The Search for "Home" in Empire: Experiences of Colonial and Migrational Anxiety

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Introduction

In 1997 Ranajit Guha published his famous article "Not at Home in Empire," which began a debate on the role of personal experiences of European colonial servants in empire. Guha posited that discussions of colonial India tended to ignore aspects of colonial anxiety described by colonial officers, particularly in their private correspondence. Instead, he argued that scholars have drifted into the trap of presenting colonial officials as enthusiastic instruments of a coherent and structured imperial project. The reality, however, was far more complex. Guha's view was constructed around his argument that the image of empire has been promoted as "a sort of machine operated by a crew who know only how to decide but not to doubt, who know only action but no circumspection, and, in the event of a breakdown, only fear and no anxiety" (487-8). This naturally failed to accommodate individual colonial officers who may have been fretting over the immensity of an unknown world, and thus become "lost" in empire (Guha 487-8). Jon Wilson, taking up the debate began by Guha, wrote in his seminal work *The Domination of Strangers* that the colonial state can be seen as unstable and uncertain, with no clear direction (47).

Guha's arguments are framed through the idea of a sense of home that was lacking for Europeans in the subcontinent. Surrounded by an alien populace far from friends or family, and not sharing a common cultural identity with the indigenous population, it was no surprise to him that the failure to create a home led to the creation of artificial spaces of habitation and leisure through institutions such as gentlemen's clubs (Guha 483). The creation of these spaces and the willingness to engage with them were a response to the disconnect from familial and familiar network ties which came about through colonial service far from the metropolis or the center of interpersonal networks. This raises questions about how to effectively grapple with the range of epistolary sources which suggest issues related to such disconnections. Linked to this are the concepts of how the empire managed the private lives of its officials, and the attempts, if not inability, of servants to create a place for themselves.

The solution to these problems has seemingly been in the study of the colonial experience through what has come to be known as colonial anxiety. Brian Keith Axel has noted that discussions of colonial anxiety have generally reflected fear of the foreign and unfamiliar, as well as the recognition of a certain fragility of the European presence itself (17-21). It is, however, important to note that discussions of colonial anxiety have until now been rooted in the years after the 1757 Battle of Plassey when colonial control of India by the East India Company was on a much firmer footing. Naturally, this all but discounting the experiences of colonial servants pre-Plassey due to the lack of primary sources and far greater visibility of symptoms under official Company rule. Pre-1757, Company influence in India was largely confined to the presidencies of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. The description of the type of anxiety experienced has likewise remained entrenched in the historiographical understanding of the post-Plassey era. A broadening or refinement of the discussion of the experience of anxiety in the colonial setting has thus not been sufficiently debated. There have been notable studies of colonial anxiety for the period of Company rule, with the cases of John Shore (5 October 1751 - 14 February 1834) described by Wilson (65-7), and Francis Yeats-Brown (15 August 1886 - 19 December 1944) laid out by Guha (483-5). Both of these case studies effectively deal with the idea of a disconnect at the personal level for colonial servants and work within the broader study of colonial anxiety. However, the focus was certainly post-Plassey and perhaps not sharply trained on the concept of anxiety.

Mark Condos, meanwhile, has taken the approach of viewing colonial knowledge in terms of state security as a tool for examining colonial anxiety, with such knowledge providing both the means to dominate in the colonial setting and fall victim to fear and confusion when a lack of knowledge was apparent (12-3). Whilst Condos has drawn attention to a separate lens of comparison for colonial anxiety, that being the notion of state security, the concept of colonial anxiety itself is still elusive. Indeed, Condos's discussion of colonial anxiety focuses on the post-Plassey period; this would further suggest that his interpretation of colonial anxiety, at least regarding colonial insecurity, was grounded in the years after 1757. This again returns to the problem of discussing pre-Plassey colonial servants' experiences through the lens of colonial anxiety, perhaps sidelining an important strand of investigation.

Clearly, a structure is needed in order to provide scholars with a comparative framework. Through the use of the private papers of Sir Robert Cowan, governor of Bombay (1729-1734) as a comparative case study, it is argued that the parameters of the colonial anxiety discussion can be broadened to include the pre-Plassey era and thus

shift the focus in order to re-enliven the debate. Cowan's private papers have been contrasted with those of Arthur Cole, resident of Coorg, Mysore (1809), to search for signifiers of anxiety that may have come about due to the colonial encounter and the attempted creation of space. In this way, the social theory of space and the preconditions for human association advocated by Georg Simmel are also relevant in terms of contemporary social theory surrounding the creation of a place (Frisby 126). The result has been a test case for the opening-up of definitions of colonial anxiety.

Anxiety and the Case of Robert Cowan

The question must first be posed as to what anxiety is. Its precise nature has been the subject of much debate throughout the twentieth century by psychoanalysts. Freud argued that anxiety is a reaction to a situation of danger; that is, something felt that has a marked feeling of unpleasure (91-6). Lacan, however, contested that Freud's *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* lacked structure, thus proving difficult to situate the subject matter in contexts or surroundings. Lacan's solution was to construct a matrix in order to differentiate the dimensions involved (see below fig. 1 and *Anxiety* 9-10). Lacan describes anxiety as something that both possesses an object and being entirely free of doubt. It is, to this end, something unpleasurable that is known to the subject. It is the unexpected appearance of the object, that unpleasurable article, which causes the phenomenon of anxiety. Anxiety is therefore not the danger itself, but the warning signal for an apparent threat or perceived lack on the part of the subject (Lacan, *Anxiety* 75-6; 138). The object(s) of anxiety can, however, be indeterminate due to the myriad threats in the world. Whilst distilling individual dangers is problematic, Lacan's chart (Figure 1) which outlines the levels of severity and locomotion of anxiety is very useful. As can be seen, anxiety lies at the extremity of the table, indicating that there are levels of unpleasure leading to the full affect. It does also point to the reflexive nature of anxiety, something commented upon by Freud, in that varied levels of difficulty and movement can produce separate signifiers on the chart (Freud 157). This highlights that different signifiers of anxiety have varying degrees of severity and are distinct. Anxiety then is an affect felt in response to perceived threats. The questions must then be what was the object of Cowan's anxiety and whether it can be attributed to specific colonial anxiety.

Figure 1 - The Anxiety Chart (Lacan, *Anxiety* 77).

In February 1721, Cowan was appointed as the Company representative in Goa with the aim of negotiating an alliance with the Portuguese against the Maratha admiral Kanhoji Angré. Whilst in Goa, Cowan suffered from what might be described as loneliness and frustration as a result of his placement (1721-1722). This idea of angst and loneliness was reinforced by his negative review of the surrounding native and Portuguese populations, with Cowan having complained that he had not spoken English for eight months and stated that he felt lonely and desired companionship: "I have never wanted company more than now" (Letter to James Macrae [1721] 21; Letter to John Courtney [Jul. 1721] 50v). Such a disconnect was similar to the recorded experiences of Shore and Yeats-Brown. Indeed, a key facet of the ability to make a place for oneself lies in the construction of interpersonal relationships and community association. The absence of such things left Cowan facing a certain lack in personal terms, thus preventing him from adequately settling in Goa and making a place for himself. This feeling of frustrated isolation was combined with the dissatisfaction of his posting due to limited trading opportunities. Such a negative experience was also to be seen for Cowan when he served as Chief of Mocha (1724-1727), where he also suffered from symptoms of what might be tempting to regard as depression or mental illness (Letter to John Courtney [Aug. 1721] 50v; Letter to Mrs. Cairnes [1721] 69v; Letter to Mr. Lennox [1721] 72v; Letter to Peter Delaporte [1724] 16).

To diagnose retrospectively is subject to numerous difficulties, and so an outright diagnosis of anxiety or depression for Cowan is out of the question. However, it can be commented that he did experience loneliness, fear of illness, recurring pains, and fatigue. These represent commonly described symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder and can be located on Lacan's chart under symptom and acting-out. This also carried through into his use of language, where his descriptions of indigenous peoples were often unfavorable. Speech and language too are vital tools in understanding the psyche of a subject such as Cowan, with Lacan holding that the dichotomy of what has been said and

unsaid is a core aspect of analysis (*Écrits* 206). Cowan's letters, therefore, may act as a gateway to the object(s) affecting him. For example, he describes the Mochan people as generally "rascally" and insolent (Letter to James Macrae [1724] 21; Letter to William Phipps [Mar. 1725] 54v). The offhand dismissal of indigenous peoples as lazy or of having poor morals was, however, a common orientalist standpoint throughout the colonial era and served as a method of asserting alleged superiority over natives. These collective instances, however, also raise the question as to whether or not Cowan was suffering from colonial anxiety. Certainly, he felt unpleasure due to his colonial surroundings but the established definition of colonial anxiety in the wider historiography is firmly fixed to notions of colonial government. Such a definition does not adequately describe Cowan's situation. Indeed, his reactions could just as easily have been due to the complexities and anxiety of early-modern migration, leaving the term "colonial anxiety" poorly adjusted to the circumstance. This creates a problem, however, with incorporating pre-Plassey epistolary sources into the wider historiography of colonial anxiety.

One method of investigating this issue is through the lens of Cowan's Indian career, with a notable element of his correspondence being a distinct gendering of letters based on content. It was to his female network of correspondence alone that Cowan directed his expressions of loneliness and anxiety. The specific utilization of a gendered network of correspondence was unlikely a coincidence, and must instead surely point towards a defined need; or, in terms of Lacanian thought, a lack. Such a lack was likely represented by female company and the perceived familiarity of a home setting. In many ways, without a European female presence, the task of creating a personal space or homely structure in the colonies was all but impossible. Cowan, for his part, had an Indian mistress in Bombay, though this was clearly not seen as a sufficient substitute to aid in the creation of a home (Letter to Mrs. Cairnes [1721] 69v). This pointed to an English or European wife as having been necessary, or desired, for the creation of a home space, or even that the construction of home was more seen as a long-term creation back in Europe. Here, Simmel's arguments on common sociation needs of individuals, viewed as a relationship, through interaction, suggests that the aspects of home and failure to make a place go hand in hand (Dahme 415-6).

From an investigation of Cowan's letter books, one is struck by the fact that he had spikes in female correspondence in two distinct time periods. First, his time in Goa, where there are 18 letters. Second, his time in Mocha, which also gives the example of 18 letters. Whilst it could be argued that such correspondence was born out of a lack of occupation due to slack trading periods, entertainment amenities, or from holding roles that allowed a great amount of free time, it is

prudent to note that due to the yearly onset of poor weather during the rainy season there were always slack periods in which there would be plenty of time for such personal correspondence. With this in mind, it must be acknowledged that during his placements at Surat (1722) and Bombay (1722-1724; 1728-1734) Cowan made no attempt to engage in the same level of correspondence during the rainy seasons as he had during his placements in Goa (1721-1722) and Mocha (1724-1727). It is argued that the frequency of Cowan's gendered correspondence was thus directly linked to his personal experience at the time. This ties anxiety, through the lack of female company and homely surroundings, as a dominant force in the psyche of servants in Cowan's position, with the distant desire and artificially constructed association of home through correspondence playing a key role in colonial servants' coping mechanisms.

Cowan's expectation before arriving at Mocha was that his posting there was to be a method of making considerable financial gains on his own private trading account. The reality, however, was rather different. The market at Mocha was in flux and the price of coffee, the most important cash crop for the Company, soared. Cowan also alleged that the markets were being manipulated by a native merchant named Cosim Turbatty, a favorite of the ruling Imam, whom Cowan blamed for ruining the trade there. Whilst Cowan alleged that Turbatty interfered in the coffee trade, he also suggested that Turbatty used methods such as extortion, kidnap, and violence to prevent his rivals bidding on European goods landed at Mocha. The result of this was to keep prices artificially low for his own benefit (Letter to William Phipps [Mar. 1725] 55v; Letter to William Phipps [Apr. 1725] 75v). This was reminiscent of the late eighteenth-century descriptions of despotism used by orientalist accounts of colonial servants suffering from what the established historiography describes as colonial anxiety. The prime example of this being Wilson's keen observation that for Britons in post-Plassey Bengal, "despotism" conjured up the image of a society that was entirely dysfunctional. As such, the idea of despotism was used as a prism through which to compare the differences between Indian and British society (Wilson 65).

Turbatty's machinations and the failure of his private trade thus led Cowan to view Mocha, and Yemen at large, as a land ruined by despotism. As such, it came as no surprise that Cowan failed to find a place for himself there. This further linked pre-Plassey notions of colonial anxiety to post-Plassey ones; however, the pre-Plassey example remains distinct from the post-Plassey equivalent due to the variance in loci, progression of the colonial state, and understandings of colonial servants in terms of known and unknown. The difficulties at Mocha impacted both the Company's interests and, most distressingly for Cowan, his own opportunities for private trade. By 8

July 1724, Cowan wrote to his father, John, in Londonderry to highlight that Mocha had been a disappointment and that he would actively seek a return to Bombay (15v). However, there were several occasions from July 1724 onwards where Cowan sought to portray his plight. The content of these letters portrayed Mocha as a wretched place much akin to purgatory (Letter to William Phipps [Mar. 1725] 55v; Letter to William Phipps [Apr. 1725] 75v; Letter to Thomas Woolley 111-111v). This again ties the use of language to expressions of Cowan's anxiety as a signifier, and is thus an important aspect to consider (Lacan, *Écrits* 206). As can be seen from Cowan's tenure in Mocha, expectation and desire of reward can be the precursor to aspects of the anxiety chart when expectations are not fulfilled.

Colonial Anxiety and the Problem of Migration

In a similar vein, the case of Arthur Cole is an intriguing one. As highlighted by Sanjeev Jain and Alok Sarin, Cole experienced many difficulties similar to Cowan's which were linked to cultural issues associated with migration (215-6). This further suggests a division of the notion of colonial anxiety manifesting itself as specific migrational anxiety, with aspects of migration acting as objects of anxiety. Can migrational anxiety work within the boundaries of colonial anxiety, or is there an entirely separate form of anxiety that acts within both boundaries? In either case, there were common aspects of unpleasure shared by both, meaning the anxiety experienced was undeniably colonial in nature if not in name. The relative success of making a place post-migration was thus a key indicator in understanding the experiences of servants. Though there were of course a large number of colonial servants who made the journey east and who may have experienced similar issues, the cases of Cowan and Cole are of interest here as there are extant letter collections incorporating gendered correspondence for use as a case study. Cowan wrote to several of the ladies whom he would have met in London and to his sister, as well as being in semi-frequent correspondence with his fiancée and mother-in-law elect (Letter to Mrs. Gould 141; Letter to Betty Gould 14-14v). Similarly, Cole wrote to both his mother and sister to express what was affecting him (Jain and Sarin 215-6). Family and friends, in this way, were a powerful link to home, with nostalgia and regret being paths highlighted by Indrani Sen as leading to mental health issues (36). Once again, a defined lack in the form of compatible European female company and a homely environment led to expression through negative language, acting as a signifier, in the guise of gendered correspondence networks. Further, this contributed to Cowan and Cole's inability to make a place for themselves in empire.

As Jain and Sarin have highlighted in their work, the very act of migration from one geopolitical sphere to another might serve as the impetus for the development of a variety of ailments and pains, and even contribute towards the onset of what we might today broadly refer to as depression (215-6). The example of Cowan certainly lends credence to such a suggestion, with it being noted that he frequently suffered from attacks of gout and what was, presumably, flu-like symptoms (Letter to Henry Cairnes [1724] 27v; Letter to William Phipps [Mar. 1725] 56v; Letter to Henry Cairnes [1725] 92v). It would be a great leap to suggest something akin to a pseudo-hypochondria or depression based on this evidence, though the recurring nature of the illnesses and the desire to broadcast his sufferings through the use of language is suggestive of a signifier, in line with Lacan's anxiety chart. If Shruti Kapila's comments on mental maladies being an outcome of the dissolution of familiar and interpersonal ties in this circumstance are considered, the argument can certainly be suggested (132). Nevertheless, what was perhaps most telling from the perspective of Cowan's time in Mocha was his frequent need for referral to Bombay to convalesce after the busy season in Mocha (Letter to John Courtney [Sep. 1724] 28; Letter to Edward Harrison 108; Letter to Henry Lyall 184v). This convalescence was a regular occurrence during his Mocha years, and he spent the period of September to January in Bombay during each of his years as the appointed chief of Mocha. This was a clear attempt to seek out the familiar and a more recognizable representation of home than he was experiencing in Mocha. Cowan's colonial, or perhaps more specifically migrational, anxiety thus manifested in his striving for freedom and the familiar. His desire to flee from the supposed despotism of Mocha was likely also a factor as he sought the British cultural home of Bombay as a means of escape. All of this suggested a failure to create a home in both Mocha and empire.

Cole is also noted by Jain and Sarin as having suffered from a series of aches and pains, whilst also possessing a bored and listless persona during his time in Coorg (215). It is intriguing to speculate as to the impact a lack of pre-ordained knowledge regarding the eastern or oriental sphere may have had on the ability of these men to adapt to their surroundings, with both Cowan and Cole displaying a distinct vulnerability when exposed to the vast expanse of the diverse cultures in which they found themselves. The cultural disconnect here was much akin to the notion of despotism as a factor in dividing British and South Asian cultures. This is strongly tied to Guha's assessment that colonial officials felt anxious due to the "immensity of things in a world whose limits are not known" (483). In a great irony, the vast cultural and physical expanse which colonial servants were presented with served to limit their freedom, instead of providing opportunities for discovery and adventure. The lack of a home setting in the colonies

and the inability to make a place, combined with a vast chasm of the unknown, led servants to increasingly seek the familiar and comfortable within controlled surroundings such as clubs with other Europeans (Guha 483). The comparison between anxiety and dizziness made by Søren Kierkegaard is an interesting one that is applicable to this situation. Kierkegaard reasoned that when an individual looks down into an abyss and becomes dizzy, the fault is equally with the individual as with the abyss. In this state of dizziness, freedom of action or thought subsides due to the compelling anxiety of the situation (Kierkegaard 75). In the instance of colonial servants such as Cowan and Cole, anxiety served as the counterbalance to freedom, greatly inhibiting their choices and willingness to explore the other or the world outside of their own familiar spheres. Anxiety was thus a powerful force in shaping agency in colonial circles, with the concept of freedom holding the key.

The idea of the impact of climate upon the individual's mental wellbeing is an area open to debate as to whether or not it can physically have had any effect on it. However, such unpleasure seen in the context of climate may have constituted an object of anxiety. Cowan's time in Mocha did of course expose him to lengthy periods of hot, dry, and airless weather conditions which clearly discomforted him. Whilst Sen has highlighted that research into mental health for colonial servants is in its infancy, she has also drawn attention to instances of psychological symptoms occurring as a result of constantly moving residence, extended travel in the tropics, and climate. Similarly, she has highlighted marginalized existence, alienation, irritability, and boredom as common symptoms of mental illness amongst Europeans in India. However, this must be qualified with the caveat that mental ailments were not visible and so are difficult to diagnose (Sen 26; 33). Sen's highlighting of travel and migration in tropical climates dovetails neatly with the assertion that migrational anxiety played a key role in the onset of symptoms associated with the modern understanding of generalized anxiety disorder. The crux of the question must then be whether Cowan's inability to tolerate the climate, in conjunction with his need for emotional support and the direction of his angst towards an antagonist of sorts, can justifiably constitute a malady of the psyche being transformed into a malady of the body as well. Cowan certainly described affects that were location-specific, with the climate of individual places and postings being viewed as fundamental considerations in the happiness of their colonial service.

Locational factors must then have been a key consideration for colonial servants in managing their colonial, or migrational, anxiety. Ingrained in the psyche of colonial servants was the idea that certain locations or postings were healthier than others. Climate was clearly

the main consideration, though aspects of population density and topography also had a part to play. Such knowledge of the potential service environment thus inevitably led to servants having preferred working placements. This suggested much about the desire and expectation of successfully making a home or a place for oneself in preferable locations, though such expectations often led to disappointment for colonial servants. The creation of hill stations in the nineteenth century was ultimately a measure to escape the factors of climate and population; this was, however, only a temporary solution and cannot be regarded as the successful creation of either home or a place for oneself. Although only a temporary fix, this was another instance of colonial servants utilizing their desire for freedom and the familiar to positively deal with their anxiety. This of course presupposed that knowledge of more preferable loci was available and that there were gaps in the vast unknown of empire. The example of Cowan seeking a retreat from Mocha was an example of this. Ironic then that knowing about one's lack of knowledge of the unknown could serve as an object of anxiety.

Although Bombay served as a retreat and provided more familiar surroundings, it could not be described as home. Whilst the Company had built up the English settlement in Bombay and provided some essential amenities, the mass provision of comforts for Company servants was something only significantly evident in the late eighteenth century. Indeed, it was only in 1718 that the English church in Bombay was completed and 1733 that a purpose-built hospital was furnished. Provision of specialized facilities such as asylums was also an element largely occurring in the second half of the eighteenth century, with the seventeenth-century policy of confinement for social outcasts still influential in the early eighteenth century (Foucault 45). The situation in Bombay was also complicated by the great population density and cultural diversity during Cowan's period. In the 1730s it is estimated that the total population of Bombay was approximately 30,000; of this, less than 1,000 were European (Teggin 159-60). Whilst Bombay was doubtless more cosmopolitan and familiar than Goa or Mocha, the disconnect between Europeans and diverse others was clear. This can be represented by yet another layer of the external unknown, as well as a specific lack of knowledge of the wider other.

The Location and Security of "Home"

The factor of private trade was the primary motivation for early colonial servants, particularly in the early modern era, with the journey east being seen as a stepping stone to the creation of wealth. This wealth was ultimately designed for use in purchasing land back in

England and was thus essential in the construction of a home for many servants. As such, the sacrifice of the familiar to journey east in search of the means to create a home was a great irony. In their quest for home, servants had to surrender their familiar surroundings and loved ones, and consent to live in an unknown place where their freedom was limited for an unknown period of time. Again, the concept of a defined lack was crucial. With this in mind, it was no surprise that rates of success varied enormously. Cowan, for example, made approximately £50,000 through his trade, with this wealth being the foundation of the marquesses of Londonderry's fortune. Whilst Cowan had expressed disappointment at his opportunities for trading in the early stages of his career in Goa, Surat, and Mocha, and complained that he had little starting capital to begin with, it cannot be questioned that he succeeded in his goal of making a fortune. Cowan exploited the trade routes of the Western Indian Ocean and the Far East to accomplish his goal, seemingly bypassing the commercial difficulties at the Gujarati hub-port of Surat, which were caused by the regionalization of Mughal power and commercial structures (Bayly 17-18). Cowan wrote in 1724 that he believed that one in ten Englishmen seeking their fortune in India did not live to enjoy their fortune and return to Europe (Letter to John Cowan 15v; Letter to Mrs. Cairnes [1725] 135v). Clearly, the anxiety he felt for his desire to make a fortune was transient and presented itself only early on in his career. The self-imposed exile of colonial servants thus often proved both demoralizing and unfruitful. It can be seen here once again that the aspects of expectation and desire were key to the puzzle. Seemingly the lack of home or a place of one's own in empire was either accepted as a reasonable trade-off for the potential to make a fortune, or perhaps the true extent of life in empire was unknown to young colonial servants before they departed. In any case, as Wilson has observed, the possession of home was often incredibly far distant in more ways than one (68).

Anxiety in the colonial spectrum then was not something that occurred for a defined number of reasons or factors. The traditional view of colonial anxiety in twentieth-century historiography has been that it primarily occurred as a result of fear from attack, rebellion, or a more general apathy as a result of the immensity of empire. Within this category, numerous attempts, and failures, in making the process of government more objective came about. However, as Wilson reminds us, such objectivity came from the perspective of "strangers" to India who had a lack of sympathy and connection with the native populace. In remaining objective, or ambivalent, in their mission to govern and transform, either intentionally or inadvertently, colonial servants remained aloof out of necessity. This in turn led to feelings of isolation and feeling "lost" in empire. The familiar aspect of fellow European exiles within the surrogate home of shared spaces offered sanctuary

from the vast expanse of unknown, but free movement was sacrificed and as a result, the servant may have felt bound by invisible chains. This returns to Wilson's assessment that colonial servants sought highly structured spaces to retreat into, thus preventing themselves from stepping outside the bureaucratic confines of the Company state (66). This was categorically neither a home, nor conducive to making a place for oneself.

Wilson has established that anxiety about possible rebellions or violence had a powerful effect on the psyche of the colonial servant. Whilst there was the threat of possible danger, this threat was invisible and did not manifest into something that could be understood. In the absence of a distinct object, servants manifested aspects of colonial anxiety related to the vastness of the unknown surrounding them, the feeling of being "lost" in empire assuming the role of the object. As Guha has highlighted, this served to corral the servant used to freedoms of the Western metropolis into a caged situation with his status frozen into a caste-like structure. Both the cause and result were symptomatic of anxiety, though once ensnared in this trap, there was little the individual servant could do to escape his position (Guha 483-4). This is reminiscent of Kierkegaard's comparison of anxiety and dizziness, with independence of thought and action compromised. However, Wilson has suggested that an avenue of escape lay in the construction of information sharing networks with Indian "informants." By incorporating native informants into their personal networks, servants had a far greater vision and knowledge of what was happening outside of their clubs and compounds, slowly demystifying the vast unknown surrounding them (Wilson 69). Whilst the wider study of the relationships has focused on the post-Plassey era, the example of Cowan once again proves useful as he collected information from native sources and then funneled it to his personal network. Cowan's use of native sources in this way was an early example of the methods described by Wilson. The sharing of information through personal patronage networks in this way is reminiscent of Margot Finn's arguments regarding the familial proto-state and the proliferation of privately interested patronage networks in empire (101-3).

Despite Cowan not having lived during the more highly structured Company Raj, he did face constant threat of attack from the Maratha state during his years as governor of Bombay (1729-1734). The differentiation must be made here between threat and danger. Cowan experienced constant danger from the Marathas during his governorship (Letter to John Deane 48; Letter to Martin French 102v). This was a danger that was quantifiable and actions could be taken to mitigate it. The Raj, however, was faced with sedition and rebellion, threats that are difficult to monitor and identify when there is not a

great level of knowledge. Servants could lay out procedures but had little idea of when and where the insurrection would occur, or indeed who was to carry it out. The Raj example is perhaps from the more traditional mold of colonial anxiety following the work of Guha and Wilson, with the focus very much on the unknown. Cowan, however, was very much aware of who and what his danger was and was thus dealing with a known quantity, despite his lack of knowledge when an attack would come. Whilst this can neither be described as colonial anxiety outright or necessarily migrational anxiety, the bald description of anxiety does not suffice due to the colonial connotations of Cowan's actions as governor of Bombay. This is clearly another aspect of the difficulty which has emerged when discussing colonial anxiety in the pre-Plassey era. Whilst the unknown has proven challenging in finding reconciliation to this, the solution may yet be found in the physical existence of familiar spaces and objects associated with home.

The use of spaces or destinations as methods to relieve colonial anxiety is an established part of the historiography on the subject. Cowan, for example, made use of his convalescent trips to Bombay and ensconced himself within his correspondence network. These actions were early substitutes for the more rigidly defined social clubs, or latterly hill stations, in subcontinental India during Company rule. However, there was no like replacement for Cowan in his position; so alternative methods of alleviating anxiety were needed. Research into material culture has become an important division in the study of the colonial experience during the past few decades. Exciting new studies by Stephanie Barczewski (2014) and Margot Finn & Kate Smith (2018) have more sharply focused the discussion of colonial servants on physical objects and the end product of the creation of wealth in the colonies.[1] It is argued that by examining the objects and products which colonial servants held in esteem and consumed, further light may be shed on the techniques used to alleviate colonial or migrational anxiety. The item or product in question, presumably possessing some powerful recollective quality, was used as a tool for the temporary transportation of the imagined self to home or another familiar location. Such a method might also have alleviated affects contained in Lacan's chart which were felt.

In Cowan's case, the vast geographical distance played a part in limiting availability, and so the supply of these goods was scarce. This naturally increased the desire to have such products and reinforced their special nature. Due to Cowan's involvement in the Atlantic wine trade prior to 1719, the procurement of European wines was of particular interest to him when in India. Indeed throughout his career, he traded in a range of wines including hock, Galician, Rhenish, and port. However, the most desirable for Cowan was French claret (Letter to Henry Cairnes [1723] 23v). Cowan sought claret out particularly as

a special treat, though he was often disappointed at his difficulty in obtaining it in the colonies (Letter to William Phipps [1724] 50v; Letter to John Fotheringham 207). As to why claret in particular was valued is unclear, though the matter can be viewed in the context of the politicization of wine in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Due to the poor relations between Britain and France at the time, choosing port over claret was seen as a patriotic gesture by the Whig-controled establishment in order to differentiate themselves from the more Francophile Tories. However, as Charles Ludington has laid out, the transference of legitimacy from Tory to Whig could not have taken place without the conspicuous aesthetic and moral display of the consumption of quality goods, for example claret (82-4). If the mark of politeness was the consumption of quality goods, it was thus unsurprising that Cowan chose to conspicuously consume quality goods. The reality as to whether Cowan viewed his consumption of claret as a connection to a familiar locale is ambiguous. However, he certainly sought it out for his own pleasure and comfort; at the very least, this was suggestive of a desire for home or homeliness.

The concept of home was, however, a difficult one to reconcile for colonial servants without many of the trappings that went with it. Laying aside factors such as location, climate, and fear of rebellion, attention must now be turned to what the identity of a colonial home in itself was. Guha wrote of Europeans being emotionally unable to be "at home" in empire, but there must also be a physical factor to European struggles to settle. In her 1993 article, Alison Blunt drew attention to the role of women in the creation of home spaces in empire. Such a category included the vital role of women, obviously, but also aspects of material culture and freedom of space. The transformation of spaces of habitation into recognizable homes in empire, run along British-minded lines, was essential for giving colonial servants ownership over their private living spaces. Although Blunt's study is focused on the period 1886-1925, many important lessons can be drawn from it in the study of space and anxiety in early empire (421-2). This would seem to concur with earlier arguments surrounding Simmel's views regarding the inability to make a place for oneself in the colonies. Cole served during the height of Company rule in India, and so was exposed to many of the challenges highlighted by Blunt as symptomatic of the failure to create personalized living spaces or homes. Cowan, meanwhile, served during a period when colonial servants' experiences still very much revolved around forts, barracks, and Company factories. No matter what can be said about the creation of home for servants in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, making garrisons homely was an altogether more difficult proposition. Indeed, the specific lack of a home environment, together with the absence of what was clearly the vital role of women, as home-

makers and creators of the known safety identified as home, served as the object of Cowan's anxiety in empire.

Conclusion

All of this brings into question whether or not the established boundaries of colonial anxiety, discussed by Guha and Wilson, are fixed in their positions and terminologies. There were clearly shared signifiers between the experiences of sufferers of colonial and migrational anxiety, but the temptation must surely be to discount the latter in favor of the preeminence of the former in colonial historiographical circles. To combine the two notions into one convenient cover-all term is, however, all too easy a solution. If sufferers of what we today understand as generalized anxiety disorder shared common symptoms with those we have designated as showing symptoms of colonial anxiety, what harm is there in separating the term and simply stating that an individual suffered from anxiety as a result of the colonial encounter? The reason, it appears, is that the impact would be to limit the scope of postcolonial discussions by eradicating an entire strand of investigation. It is not being proposed that the term "colonial anxiety" should be struck from usage, nor that it should be denigrated: far from it. It is, however, argued that a debate of its parameters is essential in order to define what it is more accurately. It is also clear that the wider debate surrounding colonial anxiety is lacking a detailed analysis of how anxiety both manifested itself and impacted the process of colonial government for individual servants. Further, it is proposed that the formation of a structure for the analysis of anxiety in the colonial setting must be debated in order to provide points of reference for scholars of empire. The overlap with migrational anxiety has been highlighted above, with particular focus on the concepts of home and the inability to make a place, though this article has not gone so far as to suggest that it should be established as a rival category to colonial anxiety in historiographical discussions. Rather, it is hoped that future discussion will focus more sharply on where and when the division between the two terms comes into play and that the use of colonial anxiety as a lens of comparison will be refined in the future.

Notes

1. See Barczewski 2016 and Finn & Smith 2018.

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