there were allegations of US imperialism, they were seen to be qualitatively different from old-fashioned colonial exploitation: this was a neo-imperialism without colonies.

In fact, it could be said that through the twentieth century, the process of economic and strategic control over foreign territories and productive resources was transformed from the old forms of conquest and occupation to the new ones of informal power exercised through diplomatic influence, economic incentives and treaty obligations. A debate that was always part of the 19th century discourse of imperialism – direct rule or informal control – was decisively resolved in favour of the latter option.

Has globalisation at the end of the 20th century changed the conditions of that choice?

III

The celebratory literature on globalisation in the 1990s argued that the removal of trade barriers imposed by national governments, greater mobility of people and the cultural impact of global information flows would make for conditions in which there would be a general desire all over the world for democratic forms of government and greater democratic values in social life. Free markets were expected to promote 'free societies'. It was assumed, therefore, as an extension of the fundamental liberal idea, that in spite of differences in economic and military power, there would be respect for the autonomy of governments and peoples around the world precisely because everyone was committed to

the free and unrestricted flow of capital, goods, peoples and ideas. Colonies and empires were clearly antithetical to this liberal ideal of the globalised world.

However, there was a second line of argument that was also an important part of the globalisation literature of the 1990s. This argument insisted that because of the new global conditions, it was not only possible, but also necessary for the international community to use its power to protect human rights and promote democratic values in countries under despotic and authoritarian rule. There could be no absolute protection afforded by the principle of national sovereignty to tyrannical regimes. Of course, the international community had to act through a legitimate international body such as the UN. Since this would imply a democratic consensus among the nations of the world (or at least a large number of them), international humanitarian intervention of this kind to protect human rights or prevent violence and oppression would not be imperial or colonial.

The two lines of argument, both advanced within the discourse of liberal globalisation, implied a contradiction. At one extreme, one could argue that democratic norms in international affairs meant that national sovereignty was inviolable except when there was a clear international consensus in favour of humanitarian intervention; anything less would be akin to imperialist meddling. At the other extreme, the argument might be that globalisation had made national sovereignty an outdated concept. The requirements of peace-keeping now made it necessary for there to be something like an Empire without a sovereign metropolitan centre: a virtual Empire representing an immanent global sovereignty. There would be no more wars, only police action. This is the argument presented eloquently, if unpersuasively, by Hardt and Negri.

What was not much discussed in the 1990s was the possibility of conflicts of interest emerging between the major economic and military powers precisely because those national interests were now perceived to be global in their scope. The era of globalisation has seen the undermining of national sovereignty in crucial areas of foreign trade, property and contract laws and technologies of governance. There is overwhelming pressure towards uniformity of regulations and procedures in these areas, overseen, needless to say, by the major economic powers through new international economic institutions. Can one presume a convergence of interests and a consensus of views among those powers? Or could there be competition and conflict in a situation where international interventions of various kinds on the lesser powers are both common and legitimate? One significant line of potential conflict has already emerged: that between the dollar and the euro economic regions. A second zone of potential conflict is over the control of strategic resources such as oil. A third may be emerging over the spectacular surge of the Chinese economy that could soon make it a potential global rival of the western powers. These were the kinds of competitive metropolitan interests that had led to imperialist annexations and conflicts in the 19th century. Are we seeing a similar attempt now to stake out territories of exclusive control and spheres of influence? Is this the hidden significance of the differences among the major powers over the Anglo-American occupation of Iraq? Can this be the reason why the US political establishment has veered from the multilateral, globalising, neo-liberalism of the Clinton period to the unilateral, ultra-nationalist, neo-conservatism of the Bush regime?⁹

If there is a more material substratum of conflicts of interest in the globalised world at the beginning of the 21st century, then

it becomes possible to talk of the cynical deployment of moral arguments to justify imperialist actions that are actually guided by other motivations. This is a familiar aspect of 19th century imperial history. It was in the context of an increasingly assertive parliamentary and public opinion, demanding accountability in the activities of the government in foreign affairs, especially those that required the expenditure of public money and troops, that the foreign and colonial policies of European imperial powers became suffused with a public rhetoric of high morality and civilising virtues. And it was as an integral part of the same process that a “realist” theory of *raison d’être* emerged in the field of foreign affairs, as a specialist discourse used by diplomats and policy-makers, that would seek to insulate a domain of hard-headed pursuit of national self-interest, backed by military and economic power, from the mushy, even if elevated, sentimentalism of the public rhetoric of moral virtue. This was the origin of ideological ‘spin’ in foreign and colonial affairs – a specific set of techniques for the production of democratic consent in favour of realist and largely secretive decisions made in the pursuit of the so-called national interest by a small group of policy-makers. Looking at the history of this imperialist rhetoric in the 19th century, one cannot but be struck by the remarkable continuity in the arguments being employed today to justify military action in Iraq. Let me introduce what I think is the basic form of the moral argument. I will then describe a case of imperialist annexation in India in the middle of the 19th century to show the similarity in ideological rhetoric, even in their minor details.

I think the roots of the most persistent moral argument for empire in the modern world go all the way back to John Locke, regarded by many as the founding father of the liberal conception of rights. I am not thinking here of the uses made of Locke’s argument about man mixing his labour with what he finds in nature and making that his rightful property. James Tully has shown how this argument was used in both colonial and republican America to justify the wholesale expropriation of the native inhabitants and the colonisation of the land by European settlers.¹⁰ However, this is not an idea that is likely to carry much persuasive power in the world after decolonisation. So we will let that pass and consider instead another, much less noticed, argument from Locke.

All men are naturally in a state of perfect freedom, Locke said. They were also in a natural state of equality. Nonetheless, there were some who were not capable of being free men. Such persons could never be let loose to the disposal of their own will, because they knew no bounds to it, had not understanding, its proper guide, but were under the tuition and government of others, all the time their own understanding was incapable of that charge. Under this category of persons who were incapable of being free men Locke included lunatics and idiots, children, innocents and madmen.¹¹ (I don’t know the exact difference between lunatics and madmen; perhaps a specialist in 17th century English lunacy could help us sort that out.)

This little section in the Second Treatise has been seldom commented on, because in the context of constitutional rights, it seems such an obvious, almost trivial, qualification. If one looks at the ideological history of empire, however, one discovers that this contained a potent argument for the moral justification of imperial rule. People who were morally handicapped (like lunatics and idiots), or in a state of moral infancy, deserved a benevolent despot who would protect and look after them, because they were incapable of acting on behalf of themselves. Thus, John Stuart

Mill declared: “Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion. Until then, there is nothing for them but implicit obedience to an Akbar or a Charlemagne, if they are so fortunate as to find one.”¹² Some of the readers of this paper will share with me my utter dismay when, as an innocent undergraduate in Calcutta, I discovered that the author of the stirring declamation on the emancipation of women had, almost at the same time, emphatically announced that Indians were culturally unfit for representative government. It was divine providence, said Mill, that they had escaped their own home-grown barbarous despotisms and come under the enlightened absolutism of the British. “Such is the ideal rule of a free people over a barbarous or semi-barbarous one.” The British must rule Indians (or Africans or indeed the Irish) until such time as they were mature enough to rule themselves.¹³ I will not multiply the instances when this argument was employed to justify imperial domination in the 19th century. Uday Singh Mehta has usefully compiled a large catalogue in his book *Liberalism and Empire*.¹⁴ These were arguments about empire as a moral paternalism.

This framework, I believe, continues to serve as the basic structure of justification for the new imperial interventions of the 21st century. It is used, as it was a hundred and fifty years ago, to persuade democratic opinion in the metropolitan countries – the political representatives, the press and those sections of the public that care about foreign affairs. Now, as then, executive decision-makers often find it exasperating that vital matters of foreign policy, defence and national security have to be discussed and defended before an uninformed and unpredictable public and their representatives. Hence, the moral and political justification of imperial policy is explicitly seen as an ideological cloak – ‘spin’, in today’s language – made necessary by the demands of democratic politics, in order to conceal from the public the calculations of *realpolitik*.

IV

Come to think of it, the two arguments about the relation between democracy and empire are as old as the history of democracy. The choice was always between two forms of control – a pedagogy of violence based on the demonstration of superior force and the right of conquest, and a pedagogy of culture based on exchange and economic benefit. Thucydides tells us of the debate in Athens between Cleon and Diodotus over what to do with the Mitylenians. The latter had shown signs of rebellion and the Athenians, in a fit of anger, had decided to put to death the entire adult male population of Mitylene and to make slaves of the women and children. But a few days later, there were appeals to reconsider this unusually harsh judgment. When the Athenian assembly seemed inclined to lessen the punishment, Cleon, “the most violent man at Athens, and at that time by far the most powerful with the commons,” berated the Athenians with the following words:

I have often before now been convinced that a democracy is incapable of empire, and never more so than by your present change of mind in the matter of Mitylene. Fears or plots being unknown to you in your daily relations with each other, you feel just the same with regard to your allies, and never reflect that the mistakes into which you may be led by listening to their appeals, or by giving way to your own compassion, are full of danger to

yourselves, and bring you no thanks for your weakness from your allies; entirely forgetting that your empire is a despotism and your subjects disaffected conspirators, whose obedience is ensured not by your suicidal concessions, but by the superiority given you by your own strength and not their loyalty.

Cleon maintained that the Mitylenians must be given an exemplary punishment to demonstrate to one and all that the penalty of rebellion was death. Diodotus, on the other hand, argued that “the question before us as sensible men is not their (the Mitylenians’) guilt, but our interests. Though I prove them ever so guilty, I shall not, therefore, advise their death, unless it be expedient; nor though they should have claims to indulgence, shall I recommend it, unless it be clearly for the good of the country....we are not in a court of justice, but in a political assembly; and the question is not justice, but how to make the Mitylenians useful to Athens.” He claimed that Athens would gain little by killing and enslaving an entire city; rather, there were many more profitable ways of holding a dependency.¹⁵

Similar arguments were repeated in the middle of the 19th century when the Indian kingdom of Awadh (the British called it Oude or Oudh) was sought to be annexed by the English East India Company. It was the last instance in which the strategy of direct occupation and annexation was exercised by the British in India. It is instructive to revisit the debates carried out at the time in British imperial circles in the context of the recent debates over the military occupation of Iraq.

V

Awadh at the end of the 18th century was a kingdom comprising the greater part of the Gangetic plains, roughly equal in size to and possibly greater in population than Great Britain. It had emerged as an independent principality through the 18th century with the decline of the Mughal empire. In the second half of the century, the British power had risen in Bengal in the east of India and expanded to the frontiers of Awadh in the north. The ruling Nawabs of Awadh were forced into various treaties with the British that allowed the East India Company special privileges in matters of trade and recruitment of soldiers to its army, but the sovereignty of Awadh was protected. In 1775, when the Nawab died, the British claimed new privileges. “Assuming, with calculated cynicism,” as the British writer Michael Edwardes described the move, “that the death of the Nawab cancelled the agreements entered into with him, the Calcutta Council (of the East Indian Company) insisted on negotiating a fresh treaty with his successor. By it, the Nawab became a puppet in the hands of the governor-general, and the state of Oudh a dependency of the East India Company.”¹⁶ From this time, a British Resident was appointed to the court of Awadh to represent the supervisory authority of the Company. Awadh also became a substantial supplier of raw cotton, textiles, indigo and opium to British Bengal.¹⁷

Although rival European powers, France in particular, had been largely defeated by then by the British in the search for Indian territories, there was always a fear in the minds of the Company’s officials of French conspiracies involving Indian rulers and their armies, especially after Tipu Sultan of Mysore approached the revolutionary government in France for help in his battles with the British. The British continued to expand their territories in the south and the west of India. In 1798, Wellesley, the governor-general, declared: “I am satisfied that no effectual security can be provided against the ruin of the province of Oude, until the

exclusive management of the civil and military government of that country shall be transferred intact to the Company.”¹⁸ In the end, despite Wellesley’s desire to annex the whole of Awadh, the kingdom was partitioned in 1801 and large parts of its territory were ceded to the Company. Arthur Wellesley, later to be celebrated in world history as the Duke of Wellington, defended his brother’s action in the following words:

For some years previous to 1798 apprehensions had been entertained that Zemaun Shah, the king of Caubul, would carry into execution an old and favourite plan of the Affghan government to invade Hindustan...Towards the close of the year 1799 the governor-general called upon the Nabob of Oude to dismiss his expensive, useless, and dangerous troops, and to fill their places by increased numbers of the Company’s troops.... In order to improve the security of Oude still further, a reform of the civil administration of the government was necessary; and this reform was pressed upon the attention of the Nabob.... (When he said he was unable to meet the financial burden of these reforms) a demand was then made upon him to give territorial security... and a treaty was concluded... by which, in commutation of the subsidy, and for the perpetual defence of his country, the Nabob ceded to the Company the territory of Rohilcund, the Doob, and Gorruckpoor...

By the whole of this arrangement the Company gained,

1st. The advantage of getting rid of a useless and dangerous body of troops stationed on the very point of their defence, and ready at all times to join an invading enemy:

2ndly. The advantage of acquiring the means of placing upon this weak point additional numbers of the British troops, and thereby increasing its strength, and the general security of the provinces in their rear:

3rdly. Ample territorial security for the regular and perpetual payment of these funds for the support of their military establishments in Bengal:

4thly. By the introduction of their own system of government and management into the countries ceded to them and the employment of their own servants in the administration, they secured the tranquillity of those hitherto disturbed countries, the loyalty and happiness of their hitherto disaffected and turbulent inhabitants; and, above all, they acquired the resources of those rich but hitherto neglected provinces for their own armies, in case of the recurrence of the necessity for military operations upon that frontier.¹⁹

Military man that he was, Wellington put the imperial argument here in the most matter-of-fact terms possible: the partial annexation of Awadh in 1801 was made necessary by the needs of security (200 years ago, it was still Afghanistan!), restoration of order, deployment of troops and resources to pay for it all.

In the early decades of the 19th century, Awadh was practically governed by a dual authority. The Nawab’s administration was crippled by the constant interference of the British Resident. Most historians agree that under this “system of meddling”, the Nawab and his ministers were left with little initiative or responsibility: “a corrupt administration was guaranteed by the presence of the Company’s troops.”²⁰ It was later alleged that the Awadh rulers stopped ruling and retired into a life of wine, women and poetry. However, a modern historian writes: “Indolence was the only appropriate response to the situation in which the princes of Oudh were placed: in which they could not be overthrown but could not act effectively in either the old way or the new.”²¹

But there was never any question about the loyalty of the Awadh rulers to the British. In 1819, following some disturbances in Meerut, the British decided to upgrade the status of the Awadh ruler from that of a nominal subordinate of the Mughal emperor

in Delhi to that of a sovereign king. The coronation was held in Lucknow, the capital city of Awadh, accompanied by a 21 gun salute and 'god save the king'. Regardless of this legal fantasy, however, the British hardly took the trappings of Awadh royalty seriously. Their officers insisted on sitting, rather than standing, in the royal presence. They would move around the city in palanquins and have umbrellas held over them – both considered privileges of the local aristocracy. When the governor-general Lord Hardinge visited Lucknow in 1847, the king of Awadh was made to wear English patent leather boots, because allowing him to wear Indian shoes when the Englishman had presumably removed them (English boots did not qualify as respectable footwear in India) would have, according to the accepted semiotics, meant affirming the king's superior status.²²

It is necessary to point out here that there were at least two views within the British colonial establishment at this time on how best to pursue its imperial interests. One view thought it prudent not to interfere in the internal affairs of the subsidiary Indian allies, because that was both the letter and the spirit of the treaties that the British had signed with them, and also because constant interference tended to sour relations without bringing any permanent benefits. Lord Moira (later Lord Hastings), governor-general in 1813, reminded John Baillie, a particularly pushy and arrogant Resident in Awadh, that "The Resident should consider himself as the ambassador from the British government to an acknowledged sovereign; a respectful urbanity and a strict fulfilment of established ceremonials should thence be preserved by the Resident towards His Excellency."²³

But the policy of non-interference also made the British presence in these dependencies utterly anomalous. British officers complained that the Company's troops were being asked to protect a corrupt and oppressive native administration; indeed, the British power was becoming an accomplice in the perpetration of countless crimes and immoralities. This view of the imperial mission was voiced with great fervour from the 1820s by a new liberal and evangelical movement.

The liberals had two main items on their agenda for the Indian empire: the spread of English education among Indians and the opening of India to Christian missionaries. Originating in the so-called Clapham sect formed around the radical abolitionist William Wilberforce, the liberals had powerful proponents within the Company establishment in officials like Charles Grant, Thomas Macaulay and Charles Trevelyan. In their minds, the duties of evangelical Christianity were wonderfully married, in a blissful ménage à trois, to thriving commerce as well as to progressive social reform. As Grant put it:

In considering the affairs of the world as under the control of the Supreme Disposer, and those distant territories... providentially put into our hands... is it not necessary to conclude that they were given to us, not merely that we might draw an annual profit from them, but that we might diffuse among their inhabitants, long sunk in darkness, vice and misery, the light and benign influence of the truth, the blessings of well-regulated society, the improvements and comforts of active industry? ...In every progressive step of this work, we shall also serve the original design with which we visited India, that design still so important to this country – the extension of our commerce.²⁴

The liberal programme achieved momentum in the period 1828-35 when Lord William Bentinck was governor-general. Unlike other 19th century imperialist heroes, Bentinck is not famous for any major military campaigns. Rather, he led the British power in India into an ambitious project of social reform

by law and administration, most notably in the abolition of suttee.²⁵ By then, the liberal cause in India had been taken over by the Mills – father and son – who promoted a Benthamite utilitarian project of 'improving' India to a higher state of civilisation. At its core, therefore, the liberal vision was informed by a universalist idea of civilisation. As a recent historian has summed it up: "Contemporary European, especially British, culture alone represented civilisation. No other cultures had any intrinsic validity. There was no such thing as 'Western' civilisation; there existed only 'civilisation'."²⁶ The evangelical tone was particularly prominent among the non-official British population of India – among merchants, missionaries and newspaper editors. In 1850, for instance, the *Delhi Gazette* put the following challenge to the government: "What we contend for is, that our countrymen should either govern Oudh or abandon its rulers to their fate. As it is, we are powerless for good and unwilling accomplices in evil. We do infinite and perpetual wrong, because some of our nation in times past made treaties which it is immoral to observe."²⁷

But not all evangelists were in favour of the annexation of Indian kingdoms. Henry Lawrence, for instance, an imperial hero of the first rank, was what could be described as a fundamentalist Christian. But he was firmly against annexations. In an anonymous article in the *Calcutta Review* in 1845, he wrote: "Let the government of the country be taken over, but let the administration of the country be as far as possible native. Let not a rupee come into the Company's coffers. Let Oudh at last be governed, not for one man, the king, but for him and his people."²⁸

In 1847, Wajid Ali Shah became king of Awadh. He was an accomplished Urdu poet and his intelligence, aesthetic sensibility and wit were much admired by the sophisticated elite of Lucknow. In the same year, Lord Dalhousie, a Scottish nobleman, became governor-general of India. He was a fervent Presbyterian and is said to have carried self-discipline to the point of self-mortification. He decided that there were too many Indian principalities held in a subsidiary relation and proceeded to annex them wherever the legal terms of the treaties had room for such action. In 1849, he appointed Colonel William Sleeman as Resident in Awadh with the express instruction to provide him with a detailed report on the state of administration in the kingdom.

Sleeman was already a much decorated officer who had made his mark by suppressing 'thuggee' – the depredations of fearsome gangs of armed robbers all over northern India. With his puritan sensibilities, he detested the court of Lucknow: "Such a scene of intrigue, corruption, depravity, neglect of duty, and abuse of authority, I have never before been placed in, and hope never again to undergo ... Lucknow is an overgrown city, surrounding an overgrown court, which has, for the last half-century, exhausted all the resources of this fine country..."²⁹ Dalhousie, in the meantime, had already made up his mind that Awadh must be brought under the direct management of the Company, even though he was at this time opposed to outright annexation. Within days of sending Sleeman out to Lucknow, he was writing to a friend: "Meanwhile I have got two other (in addition to Punjab) kingdoms on hand to dispose of – Oude and Hyderabad. Both are on the high road to be taken under our management – not into our possession; and before two years are over I have no doubt they will be managed by us."³⁰ This distinction between management and possession would soon become a key point of policy debate within the imperial establishment.

Sleeman's report was a total indictment of the administration of Awadh and, in particular, of its ruler Wajid Ali who he

described as “a crazy imbecile in the hands of a few fiddlers, eunuchs, and poetasters”. Later published in two volumes, Sleeman’s diary takes one through the different districts of Awadh and details stories of rampant crime, bribery, extortion, fraud, infanticide, suttee, insecurity of life and property, a predatory army and an unresponsive government.³¹ He declared that “the king’s ambition seems to be limited to the reputation of being the best drum-beater, dancer, and poet of the day. He is utterly unfit to reign...”³² He strongly recommended that the administration of Awadh be taken over by the East India Company:

The treaty of 1837 gives our government ample authority to take the whole administration on ourselves, in order to secure what we have often pledged ourselves to secure to the people; but if we do this we must, in order to stand well with the rest of India, honestly and distinctly disclaim all interested motives, and appropriate the whole of the revenues for the benefit of the people and royal family of Oude.

But he added a warning:

Were we to take advantage of the occasion to *annex* or *confiscate* Oude, or any part of it, our good name in India would inevitably suffer; and that good name is more valuable to us than a dozen of Oudes. We are now looked up to throughout India as the only impartial arbitrators that the people generally have ever had, or can ever hope to have without us; and from the time we cease to be so looked up to, we must begin to sink... (In Oude) the giant’s strength is manifest, and we cannot “use it like a giant” without suffering in the estimation of all India.... We must show ourselves to be high-minded...³³

Sleeman was both optimistic and confident that the people of Awadh would welcome British administration with open arms.

There is not, I believe, another government in India so entirely opposed to the best interests and most earnest wishes of the people as that of Oude now is; at least I have never seen or read of one. People of all classes have become utterly weary of it.... All, from the highest to the lowest, would, at this time, hail the advent of our administration with joy; and the rest of India, to whom Oude misrule is well known, would acquiesce in the conviction, that it had become imperative for the protection of the people.³⁴

It is worth pointing out here that Sleeman was strongly suspicious of those evangelical liberals who were keen to annex every piece of territory in India.

There is a school in India, happily not yet much patronised by the home government nor by the governor-general, but always struggling with more or less success for ascendancy. It is characterised by impatience at the existence of any native state, and its strong and often insane advocacy of their absorption – by honest means, if possible – but still, their absorption. There is no pretext, however weak, that is not sufficient, in their estimation, for the purpose; and no war, however cruel, that is not justifiable, if it has only this object in view.³⁵

He repeatedly referred to this doctrine as ‘Machiavellian’ and thought that the Baptist missionaries, through their newspaper *The Friend of India*, were influencing opinion in Britain, since similar views were being expressed in articles published in *The Times* of London.³⁶

It was later alleged that ‘Colonel Sleeman was the emissary of a foregone conclusion’. An anonymous book, attributed to Samuel Lucas but probably the work of captain Robert Bird, sometime assistant to Sleeman and later an advocate of the deposed Wajid Ali, described the Sleeman report as follows:

He affected to inspect and make a report, but the character of his report was determined for him before he entered Oude. He professed

to examine, but he was under orders to sentence; he pretended to try, but he was instructed simply to condemn... Moreover, the colonel accomplished this feat at the cost of the Oude government, and its royal family were charged 3 lakh of rupees for the expenses of this very tour, which undermined their authority, diminished their revenue, and was the principal source of the charges afterwards brought against them.³⁷

As it happened, before Dalhousie could do anything with Sleeman’s report, there were troubles in Burma, recently conquered and annexed by the British, and it was not until the end of 1854, when the Burmese wars ended, that he could turn his attention again to Awadh. By then, Sleeman had left Lucknow because of bad health (and probably, unendurable moral outrage). Dalhousie now sent another Scotsman, Colonel Outram, to Lucknow to give him an updated report. Outram knew nothing of northern India and did not have even a smattering of Persian, the language in which all official work was carried out in Awadh. He did the best he could: he simply recycled Sleeman’s report, this time breaking it up into seven sections: (i) the sovereign and the minister, (ii) revenue and finance, (iii) judicial courts and police, (iv) the army, (v) roads and public works, (vi) statistics of crimes, (vii) oppression, cruelties, etc.³⁸

The substance of these sections was as follows. The king was “guided by low and incapable advisors, eunuchs, fiddlers, and songsters”. The treasury was exhausted and the troops and establishments were in arrears. The courts were notoriously venal: “justice is openly bought and sold... all subordinate judges are equally and notoriously corrupt”. The ‘frontier’ police was the only efficient public establishment but that was because it was commanded by British officers. The Awadh army, by contrast, presented an “appalling picture”. No new roads had been built since Sleeman’s report of 1849. “But,” noted Outram, “while public works of utility are so scant throughout Oude, the capital itself boasts of a greater display of palaces and tombs than any other city in India; ... vast sums are lavished... on His Majesty’s new palaces, gorgeous and extensive as they are...”³⁹ He finished his report with some long tables listing all crimes reported in the districts of Awadh between 1848 and 1854 and inferred, without any statistical justification, that they were on the increase. He concluded:

...the condition of Oude is, as I have shown, most deplorable. And it has been my painful duty to demonstrate that the lamentable condition of the kingdom has been caused by the very culpable apathy and gross misrule of the sovereign and his Durbar... It is, therefore, peculiarly distressing to me to find that, in continuing to uphold the sovereign power of this effete and incapable dynasty, we do so at the cost of 50,00,000 of people, on whose behalf we are bound to secure – what the Oude government solemnly pledged to maintain – “such a system of government as shall be conducive to their prosperity, and calculated to secure to them their lives and property”.⁴⁰

But he also anticipated a possible question:

It may be naturally supposed that the people of Oude, if so greatly oppressed as has been represented, would emigrate to the neighbouring British districts, which it does not appear from the replies I have yet received from the magistrates... But the condition of the people of Oude cannot fairly be tested by the extent of emigration; for, as stated by major troupe, “although shamefully oppressed, they are much attached to their country.”⁴¹

One more piece of evidence, we might note, of the moral infancy of the people of India.

The anonymous author of *Dacoitee in Excelsis*, calling for a parliamentary inquiry into the truth behind the annexation of

Awadh that had been “carefully and ingeniously concealed from the British people”, described Outram’s report as something culled out of “old and suspicious materials, prefaced with an acknowledgement of his own inexperience”. The report showed “how falsely a pretended care for a native race can be made the excuse for thwarting their inclinations, while appropriating their substance; and how, consulting our own objects alone, we can enforce a revolution to which they were adverse, and can thrust upon them our rule because we coveted their rupees”. A sovereign prince was now being asked to defend his private amusements before the English public. “The fact is, that this unfortunate gentleman has been the object of constant espionage; his private amusements have been watched and reported, and he has lived as it were in a cage of clear glass open to the constant inspection of inquisitive residents.”⁴² Outram’s report, however, was sufficient for Dalhousie’s purposes.

In June 1855, Dalhousie prepared a memorandum declaring: “The government of Oude has been notorious for its abuse of power, for gross misrule, and for the oppression of its subjects...” But his advice was cautious: “I, for my part, ...do not advise that the province of Oude should be declared to be British territory”. Instead, he recommended that the king of Awadh “should be required to vest the exclusive administration of the civil and military government of Oude and its dependencies in the hands of the Company,” but for this, the governor-general said, “the king’s consent is indispensable... It would not be expedient, or right, to endeavour to extract this consent by means of menace or compulsion.”⁴³ The contorted logic was patently obvious: the king would be ‘required’ to give up the administration but only by his ‘consent’. Dalhousie was clearly thinking of critics in parliament and the public, because he added: “...the measure, if it be assented to, will doubtless be assailed by those who are ever on the watch to attack the policy of the Indian government...”⁴⁴

But the weakness of Dalhousie’s argument was pointed out by John Peter Grant, member of his council in Calcutta: “On comparing the two plans, it will be found that they differ only in this, that the first plan (annexation) involves no political fiction, whilst the second plan (the king’s consent) does involve one.”⁴⁵ Grant made no secret of his understanding of the moral issues involved in this matter.

I have always thought our long neglect of our obligations towards the people of Oude, a great moral error; ... No one, I believe, maintains that a policy of permanent non-interference would be justifiable. If a man brings his elephant into a crowd, and, having the power to prevent him, does not interfere to prevent him from trampling the people to death, the judge will hang that man exactly as if he had put the people to death with his own hand; and nothing that can be said in favour of a policy of non-interference will suspend execution of the sentence.⁴⁶

It is unclear what exactly Grant meant by the simile of bringing an elephant into a crowd: presumably, he was referring to the propping up of the Awadh monarchy by the British, in which case he was talking about the problem of controlling Frankenstein’s monster – a familiar theme in the history of late 20th century international alliances, especially, in this context, the western support for Saddam Husain in the Iran-Iraq war and the origins of both Osama bin Laden and the Taliban in the CIA-supported war against the Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

Barnes Peacock, a judge and another member of Dalhousie’s Council, explored the legal angle and decided that annexation

would be legally justified. “...if a treaty entered into by two countries be broken by one of them, the injured nation has the option either to consider the treaty at an end, or to uphold it, and insist upon the performance of it, and, if necessary, to resort to force for that purpose”. Citing Emerich de Vattel, the 18th-century Swiss jurist who codified the law of nations, he concluded that to go to war against Awadh was right under international law.⁴⁷

As many as four members of the governor-general’s council disagreed with Dalhousie’s ‘consent’ option and favoured outright annexation of Awadh. In the meantime, ‘public’ voices emphasising the moral duties of empire were reaching a crescendo. The Lucknow correspondent of *The Englishman* wrote: “Everyday that the annexation of this misgoverned country is delayed, another day of suffering is added to the lot of hundreds, nay thousands, of one of the finest races of Hindustan.”⁴⁸ Around this time, a book entitled *The Private Life of an Eastern King* appeared in London, purporting to be the diary of a European in the court Nasir-ud-din Haidar in the 1830s, and detailing the excesses and depravity of the Awadh monarch and his courtiers. A patent forgery, the book nevertheless drew outraged comments from the English press. *The Edinburgh Review* demanded: “Are we to be deterred from doing our duty to those millions by a morbid fear that we shall be charged with cloaking ambition and greed under a pretence of humanity?”⁴⁹ An anonymous article in the *Calcutta Review* by a European visitor to Lucknow was almost apoplectic with rage:

We saw a great deal, but I am sick of all this. I have been listening all day to stories, some of them backed by irrefutable evidence, any one of which would make the House of Commons quiver with indignation. What is the misgovernment of Naples compared with this? I doubt if Tiberius or Caligula were a bit worse either in cruelty or debauchery, than the Nasir-ud-din; and the present man is as bad, though of a feebleness energy... “Why is not indigo grown?” Said I. “Well,” said he (a man of Lucknow), “it has been tried, two Englishmen tried it. One was murdered, and the other had to fly. “You see, there is no security of life and property here.” I heard, too, one little statistical fact, that will give you some idea of the state of morals. There are upwards of one hundred houses in Lucknow, all taxed and registered, and inhabited not by women but by men. Was Gomorrah worse? Such is life in Lucknow.”⁵⁰

Surrounded by this clamour, the court of directors in London wrote to the council in Calcutta to say that unless it was a “virtual certainty” that the king would accede to the transfer of his administration, he should not be offered any alternative and Awadh should be annexed by force if necessary.⁵¹

Goaded by his superiors and faced with a timetable by which he was to relinquish his post and return to Britain by March, Dalhousie decided to throw legal caution to the winds. He decided to offer the king of Awadh a new treaty by which he would sign away his kingdom or face removal by force. On February 4, 1856, with British troops from Kanpur advancing to the gates of Lucknow, major-general Outram met Wajid Ali Shah. According to the official report, “His majesty turned towards the Resident and said, ‘Why have I deserved this? What have I committed?’” When the Resident explained the options, the king “gave vent to his feelings, in a passionate burst of grief, and exclaimed: ‘Treaties are necessary between equals only: who am I, now, that the British government should enter into treaties with?’ ...Uncovering himself, he placed his turban in the hands of the Resident, declaring that, now his titles, rank, and position were

all gone, it was not for him to sign a treaty, or to enter into any negotiation.... He touched on the future fate which awaited his heirs and family, and declared his unalterable resolution to seek in Europe for that redress which it was vain to find in India. The Resident... assured His majesty that at the expiration of three days, unless His majesty acceded to the wishes of the British government, the Resident would have no alternative but to assume the government of the country."⁵²

On February 7, Outram sent a message to Calcutta announcing that "the king had declined to execute the treaty." Not surprisingly, he found a European conspirator behind this unexpected act of boldness on the part of an effete Oriental:

The king has been encouraged and sustained in his resolution to adopt a course of negative opposition and passive resistance, by the advice, I am told and believe, of Mr Brandon, a merchant at Cawnpore, whose antecedents of meddling mischievousness are well known to his Lordship in council. This individual assures His majesty that, if deputed to England as his Agent, he will, without a doubt, obtain his restoration.⁵³

That day, British troops entered Lucknow as Outram issued a proclamation announcing the removal of the king and the assumption of power by the East Indian Company. A few days later, Wajid Ali, along with his family and servants, was transported to Calcutta to spend the rest of his life there as a virtual prisoner. The people of Awadh mourned the departure of their king:

Noble and peasant all wept together
and all the world wept and wailed
Alas! The chief has bidden adieu to
his country and gone abroad.⁵⁴

Dalhousie put it on record that he had been prompted by the opinion of the court of directors in London and of members of his own council in Calcutta to abandon his previous position and adopt "the more peremptory course".⁵⁵ Privately, he wrote: "So our gracious Queen has five million more subjects and £1.300.000 more revenue than she had yesterday. As a present object, it would have been better that a treaty had been signed, for an amicable agreement would have looked best. But as regards the future, it is much better as it is. We shall have to bear a much less heavy charge, and we are entirely free prospectively."⁵⁶

The author of *Dacoitee in Excelsis* asked: "And now that this result has been attained, by the violation of treaties, with signal ingratitude, and not without some taint of perfidy, – now that the Oude people have been liberated and are kept enfranchised by an overwhelming force, to what extent can we show that they are our debtors, or that the substitution of our authority has been a boon or advantage to them?"⁵⁷ More than a hundred years later, analysing the annexation of Awadh, a British historian wrote:

If Evangelicalism provided the emotional impulse, liberalism provided the dogma and moral justification for annexation, for it preached that British institutions were those best calculated to promote the happiness of the Indian people. It also provided an illusion of popular mandate, and this was an essential condition of action in an age morbidly sensitive to the political dangers of offending Indian opinion. The liberals' confidence in the worthiness of their own motives and in the merit of the principles which underlay the British system of government led them to underrate the inadequacies of that system in practice. They accepted its comparative excellence as axiomatic and consequently took for granted Indian acquiescence in its extension. They sincerely believed not only that annexation was good for the people of Oudh, but also that it was what they wanted. The

truth is that Indian opinion was quite different from what the British imagined it to be.⁵⁸

A little more than a year after the annexation – in May 1857 – all of northern India broke out in the most widespread and violent revolt in the history of British India. Awadh was at the centre of the revolt, locally led by one of the wives of the deposed king, various landlords and chiefs and a mysterious Islamic preacher.⁵⁹ For 10 months, Lucknow, and much of the countryside around it, was in the hands of the rebels. Henry Lawrence, who had advised against annexation and was appointed to succeed Outram in Lucknow, died during a rebel attack on the besieged residency. Later, critics in the British Indian establishment would attribute the so-called Indian mutiny to the evangelical zeal of the liberals.⁶⁰ The second half of the 19th century in India was mostly dominated by a conservative colonial ideology that shied away from social intervention and preferred to rule through local chiefs and power brokers, anticipating the form of indirect rule that would become the theory of British colonialism in Africa.⁶¹

When imperialism became a matter of popular enthusiasm in Britain after the extension of the suffrage in the 1870s, it was Egypt and Africa that emerged as the new focus of attention.⁶² Many of the strategic and moral arguments justifying the imperial project that would be used to mobilise democratic opinion had already been played out decades before in India.⁶³

What is remarkable is how many of the same arguments, including the evangelical fervour, the axiomatic assumption of the mantle of civilisation, the fig-leaf of legalism, the intelligence reports, the forgeries and subterfuges and the hard-headed calculations of national interest, remain exactly the same at the beginning of the 21st century. Are we then in a new cycle of the age of empire? What is clear is that the formula 'democracy at home, despotism abroad' is perfectly applicable today in the context of realist discourses of national interest, that the liberal evangelical creed of taking democracy and human rights to backward cultures is still a potent ideological drive, and hence, that the instrumental use of that ideological rhetoric for realist imperialist ends is entirely available, as we have seen in Iraq. Eight months after the 'liberation' of Iraq, Lt Col Nathan Sassaman, a battalion commander in the US occupying forces, was reported as saying: "With a heavy dose of fear and violence, and a lot of money for projects, I think we can convince these people that we are here to help them".⁶⁴

The question is: will the people of the occupied countries agree to the renewed state of colonial tutelage? The conditions in which this choice might be made, have changed dramatically in the course of the 20th century. As I argued in the opening section of this paper, the idea of popular sovereignty, whether transcendent and territorial or immanent and constitutive, is now virtually universal in the whole world. And despite the efforts of many recent critics to write its obituary, the nation continues to be the dominant political form in which this sovereignty is imagined by most people. The territorial definitions of the nation state may be contested, its internal structures of governance may be bitterly criticised and resented and, needless to say, could stray far from the standards of constitutional democracy. But even when the existing institutions of the nation state are pulverised into rubble by imperialist interventions, as in the continuing wars in Afghanistan since the 1980s and the wars and sanctions in Iraq since the 1990s, the immanent consciousness of popular sovereignty steadfastly rejects the claims of imperial benevolence and to uphold the axiomatic, even if imagined, legitimacy of national

self-rule. This is a condition that was established in world history by the success of the anti-colonial movements in the 20th century and does not appear to have been supplanted by anything else.

The new question that arises is: what resources can democratic politics in the western countries mobilise to prevent a relapse into the 19th century world of secret diplomacy and imperialist warfare cloaked by the hypocritical rhetoric of civilisation and moral virtue? It is a question about the intrinsic quality of western democracy as it actually exists today. It is a question that, ironically, is being asked by those people to whom the west professes to give lessons in democracy. The students are now shouting: "Teacher, learn your own lessons first". Whether the teachers will listen remains to be seen. That indeed may be the encounter that will define the history of the 21st century. [9]

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Notes

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- 3 See in this connection the interesting discussion by Talal Asad of the effectiveness in the US political context of Martin Luther King's religious discourse of civil rights and the relative lack of success of Malcolm X's secular discourse of human rights. Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2003, pp 128-58.
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- 5 I have culled the following facts from standard readings on globalisation, most usefully from Saskia Sassen, *Losing Control? Sovereignty in an Age of Globalisation*, University Press, New York: Columbia, 1996.
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- 40 *Oude Blue Book*, p 46.
- 41 *Oude Blue Book*, p 44.
- 42 *Dacoitee in Excelsis*, p 156.
- 43 Minute by governor-general of India, June 18, 1855, in *Oude Blue Book*, pp 150, 184-7.
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- 45 Minute by Grant, August 7, 1855, in *Oude Blue Book*, p 190.
- 46 Minute by John Peter Grant, November 22, 1854 in *Oude Blue Book*, p 3.
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- 59 For a history, see Mukherjee, *Revolt in Awadh*.
- 60 For a discussion, see Thomas R Metcalf, *The Aftermath of Revolt: India 1857-1870*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1964.
- 61 See Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1996.
- 62 See, for an interesting collection of essays, J M MacKenzie and Patrick Dunae (eds) *Imperialism and Popular Culture* Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1984.
- 63 See, for instance, A P Thornton, *The Imperial Idea and Its Enemies: A Study in British Power*, Macmillan, London, 1959, and E J Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire 1875-1914*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1987.
- 64 Dexter Filkins, 'Tough New Tactics by US Tighten Grip on Iraq Towns', *The New York Times*, New York, December 7, 2003.