British Policemen in Colonial India
Law and Society

Introduction

Since George Floyd's murder, police forces across the world are now in the spotlight. Highlighting the universal nature of police brutality Verso Books released a spate of blog posts discussing police violence in young democracies like South Africa, Brazil and India. These discussions have been accompanied with wide ranging calls for the abolition of the police. In juxtaposition to these reactions though, there remains a demand for the police to prevent and intervene in violent crimes around the world. Concerns surrounding the rising rates of cyber-security crimes, global human trafficking cases, and other crimes have necessitated the involvement of the police. These contrasting viewpoints of the police force a re-evaluation of what we mean by "police". Extending this further we remain unaware of what the police *themselves* understand by it. In this paper, I am want to address this very question – What does policing mean for the police? Many studies on the police tend to focus on the United States, providing little historical or contemporary understanding of the police in the rest of the world. In view of this gap, I study the Indian colonial police. The colonial setting provides an interesting context to study the police. Most studies maintain that the police in this setting was solely dedicated for maintaining colonial rule (Verma, Arnold). In other words, the purpose of the police was clear-cut. I use this paper to understand whether it was in fact as clear cut to the policemen who staffed it.

The few existing studies on the Indian colonial police chronicle the police's antagonistic attitude towards the urban working poor in the Madras presidency (Arnold, 1976), their schizophrenic relationship with native prostitutes in the Bombay presidency (Tambe, 2009) and their biases toward the lower-caste peasant community in rural Madras presidency (Kumar, 2015). The focus of these studies is primarily on the "material backgrounds" that undergirded the relationship between the police and the policed (Singh, 2019). It frames the police as a weapon of the propertied class and the policed as representative of working class and peasant interests. In doing so, these studies explain why the colonial police was deployed by industrialists - both Indian and British - to suppress labor riots (Arnold, 1976), why they colluded with brothel owners to regulate prostitutes (Tambe, 2009) and why they aggressively obstructed public events that were organized by poor discriminated castes (Kumar, 2015). These explanations are compelling but tend to view the colonial police as a monolithic entity and disregard the agency of the individual policeman. We consequently understand little about the colonial police at a microscopic level: How would the individual policeman respond to crimes of passion? What would the individual policeman do in a violent caste dispute? Who would the individual policemen suspect in crimes of theft and dacoity? These are some of the many questions best addressed by focusing on the individual policeman who staffed the colonial police.

Of all the individuals who staffed the colonial police, the British policeman has received little attention. Some scholars suggest these policemen were removed from local realities and had little experience policing Indian society (Kumar, 2015; Deflem, 1994). This view, however, is misleading. In his revelatory analysis of the colonial police in the United Provinces presidency,

Campion, 2002 describes the extent to which British policemen were immersed in Indian society. He argues that of all the British officials in the colonial administration, the policemen were most proximate with Indian society. While most British officials spent their careers in India not knowing any of the vernacular languages, British policemen were trained and expected to pass vernacular language exams. They were encouraged to leave their desks and patrol the localities they policed. Furthermore, they worked closely with a retinue of Indian constables recruited from the regions they policed; these constables further educated them on cultural norms in their regions. Yet, despite their immersion in Indian society, British policemen were ultimately foreigners in the society they policed. This tension between their familiarity and foreignness placed British policemen in a unique position in a society that was marked by violent caste, religion and gender hierarchies. I believe that exploring their perspectives, as they policed a foreign society, will offer further insight into their behavior as policemen towards Indians.

One of the few studies that delve into the individual policeman's perspective is William Muir's foundational ethnographic study of policemen in a small county in the United States (1977). Muir proposes studying policemen as "streetcorner politicians". Their responsibilities – ranging from placating a riotous crowd to resolving a domestic dispute – forces them to develop certain tactics that are not unlike a politician's. The difference is that "the offices of [policemen] are on the curbside instead of off corridors". In other words, the policemen's tactics are deeply localized. Muir argues that their localized application of tactics is driven by two aspects – understanding and judgement of human society. Understanding is the rationale for societal order while judgement is the sociological calculation that drives action. To elaborate, understanding is, for instance, whether a policeman sees societal order as an outcome of personal suffering or of chance; it is a self conceptualized explanation of societal order. In contrast, judgement is the impetus for action; it determines, for instance, who a policeman sees and doesn't see as a threat or who they believe is and isn't pliable. On the relation between these two aspects, Muir notes that for a policeman, understanding shapes judgement. A broader point, however, is that a policeman's understanding and judgement coalesce to explain his actions as he locally navigates human society.

In this paper, I apply Muir's framework of understanding and judgement to the British policemen in colonial India. However, the applicability of this framework is non-obvious as it was developed in a distinctly different setting from colonial India. There are two specific issues. Firstly, how do we study a policeman's understanding of societal order in the context of colonial order? Is the British policeman's understanding of societal order influenced by his view of colonialism or his view of human society? Secondly, to whom does the British policeman's judgement apply in a colonial context? Would all Indians – even those who form the police force – be included? Would all British men living in Indian society – even those who challenged British law - be precluded? To address these issues, I customize Muir's framework to the colonial context. I assume that for British policemen, their whiteness, specifically their Britishness, was a non-negotiable aspect of their experience in the Indian sub-continent. Given this, firstly, I study the British policeman's understanding by observing his view of British presence in colonial India. Secondly, I study his judgement of both the Indian society and his Indian subordinates. These themes will help address the following questions –

- understanding of British presence in colonial India – What was the relationship between the

British and Indian? What was

- judgement of Indian society – What was and was not a crime in colonial India? Who was and was not a criminal?
- judgement of Indian subordinates – Who was and was not a good Indian policeman?

In studying these themes, I believe we will better understand the perspectives underpinning the individual British policemen's behavior in colonial India.

Focusing on individual British policeman is best achieved through an interpretive analysis of their writings, especially their memoirs. For the sake of convenience, I limit myself to investigating the memoirs of three different British policemen who served the colonial administration at three different times. These three policemen are – Arthur Crawford (served sometime between the years 1853-1888), Edward J. Cox (served between years 1882-1902) and Finney (served between years 1924-1947). Their memoirs offers insights on the themes we want to study and more generally, provide a glimpse into the varying perspectives of these three policemen.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: The second section provides an overview of the history of the colonial police, specifically of its British policemen, in the Indian sub-continent, the third section provides a brief description of the memoirs, the fourth section is an interpretive analysis of each policeman's memoir, and the last section is a discussion of the observations made in section four.

History of the Indian Colonial Police

Until the 1857 Revolt, the Indian colonial police was primarily a provincial police. They reported to the provincial administration and the central British administration was largely uninvolved in matters concerning the police and its capacity to govern the provinces. With the 1857 Revolt, the British administration's view towards policing changed dramatically. For the British, the 1857 Revolt was a tragic and bloody episode where "native rebels" took the lives of many British men, women and children. It revealed to the British that they did not have a firm control over the Indian colonies. This was a turning point that led to the transfer of administration power from the East India Company to the British Crown. The police's incompetence and inability to check the 1857 Revolt was not lost on the British Crown. The Crown saw the police as essential to controlling and governing the Indian population but recognized that in order to contribute to these objectives, the existing policing system required changing. One of the primary changes undertaken by the British administration was therefore to place the police under *both* the central and provincial administration (as opposed to under the provincial administration alone). This was reflected in the 1861 Police Act which "introduced a measure of uniformity in police administration throughout India and also standardized procedures of criminal justice for both the magistracy and police" (Campion, 2002). The Act facilitated the creation of the Indian Police Service (IPS), which was constituted by the highest rank-holding policemen who were initially appointed by the central administration but served the provincial government. These policemen were – at least at the start - entirely British and were "paid, pensioned and commissioned by the Government of India" (Campion, 2002). Despite this Act though, there remained complaints about the inefficient, corrupt and oppressive nature of the police.

Some of the criticism was directed towards the quality of the IPS policemen. The IPS policemen often compared poorly with the India Civil Service (ICS) bureaucrats and magistrates. Recruitment into the ICS was highly selective while the IPS had very few basic requirements. For the British administration and population in India, this affected the quality of policemen who would enter the IPS. Campion, 2002 notes that "…the IPS became a refuge for the mediocre sons and nephews of
prominent British families serving in India; young men who lacked the ambition or ability to secure a commission in the army or a place at a university and whose parents were often at a loss for what to do with them" (2002). Furthermore, the "civilianization" of the IPS, which involved disarming the police and separating them from the armed military, reinforced the view that the police were a less glamorous and "emasculated" version of the army. In short, as a civilian service, the IPS was subordinate to the ICS and as a uniformed service, they were subordinate to the military (Campion, 2002). Given this perception of the IPS, the central administration enacted reforms targeting the rigorousness of the recruitment process. In 1893, the Viceroy of India, Lord Lansdowne, instituted an exam to select IPS policemen. The exam was modeled after the ICS exam, and was hoped to reshape the perception of the incoming IPS officers. With this 1893 reform, the way in which policemen were recruited into the IPS became "more uniform and more selective" (Campion, 2002), which helped improve the status of the IPS policemen to a certain extent. Soon the IPS was drawing primarily young British men from middle-class families in Britain. These men saw the IPS as a promising career path to rising in Anglo-Indian society.

However, in the early 1900s, as the demand for self-representation grew across the colony, the Indian National Congress pushed for the "Indianization" of the IPS. The British administration was also finding that the Indians who served the British IPS policemen were increasingly disgruntled since they were locked out of IPS and had no opportunity to grow within the Indian police; the administration worried that the growing disillusionment within the police contributed to the existing incompetence and inefficiency of the police. As a result, in 1912, Lord Islington's Committee proposed that the IPS exam be made available for Indians as well and recommended that one-third of the IPS seats be reserved for them. Although several British policemen expressed reservations, the measures were slowly implemented across the different provinces. At the time of Indian independence, the Indian police had largely been Indianized but that said, the police continued to be seen as an oppressive force in Indian society (Kumar, 2015; Arnold, 1976).

Through the course of these reforms, the organizational hierarchy of the police in each province was largely undisturbed. The IPS policemen - who were mostly British - were charged with overseeing (sub-)provincial police units that were mostly staffed by Indians. Deployed at the provincial level, the police was therefore broadly a two-tiered division - with the British policemen in command and the Indian constabulary in service. However, within the tier of rank-holding British policemen, there were effectively three gradients - the Inspector General of Police was the highest-ranking police official in the province, the Deputy Inspector Generals (DIG) were responsible for certain sub-divisions within the province, and below the DIG, the District and Assistant Superintendent of Police (DSP and ASP) were responsible for policing

within a single district. The DSPs and ASPs formed the "bedrock of the Indian Police Service" (Campion, 2002). These were the policemen who interacted most closely with the Indian constabulary and more broadly, Indian society.

Sources

The three policemen's memoirs that form the primary source for this paper were written and published after each of their careers in the Indian sub-continent had ended. Critically, they were written from memory and therefore, are less a source of fact than a source of their individual perspectives, developed with the benefit of hindsight and articulated with a certain audience in mind. In view of this, I describe below the context in which each of these memories were produced.

- Arthur Crowford's *Reminiscences of an Indian Police Official* (1894) – Crawford's memoir was written and published shortly after his arrival to England from India in 1894. At the time of its publication, the British was still reigning over much of the Indian sub-continent. The memoir's purpose was to share "experiences for the benefit of the public in England, whose ideas of Official life in India, of the mode in which the country is governed, and of the idiosyncrasies of its people are still of the character." To this end, the memoir is largely focused on sharing select criminal cases that Crawford saw through his career as a policeman. There's little discussion of his administrative positions, locations he was posted in / transferred to and more generally, his personal life. Nonetheless, his memoir offers observations on Indians and their relationship with the colonial British administration.
- Edward Cox's *My Thirty Years in India* (1909) – Cox's memoir, like Crawford's, was written and published shortly after his arrival to England from India in 1909. The British was still governing the Indian sub-continent although there was growing demand for self government amongst Indians. During this time, many British people living in England supported Indians' demand for self-government. In response to this, Cox purposes his memoir to dispute the British people's view that under British rule "the natives of India are poor, miserable and starving". His memoir offers details on his life as a policeman, family man and a British man in the Indian sub-continent.
- P.E.S. Finney's *Just My Luck* (2000) – Finney's memoir was written between 1975-77, almost thirty years after leaving India, and published by his son in 2000. At the time it was written, India was independent and there perhaps was little sympathy for the erstwhile colonial administration; yet Finney confesses he is a through and through imperialist in his memoir. The memoir was written "primarily for the enjoyment of his family". It discusses much about Finney's social life while also, describing his experience as a policeman working for the colonial British administration.

Arthur Crawford: IPS Officer for Bombay Presidency (sometime between years 1871-1888)

When Arthur Crawford arrived in India in 1853, he was barely 20 years old. While he himself

doesn't explain why he chose to move to the sub-continent, it's reasonable to assume that like most young British men at this time, Crawford was looking to pursue career opportunities in the British Indian Empire. On his arrival, he was assigned to the position of Assistant Collector in the Bombay Presidency and a decade later, was promoted as Municipal Commissioner of Bombay City. His tenure as Municipal Commissioner came to be infamous. Although he was reputed for revamping the city's sanitation infrastructure, he was embroiled in the infamous Crawford Scandal. He was accused of financial mismanagement, corruption and extortion. He was specifically charged for cozying up and accepting bribes from elite Indians. In 1871, Crawford resigned from his position as Municipal Commissioner. Between then and 1888, it seems that he occupied a variety of official positions including as an IPS official. The duration he spent as a policeman in Bombay Presidency is unknown. During his time in India, the British were focused on re-establishing their reign over the Indian sub-continent in the aftermath of the 1857 Revolt; this included passing a series of
legislations that disarmed Indians, prohibited large assemblies of Indian and monitored any seditious sentiment amongst Indians. In 1888, Crawford was arrested on the basis of the allegations that were made against him during his time as Municipal Commissioner. He was ultimately found not guilty but his arrest marked the end of Crawford's tenure in the Indian sub-continent and signaled his return to England.

For Crawford, India was a "conglomeration of nationalities, creeds and castes". It was a complex society that seemed impenetrable especially for a foreign British man: "Few, very few of us get to know anything of the masses of natives, their habits, their modes of thought, their inner lives. Betwixt us and them "there is great gulf fixed"…" Recognizing the "great gulf" drives Crawford to immerse himself in local culture and politics. He insists that his colleagues and successors "learn to read well and write the vernacular of the district" they serve in. Immersion was essential for continuing the rule of the British administration. He believed that governance from afar, where British officials were disconnected from the Indian people, was ineffective and unhelpful. It was necessary to recognize that India was ultimately a "mixed population" and required governance that was sensitive to local politics. Local, for Crawford, is not the Indian sub-continent as much as it's the Indian district. Having this perspective allows Crawford to re-frame British rule in the Indian sub-continent as British rule in a local district, populated by distinct Indian groups. In this framing, the British, despite their superior administrative position in the Indian sub-continent, are merely one of many diverse groups in the local Indian setting. In effect, their presence in as diverse a region as the Indian district, is de facto.

As a policeman, Crawford's perspective motivates him to see crimes as "peculiar to particular castes and races." For instance, the "murder of children for the sake of their ornaments is usually the work...of the trading classes", usury was extensively practiced by the "sowars and purbhu caste", and "forgery is the work of the higher castes, of the educated classes necessarily…". Crawford is most suspicious of the "wily "Goozar,", Brahmin or Khojah". He believes they are responsible for most crimes in Indian society. "[It] is a matter of common notoriety that these last named immaculate gentlemen[1] have of late years (to use a slang phrase) "put up" many of the dacoities and burglaries that have been committed by half-starved Kolis, Bheels, and the like, first of all working on their fearsome exciting their cupidity, suggesting the victims, supplying information regarding them, and then, the robbery completed, appropriating the proceeds;

afterwards, without the smallest compunction, if it suited their purpose, or to secure their own safety, indirectly betraying them into the hands of the police." His suspicions towards upper-caste was complemented by his sense of allyship with the rest of Indian society. For instance, in a situation that required all Indians to register and surrender their arms in the aftermath of the 1857 Revolt, Crawford notes with disapproval that "(c)ringing Brahmins, sneaking Kulkarnis (village accountants), were, of course, foremost not only to register such arms as their households held, but to pay off old scores by giving secret information of weapons owned by the Patels, or village head men, or any other individual against whom they happened to have a grudge." His disapproving attitude towards certain castes, despite them inadvertently supporting the British administration, reveals that Crawford was deeply embedded in the social fabric of India.

His immersion in Indian society allowed Crawford to develop and value his connection with his native subordinates. Crawford is appreciative of the support his Indian subordinates provide while

[1] Most Brahmins distinguished themselves using their last names.

policing. He lauds the "native detectives from Bombay" for "elicit(ing) the truth", the "exceptionally sharp Parsi inspector" for checking defrauding in forest matters, and the "most intelligent and reliable of (his) constables" who have supported his criminal investigations. One noteworthy relationship is between Crawford and Tannak, a village watchman who was a *mahr*[2]: Tannak was initially employed by the village money-lender to extort money from poor pensioners but when the District Collector got wind of the scheme, Tannak furnished information that helped build a case against the money-lender. According to Crawford, "Tannak became a respectable character, and a very useful police informer, and died at a green old age, greatly looked up to by pensioners, and never weary of relating the incidents of the Court of Inquiry, where *he boasted that Colt Saheb (District Collector) would have been helpless without him*." The acknowledgement that Indians - like Tannak - were essential for carrying out policing reveals that Crawford didn't see British governance as pursued by the British alone but by Indians as well.

While making recommendations for reforming the colonial police, Crawford's viewpoint that Indians mattered as much to the efficiency of the police drove him to demand better support for the native constabulary, the "rank-and-file" of the colonial police. He writes that the native constabulary are under-paid and have little training. "They are willing…and fairly honest, but fifty percent of them, or more, are illiterate". He fends criticism off the native constabulary by maintaining that "the police are no more to be blamed in India than their much more intelligent and highly-trained confreres in England, working among a more civilized population, and are aided by telegraphs and railways in every direction." On recommendations for the colonial police, Crawford also notes that policing in India can achieve little without detectives especially in a context where there's little infrastructure, few resources and "the body is quietly burned". As he notes, "if the statistics could be compared of reported murders in Great Britain and India in any one year, it would be found that, taking due account of population, the percentage of murders reported is larger in the former than in latter country yet the proportion of convictions would be more numerous in Great Britain, by reason of the total want of detective agency in India". In comparing the colonial police to the police in England, Crawford reveals that he sees the police performing the same function in both countries. In other words, for him, there was no especial

need to police Indians.

Edward Cox: IPS Officer for Bombay Presidency (between years 1882-1908)

In 1876, after completing his first year at Trinity College in Britain, Edward Cox discovered that there very few promising career opportunities as a university graduate and instead decided to follow his brother to the Indian sub-continent. He was 19 years old. Once in India, he secured a teaching position at an all-English boys' school in Darjeeling and later, at Nizamut College in Moorshedabad. However, he was intent on securing a government position. In 1879, he was interviewed and offered a position as an Assistant Political Agent in the Bombay Political Department. As an Assistant Political Agent, Cox was made responsible for magisterial work that included collecting revenue and settling land disputes. Few years after he was promoted to first class magistrate but his career as a magistrate was cut short. In 1881, he was informed that he was ineligible for the position since he wasn't a qualified Civil Service officer. At this point, Cox was only able to secure a government position in the IPS. A year later, at the age of 27, Cox joined the IPS as a Police Probationer in the Bombay Presidency. This transition saw a "drop in pay" and

[2] Mahars are Dalits, primarily residing in Maharashtra and its neighboring regions.

"rotten prospects". Six years later, Cox was gazetted second grade Assistant Superintendent of Police. He was posted in several districts across the Bombay Presidency, and spent anywhere between three months to four years in each district. The bulk of his work involved patrolling the districts, making acquaintances with the locals, investigating several criminal cases, and documenting administrative tasks and crime updates. During this time, the British still very much governed the Indian sub-continent but their rule was increasingly challenged by a crop of extremist revolutionaries. By 1904, Cox writes that he was "sick of it all, and counted the days to the time when (his) pension should be due and (he) could live in England." In 1908, after having spent a few years in the Deputy Inspector-General position, Cox finally left India.

Through his thirty years in India, Cox firmly believed that the British Empire was for the "immense benefit" of the Indian people. He compares the relationship between the British and the Indians as "that of a master to his favorite pupil, of a father that his children." Embedded in this comparison is Cox's belief that Indians lacked wisdom. To him, any Indian was a "fool" made better under British guidance. This was particularly challenging, according to Cox, given Indians' proclivity to "slyness": "At home (in England), as a general rule, you expect honesty. In India, as a general rule, you expect dishonesty and have to make arrangements beforehand to defeat it." This belief is instantiated in Cox's attitude towards the Bhil community. The Bhils were a tribe, identified and criminalized as dacoits by the British Government. They were associated with "pillage and plunder". Despite this though, the government recruited Bhils to staff the army and police forces. They saw the Bhils as a "marital race" whose acrimonious relationship with mainland Hindus, made them well-suited for policing the colony. For Cox, the Bhils' recruitment into the police force was further reaffirmation that the British had "gently persuaded the forest tribes to enter upon a civilized life". Their transition from "predatory tribes" to "informal corps" was progress for the Bhils and more broadly, Indians.

As a policeman, Cox's perspective motivated him to be suspicious of all Indians. For instance, while assigned to keep an eye on the coolies who were employed on the railways, Cox is frustrated that he's unable to detect a "bad character". He notes that since he didn't have any staff, he was prevented from finding the "bad sheep" amongst the coolies. Cox's suspicions are felt in other contexts as well. During his time in the Sindh region, Cox noted that the wealthy *zamindars* he was friends with, despite being "generally of dignified appearance and courtly manners", were "by no means above suspicion, and…detected ever so many cases of villainy among them". All his investigations abound with suspicions, he rarely trusted either the victims or the perpetrators of a crime. He trusted "evidence alone". One such case involved a woman named Radhabhai. Radhabhai was accused of poisoning her baby with arsenic by her family and neighbors. She was brought to the Magistrate's office where she protested that she had committed no such crime. Cox is skeptical of both neighbors and family and Radhabhai. On demanding an autopsy for the dead child, Cox finds that baby had died from cholera and not poisoning. This case reaffirmed for Cox the lack of scientific temper in Indians; the British were necessary to guide and teach them the values of evidence and rationale.

Cox's lack of faith in Indians extended to his Indian subordinates as well. He believed they were either sly or foolish. This belief gave him the leeway to discipline them through "bombardment", "let(ting) him have it full between the eyes with (the) fist", and dismissals for being "sons of asses". The deferential Indian who willingly admitted ignorance was worthy of his appreciation. His
constable Ibrahim Khan was a "remarkable man" because he was "very pertinent, and promised not to offend"; similarly, the Inspector Krishnaji started doing "excellent work" after enduring Cox's "wrath". Reprimanding his subordinates was essential for civilizing Indians. For example, Cox was frustrated at how little effort the Bhils put into their uniforms. On a rainy day, he noticed with disapproval that a certain recruit in uniform was carrying his umbrella. Cox spoke to him like a "father, without appearing unnecessarily indignant" and was happy to see that there were "no more umbrellas in connection with uniform". In donning the "father" role, Cox was able to erase the public and personal boundary that existed between him and his Indian subordinate. (A boundary which incidentally existed between him and his European colleagues). He was able to take liberties with his Indian subordinates - whether it involved physically assaulting them or humiliating them by demanding they correct their appearance.

Ultimately, for Cox, policing the Indian sub-continent – whether in the Sindh or the Deccan region – was same throughout the region. Indians – regardless of his caste, creed or religion – were the same and hence, needed to be policed in the same manner. Moreover, their inherent backwardness called for a certain style of policing that knew little bounds and was perhaps unnecessary in another, "more civilized" settling like England.

P.E.S. Finney: IPS Officer for Bengal Presidency (between years 1924-1947)

P.E.S. Finney arrived in India as part of the 1924 IPS cohort. His motivation to join the IPS was shaped by his experience of the 1914 Great War. During this time, Finney was a 10-year-old boy and his mother was a volunteer nurse who would take him to visit wounded soldiers. This formed

an "indelible impression" that gave birth to his "martial inclinations". Applying to the Indian Army was implausible since Finney's family couldn't afford the fees at the army officer's training college. Alternatively, Finney applied for a position in the IPS. Unlike his predecessors who were nominated into the IPS on an ad hoc basis, Finney was selected based on his performance in the Civil Service Examination. He opted to serve as part of the Bengal Presidency's police force, where he had heard an "alarming account of terrorist activity". Between 1924 and 1926, Finney received training in the province's Police Training College. Soon after, he was posted as Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) across different rural districts in the Bengal Presidency. He spent anywhere between one to two years in each of these districts. His responsibilities ranged from assigning duties amongst the native constabulary, disciplining them, supporting investigations, documenting administrative updates, and touring the districts. He also spent a few years running detention camps. Through his time in India, Finney worked solely for the colonial police. This was different from the checkered career trajectories led by his predecessors, Crawford and Cox. As a policeman, some of the significant events that Finney witnessed included the enactment of the 1935 Government of India Act, which formalized self-governance for Indians, the entry of Britain in World War II and the independence of India. Against this backdrop, Finney visited United States, married a woman he had met in his time as a policeman in Calcutta, and learnt to speak fluent Bengali. At the end of his tenure, Finney describes that he was "mentally tired" of India but nonetheless, notes that the continent had given him the "best years" of his life.

Finney saw India as a colony that was evolving towards being a dominion of the British Empire. In becoming a dominion, India would have the power of self-government while remaining an outpost for British Empire. It was a win-win for both India and the British Empire: India would benefit from the stability of the "[Empire's] fighting troops, her Oxbridge-trained ICS administrators and her British-trained Police" and the Empire from India's "strategic position". India's evolution from colony to dominion was facilitated by Indians acquiring the ways of the British. In believing this, Finney acknowledges that the gap between Indians and the British was not insurmountable; that Indians, in fact, could become British. Having this view leads Finney to understand that there exists scope for mobility between the two races. Given this, insisting that one race was superior to another was not only undesirable but impractical. For instance, he mentions that he "lived and did everything" with the two Indians who were part of his IPS cohort's training. He is also very accepting of co-mingling between the two races, noting that Anglo-Indians were "a fine crowd of men". A corollary of this viewpoint is that Finney doesn't always hold fellow British men in high regard. He bitterly notes that while initially he believed "British people, were honest, decent individuals", he was "gradually disillusioned" by his dealings with other British men in the continent. One of these men included a young naval officer who Finney found "thoroughly unpleasant": "He had had a "hostilities only" commission and had no idea how to deal with Indians, frequently shouting at and abusing the servants". This, however, doesn't compel Finney to challenge British rule in the sub-continent: British rule was essential for both India and the British Empire. In his perspective, British rule is characterized not by British people as much as by British culture - an aspect that Finney believed that Indians would eventually embody *through* British rearing.

This understanding was reflected in Finney's actions as a policeman. Policing Indian society was

not merely restricted to enforcing public order but also, included ensuring the well-being of the Indian people. For Finney, these were the merits of having a "British-trained police". This implied that the police's role was not tied to wielding arms against Indians but through taking "prompt and early action" that ultimately benefitted the people. This was in stark contrast to what he saw in America, where the police, with their propensity for "useless and unnecessary firing", had a "love
hate relationship with the public". In carrying out his policing duties, Finney was also therefore the harbinger of British culture. During his tours, he wouldn't hesitate to support Indians suffering from ailments. On one of his visits, he noticed that a baby "might be suffering from pneumonia with her labored breathing and high temperature", and insisted that the "father…get her to the hospital as quickly as possible [with] and gave him a letter to a Dr. Archer at the C.M.S. Hospital…". He was intent on providing employment opportunities for Indians who lived close to the detention camps and demanded better water and sanitation facilities for the detainee under his supervision. Finney's actions were guided by his belief that British rule was essential for Indians. This also explains why he was primarily invested in investigated cases that either directly or indirectly challenged British rule. These cases included the "ordinary investigation of Communism, terrorism, labour troubles and various other things which had or might have a political repercussion". Cases that were otherwise - such as murders, domestic violence, thefts - rarely mark Finney's career, suggesting they were not integral to how he saw his role as a British policeman in the Indian sub-continent.

The most direct way in which Finney inculcated British culture in Indian society was through his native subordinates. He demanded appropriate accommodation for his subordinates, schools for their children and job security for them. He appreciated subordinates who exhibited traits that he believed were British. He notes that he "got very fond of the Punjabi Muslims [he had recruited]…These men had the manners and behaviors of gentlemen. I found that I could sit and chat with the old Punjabi Muslim Subedar on a vast number of topics, whereas one couldn't converse in the same way with either the Gurkha[3] or the up-country subedhar." This, however, did not preclude Finney from condoning subordinates who remained loyal and reaffirmed British rule. He is moved by the loyalty of Gurkahas who supported with running the detention camps. He is full of praise for his probationary Sub-Inspector, Santosh Gupta who "was an extremely clever young man…[who] cleaned up burglaries in the town and [whose] clever detective work led to at least two of the well-known dacoit gangs being broke up, with a number of persons convicted", his Sub-Inspector Hari Mohan Bagu who, despite his "rough and harsh" methods with criminals, "kept down the crime rate and was extremely popular with the local law-abiding residents" and many others. Subordinates who expressed some form of mutiny against British and by extension, his authority, were dismissed. He was intent that his unit recruits only "men who could be fully trusted and not go over to Congress or show signs of disaffection".

It's worth noting that while Finney was an IPS officer serving the British Empire, his allegiance was especially tied to the Bengal Presidency and its population of Bengalis. This is well-captured in his point that "[the] Bengali has often been a subject of scorn for his alleged lack of daring and courage. This is completely unfair and unjustified. He is not the martial type like the Punjabi, the Rajput and other races who formed the backbone of the Indian Army. But there are dozens of cases of the courage of the Bengali Intelligence Officer, rarely in the heat of the battle, but after

coolly calculating the risks of the duty he was performing." His role as a policeman was not merely related to supporting the British Empire but also, preserving the people of Bengal. This was achieved through India's continued presence in the British Empire and not through, as what ultimately happened, the splitting of Bengal and its people.

Discussion

	Understanding of British presence in India	Judgement of Society	Judgement of Subordinates	Policing Perspective
Crawford	British were one of many diverse groups in the Indian sub continent	Some groups were criminal minded; others not so much.	Subordinates were well-informed of the local conditions and should be leveraged for policing.	Policing in India is very dependent on local conditions
Cox	British were civilizing Indians	All Indians were either foolish or criminals.	Subordinates were either foolish or sly. Those who were pliable tended to by good people.	Policing in India is peculiar to the Indian personality
Finney	British were preparing Indians for self government	Political terrorists were criminals.	Subordinates were to be trained for self government. Training was less about tactics than about inculcating an appreciation for British culture and British rule.	Policing in India is to stem any challenge against the British Empire

[3] Gurkhas were a tribe of Nepalis who were considered as having "martial blood" and fit for policing mainland Indian society.

A summary of the policemen's understanding of British presence in the Indian sub-continent along with their judgement of Indian society and their subordinates is provided above. Each of

the policemen's perspective on policing is distinctly different. Crawford believed that policing in the Indian sub-continent was deeply conditioned by the local environment, an environment that was unfamiliar to the British. He was therefore insistent on acquainting himself with the local culture of the regions he patrolled, a process that left him intimately familiar and overwhelmingly obsessed with caste, creed and religious dynamics. In contrast, Cox believed that policing in the sub continent was shaped by personality of the Indian race. He focused on assessing (what he believed were) the peculiarities of the Indian race and reacting to these peculiarities, whether it meant harshly reprimanding his Indian subordinates for their foolishness or warily suspecting his Indian *zamindar* friends of mischief. Finally, Finney believed that policing in the sub-continent was especially responding to the intransigent political demands for India's independence from the British Empire. He was less interested in the common murder or theft and instead more attentive to political terrorists who challenged the rule of the British administration. These different perspectives of policemen on the role of policing in colonial India challenge existing studies that presume policing operates with a singular purpose. It reveals that there are competing visions of policing that seem to translate to distinctly different police behavior: Crawford was inclined to charge the upper-caste Indian, Cox was tempted to police almost any India, and Finney was on the lookout for the politically minded Indian. Given these variations amongst individual policemen, it's worth investigating into the factors that trigger these variations – Was it variations in the political context of the Indian sub-continent? Was it the institutional reforms that preceded the entry of each of these policemen (Did each institutional reform select for a different type of policeman)? Was it the personal and social lives led by these policemen during their time in India? In addressing these questions, we are faced with a more fundamental question – What would we desire from these three individual policemen: reform or absence? In more abstract terms, who is the ideal policeman? These questions and more implicitly, the results, complicate what we understand by the term "police", suggesting further introspection into both what we see and we *hope* to see from the police.

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