Wesleyan University The Honors College

Empire and Assassination: Indian Students, 'India House', and Information Gathering in Great Britain, 1898-1911

by

Paul Schaffel
Class of 2012

A thesis submitted to the
faculty of Wesleyan University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts
with Departmental Honors in History

Middletown, Connecticut April, 2012

Table Of Contents

A Note on India Office Records....3
Acknowledgements....4

Introduction-A Dynamic Relationship: Indian Students & the British Empire....5
Separate Spheres on a Collision Course....6
Internal Confusion....9
Outline....12
Previous Scholarship....14

I. Indian Students & India House....17
Setting the Stage: Early Indian Student Arrivals in Britain....19
Indian Student Groups....22
Krishnavarma's India House, 1905-1907....24
V. D. Savarkar's India House, 1907-1909....30
India House Membership....39
Conclusion....41

II. The India Office & The Bureau of Information for Indian Students....43
The Certificate of Identity....46
An Imperfect Certificate System....52
William Lee-Warner, 1846-1914....56
The Bureau of Information for Indian Students....64
Thomas Walker Arnold and the Benevolent Bureau....72
Conclusion....76

III. The Assassination of Sir William Hutt Curzon-Wyllie by the Indian Student Madan Lal Dhingra....78
Madan Lal Dhingra....80
William Hutt Curzon-Wyllie....84
The Aftermath....86
Conclusion....89

IV. The Rise of British Criminal Intelligence & the Fall of India House....91
The Surveillance Pseudo-Network, May 1907-June 1909....93
The Case of Kirtikar....96
An Increasing Cohesiveness, July 1909-February 1910....103
Savarkar's Arrest, March 1910-February 1911....107
After Savarkar's Arrest....114
Conclusion....116

Conclusion....118
The Nature of Empire....119
Postscript....122

Bibliography....124

A Note on India Office Records

The India Office Records, available at the Asian and African Studies Reading Room at the British Library in London, constitute the majority of the archival sources in this thesis. I have attempted to make the process of determining the location of these documents as comprehensible and transparent as possible for future researchers. Individual documents are cited as follows: "Title of the document," [Date(s) of the volume in which the document has been filed], [the name of the India Office department responsible for the creation of the document], [the catalog number of the volume in which the file can be found followed by the file number], [British Library]. In practice, this format appears as follows:

"Indian Students Magazine Meeting," 1903, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/643 1680, British Library.

Meaning the source cited is a document entitled "Indian Students Magazine Meeting," written in 1903, by an individual in the Public and Judicial Department, located in record book 643, file 1680, and is held at the British Library. This method has worked well. For brevity and clarity, subsequent citations contain only the title of the document. None of these sources share the same title, hopefully avoiding confusion.

Acknowledgements

Now that I am at the ending, I hardly know where to begin. First I must thank my advisor, Professor Pinch, for providing me with a steady hand throughout this process. Without his assistance, none of this would have been possible, most especially when I was planning on pursuing a project on the Italian immigrant population in London (which would have been a most difficult endeavor considering I have no knowledge of Italian).

I must also thank those who helped me during my archival research in London. The archivists and librarians in the Asian and African Studies Reading Room at the British Library, most notably Dr. Antonia Moon, made researching what at first appeared to be an overwhelming amount of material exceedingly manageable. I must also thank Albert Ho for providing me with generous accommodations and hospitality during my stay. I would again like to thank the White Committee for supporting my initial project plan and providing the funds necessary to allow for research in Great Britain.

I would also like to thank Eileen Read for her assistance editing, and providing another set of eyes when mine were too tired to continue.

Finally, I thank my family, whose support since this all began last August has been priceless.

Introduction

A Dynamic Relationship: Indian Students & the British Empire

On the night of July 1, 1909, an Indian student living in London named Madan Lal Dhingra assassinated the India Office's political aide-de-camp, William Curzon-Wyllie. This act of violence would reverberate throughout Great Britain and India for decades after.[1] Further, the motivation behind the act stretches well into the nineteenth century. As early as the 1870s, Indians had traveled to Great Britain with the intent of attending British universities, gaining professional expertise and knowledge that could only be found at the heart of the Empire.[2] The British soon feared that the small, but ever-growing, number of Indian students in Britain represented a potential threat to the Raj. It was believed that Indian students would

[1] "Murder of Wyllie Stirs All of England," *New York Times*, July 2, 1909.
[2] Shompa Lahiri, *Indians in Britain : Anglo-Indian Encounters, Race and Identity, 1880-1930* (London; Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2000), 5.

organize and conduct a policy of anti-imperialism hitherto impossible due to the controls present in British-India.[3] Free to operate as they pleased in Great Britain, the possibilities for radically minded students were seemingly endless. Curzon-Wyllie's assassination represented both the British government's greatest fears, as well as the culminating act of Indian student radicals in Great Britain, a group that had come to be dominated by the militant rhetoric of V. D. Savarkar.

In the aftermath of the assassination, the British adopted a much more aggressive policy of pursuit: arresting Savarkar, shutting down Indian organizations associated with radicalism, and creating the Empire's first global surveillance network. The militancy preached by Savarkar and his followers was quickly quashed, only to be replaced by Gandhian political non-violence. Indian students continued to travel to Britain in the years following the assassination, but London and its environs was never again a breeding ground for anti-imperial political actors.

Separate Spheres on a Collision Course

One of the central concerns of this thesis is the evident disconnect between the British government and the Indian student population in Great Britain. Until the assassination of Curzon-Wyllie, discourse between the India Office and Indian students was extremely limited. However, each group was fixated on the other. For the British this meant the establishment of numerous schemes designed to increase the amount of information gathered about the Indian student population, while Indian students were deeply concerned with understanding the India Office's political composition and

[3] "Request for Files on Indians," 1909, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/961 3232, British Library.

ultimate ends.[4] During the first decade of the twentieth century, these two distinct, but intertwined spheres, persistently circled each other, searching for an opening through which to infiltrate.

The assassination brought these two groups into direct confrontation. Dhingra had shattered the invisible line that had allowed both Indian student radicals and the India Office to operate without directly impinging on each other. In the aftermath of the assassination the two spheres could no longer independently coexist. The British government attacked India House, the major radical organization in London, shutting it down and dispersing its members.[5] In response to this newly aggressive British response, Indian students were more circumspect, eventually becoming subsumed by the ever-expanding British intelligence infrastructure.

In the years that followed the assassination, it appeared as though the British had won a decisive victory against anti-imperial politics. Faced with the imminent threat of terrorism in its own backyard, the Empire had stood up to the test and thwarted future radicalism.[6] Scotland Yard received the bulk of the credit for this success, and the British public was happy to welcome a pliant Indian student population back to London.

---

[4] "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students," 1908-1912, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/1120 4173, British Library; "Information About the Revolutionary Party in London from H. K. Koregaonkar of India House," 1909, Political Department: Indian States, IOR/R/R/1/1/10, British Library; ibid; "Indian Students in the UK," 1907-1910, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/845 233, British Library.
[5] Nicholas Owen, *The British Left and India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 74.
[6] Richard Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries in Great Britain and on the Continent, 1905-1914," *Intelligence and National Security* 3, no. 1 (1988): 70-71.

However, this narrative is misleading. The growing Indian student population was not as much of a threat as the British believed it to be. Dhingra's action was not the result of a master conspiracy orchestrated by Savarkar, but a single crime undertaken by a man with a personal vendetta against the British government and William Curzon-Wyllie specifically.[7] The majority of the members of India House, although willing to take part in meetings charged with radical rhetoric, still believed that they would one day work for, and be a part of, British-India and thus were unwilling to make the sacrifices necessary to advance the nationalist cause.[8] The British may have believed that Dhingra represented only the beginning of what would come to be a wholesale campaign against British officialdom, but this belief was misguided and due largely to the ineffectiveness of the knowledge systems of the India Office.

The attempts by the India Office at gathering information about the Indian student population were problematic. These schemes, which focused on the creation of a bureaucratic center of control that could assist in managing the actions of Indian students in Great Britain, faced a lack of cooperation throughout their periods of operation.[9] For example, the Bureau of Information for Indian Students, the focus of Chapter II, was largely ineffective because of the reluctance of Indian students to participate in the affairs of an organization that they believed was a surveillance agency. However, organizations like the Bureau also failed because the men who ran

---

[7] Rozina Visram, *Asians in Britain : 400 Years of History* (London; Sterling, Va.: Pluto Press, 2002), 156-57.
[8] Owen, *The British Left and India*, 68.
[9] "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."

and created them did not always share the goals of the larger imperial information network. T. W. Arnold and William Lee-Warner, the two men most responsible for the operations of the Bureau, had a sincere desire to aid and assist these students, even going so far as to explicitly denounce spying as an acceptable Bureau policy.[10] At its peak period of operation, the Bureau facilitated Indian student study in Great Britain, without the caveats that Indian students secretly believed existed.

Here we see that both spheres misperceived the other. The British believed that they were facing a scourge of radicalism that posed a real threat, while Indian students thought that any involvement from the British government was an indication of a larger ploy to monitor all Indian activities.[11] In fact, it was the assassination, an event that was a complete surprise to both Indian and British communities, which would be the most real threat of the entire period. The British intelligence operations created in the wake of the assassination were the first to actively seek to control the Indian student population in the way that Indian students feared. The lack of knowledge that pervaded both sides prior to the assassination precipitated the unfortunate resolution between the two groups that occurred after Curzon-Wyllie's death.

Internal Confusion

Another main theme of this thesis is the heterogeneity of these two groups and the implications of the internal inconsistencies that often found their way to the fore

---

[10] Ibid.
[11] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 59; "Shadowing of Indian Students by Scotland Yard Detectives," 1909, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/924 758, British Library.

during the early part of the twentieth century. Indian students and India Office officials were physical representations of the difficulties inherent in imperial citizenship. These individuals were not simply Indian or British, but both, a hybrid amalgam that, by necessity, papered over the internal contradictions implicit to the racial hierarchy that underpinned imperial rule when the two groups were in conflict.

India House, first led by Shyamji Krishnavarma, and then by Savarkar, maintained two vastly different forms of nationalist politics. Krishnavarma believed that cooperation with the British was a central component of the movement for an independent India, while Savarkar rejected even minor attempts at conciliation with the British. As will be discussed in Chapter I, the character of Krishnavarma's India House was dramatically different from the one inculcated by Savarkar in the months after his installation as leader.[12] Importantly, the composition of India House membership did not change when its leader did. This meant that Savarkar preached militant violence to the same men who had eagerly accepted Krishnavarma's moderate tone.[13] India House became a radical organization under Savarkar, but in name only. The men Savarkar needed to carry out his plans for violent aggression against the British did not exist in London. Curzon-Wyllie's assassination came as a complete shock, even to his peers at India House. British involvement at India House was minimal during this period; members were able to practice bomb-making and pistol shooting as they pleased; yet Dhingra's act remained the only violent one during the entire period.[14] In the end, Indian students in Great Britain found that they

---

[12] Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 126.
[13] Owen, *The British Left and India*, 71.
[14] Ibid., 69.

were not willing to forsake the British components of their identity in order to create a wholly Indian one.

The India Office too had difficulty maintaining a consistent political policy during the period. Tasked with the creation of a way to order and control what would be termed the "Indian student problem," the India Office eventually organized the Bureau of Information for India Students, a structure created with the explicit intent of increasing British awareness and paternal involvement in the lives of Indian students.[15] However, in practice, the Bureau of Information, due to the stewardship of its Educational Advisor, T. W. Arnold, became an advocate for Indian student equality, while rejecting policies of explicit surveillance and forced enrollment. Arnold, an 'imperial careerist', had spent over a decade working in India prior to his role as Educational Adviser, and had developed deep respect for the country and its people, even considering a conversion to Islam.[16] William Lee-Warner, the India Office official most responsible for the Bureau's formation, also had spent considerable time in India, adopting a political philosophy that was sympathetic to Indian concerns and needs.[17] These two individuals were confronted with the aims of the British Empire seeking to quiet Indian nationalism, but also attempted to placate the desires of their own consciousnesses, creating an India Office policy that was superficially controlling, but actually accommodating.

---

[15] "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."
[16] Katherine Watt, "Thomas Walker Arnold and the Re-Evaluation of Islam, 1864-1930," *Modern Asian Studies* 36, no. 1 (2002): 2-3.
[17] F.H. Brown, "Sir William-Lee Warner (1846-1914)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Brian Harrison, HCG Matthew, and Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Outline

These two main themes are examined in three main chapters and a fourth, shorter chapter that discusses the specifics of William Curzon-Wyllie's assassination. The first chapter examines the growth of the Indian student population in Great Britain, experiences of individual students, and the formation of multiple Indian student organizations and the British response. Particular attention is placed on the evolution of India House, first under Krishnavarma and then Savarkar, in order to clarify the distinct nature of each leader's political beliefs.

Chapter II details the India Office response to this burgeoning population. The India Office's goal during this period was to gain a greater understanding of a group that had previously been uncategorized and had fallen through the cracks of a bureaucracy that sought to order every aspect of the Empire. The India Office responded to this 'information panic', a term borrowed here from C. A. Bayly and D. K. Choudhury, in two ways, first creating certificates of identity for Indians set to travel to Great Britain and then, with the failure of the certificate scheme, the creation of the previously mentioned Bureau of Information for Indian Students.[18] The personal histories of William Lee-Warner and T. W. Arnold, the two men most

[18] C. A. Bayly, *Empire and Information : Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); D. K. Lahiri Choudhury, "Sinews of Panic and the Nerves of Empire," *Modern Asian Studies* 38, no. 04 (2004).

responsible for the Bureau's operation are analyzed as examples of the 'imperial careerist'.[19]

The penultimate chapter assesses on only a single event: William Curzon-Wyllie's assassination. As the pivotal moment in the relationship between the British government and the Indian student population in Great Britain, the assassination is worthy of particularly detailed focus. The events and individuals described in Chapters I and II existed in an Empire prior to the assassination. After July 1, 1909, the power that had been given to individuals such as T. W. Arnold was reduced and replaced by police forces. Dhingra's personal history, as well as the potential reasoning behind his decision is described. Although little is known about Dhingra outside of the information gathered after his arrest, his background depicts an individual whose violence was not only the result of his political beliefs, but also one of internal discomfort.

Finally, Chapter IV explains the aftermath of the assassination. The British responded by strengthening their criminal intelligence organizations, and focusing on Savarkar as the individual most responsible for motivating Dhingra. The evolution of the British intelligence machine was provoked specifically by the assassination. The British government had committed to the Bureau and had hoped to uncover information about the Indian student population in a less aggressive manner. After Curzon-Wyllie's death, this attitude changed, and prosecution through legal means became a necessity. Savarkar's arrest and trial are described, as is the creation of

---

[19] David Lambert and Alan Lester, *Colonial Lives across the British Empire : Imperial Careering in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

global surveillance network meant to trace the activities of Indian student radicals not only in the Empire, but throughout the world.

Previous Scholarship

The two main academic works that have focused on the presence of the Indian student population in Great Britain at the turn of the century are Shompa Lahiri's *Indians in Britain: Anglo-Indian encounters, race and identity, 1880-1930* and Rozina Visram's *Asians in Britain: 400 years of history*.[20] Taken together, these two volumes provide an excellent survey of the period and the growing presence of Indian students, as well as their experiences in Great Britain. Both Lahiri and Visram focus their attentions on the perspective of the Indian student and the reactions of these students to their British environs. Indian scholars, including Harindra Srivastava, and Dhananjay Keer, have furthered the historical understanding of the internal operations of India House, through thorough biographies of Savarkar and his time in Britain.[21] Substantive work has also been undertaken on the development of the Indian nationalist movement as it took place in India during this period, including the split of the Congress and the growing radicalism present in Bengal after its partition.[22] The course of the radical Indian student movement in Great Britain, as well as its antecedents in India have, therefore received considerable attention. However, the overwhelming focus on the

---

[20] Visram, *Asians in Britain*; Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*.
[21] Harindra Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years: Savarkar in London, June 1906-June 1911* (New Delhi: Allied Publishers Private Limited, 1983); Ra A. Patmanapan, *V.V.S. Aiyar* (New Delhi: National Book Trust, India, 1980); Dhananjay Keer, *Veer Savarkar* (Bombay: Popular Prakshan, 1966).
[22] See for example John R. McLane, *Indian Nationalism and the Early Congress* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977); Jim Masselos, *Indian Nationalism: A History* (Elgin, IL: New Dawn Press, 2005).

Indian student perspective has left the India Office's handling of the Indian student question uninvestigated.

Although some scholars, such as Radhika Singha, have examined the certificate of identity as a British tool of control, their discussions have largely been restricted to the presence of these certificates in India and South Africa.[23] The Bureau of Information for Indian Students has faced even greater neglect by imperial historians. The entirety of the Bureau's operations receive no more than an extremely brief mention in Lahiri's account and is absent from Visram's work.[24] Even a history of the India Office, which focuses specifically on the period at hand, ignores the Bureau.[25] T. W. Arnold's contributions to the Indian independence movement have received little attention; however his leadership of the Bureau represented an important break from British policy of the period.[26] Arnold's history, as well as the Bureau's, are important and well worth telling. I hope to add a significant, and novel, understanding of India Office operations during this period, which adds nuance to the way in which India Office policy is perceived.

William Curzon-Wyllie's assassination and the increasingly sophisticated British criminal intelligence network are normally considered together due to the assassination's direct, catalyzing effect. However, rarely is Dhingra's action viewed

---

[23] Radhika Singha, "A 'Proper Passport' for the Colony: Border Crossing in British India, 1882-1920"," *Colloquium Series, Program in Agrarian Studies*(2006), http://www.yale.edu/agrarianstudies/papers/16passportill.pdf accessed October 20, 2011; Radhika Singha, "Settle, Mobilize, Verify: Identification Practices in Colonial India," *Studies in History* 16, no. 2 (2000).
[24] Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 15.
[25] Arnold P. Kaminsky, *The India Office, 1880-1910* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986).
[26] Watt, "Thomas Walker Arnold and the Re-Evaluation of Islam, 1864-1930."

in the context of India House as a whole. Additionally, Dhingra's relationship with Curzon-Wyllie, and Curzon-Wyllie's relationship with Dhingra's family, are crucial components of the assassination that are rarely considered. Richard Popplewell has provided an excellent dissection of the evolution of the British intelligence apparatus from the assassination through World War I, but less attention has been given to the disorganization that provided criminal intelligence earlier in the century.[27]

[27] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries."

I

Indian Students & India House

A study of Great Britain's Indian student population of the early part of the twentieth century poses a considerable challenge because of its heterogeneity. From Gandhi to V. D. Savarkar, to the countless unnamed students who came to Britain and returned to India without any shift in political viewpoint, the personalities and destinies of these students are without limit. In this chapter, I focus mainly on those students who did become involved in politics, whether that be through explicitly political organizations such as the Free India Society, or through cultural groups such as the Edinburgh Indian Association. However, it is important to remember that there were many students who were not a part of this political culture, and who willingly and readily assimilated into Victorian Britain.

The students who engaged with India House, the main focus of this chapter, were not among these assimilated students, but were instead at the forefront of Indian anti-imperial politics of the period. By tracing the history of India House, first under

its founder Shyamji Krishnavarma, and then under the extremist law student V. D. Savarkar, I hope to illuminate the complexity and contradictions of an organization that has been too readily cast as a one-dimensional terrorist group. As we will see, Krishnavarma was more of a moderate than a radical, seeking a peaceful end to British rule in India. His replacement, Savarkar, although an impassioned opponent of the British, was unable to implement his vision of a violent conquest over his imperial enemies; this was not however due to any interference from the British, but because of limitations inherent in the Indian student population itself. No matter how much Indian students might have despised British rule, their initial goals of attaining prestige and scholarly certification (whether it be in the law, medicine, or otherwise) were difficult to escape: the knowledge that any action that appeared seditious in nature would ruin a career was a powerful deterrent from terrorist activities. This fear of punishment from the British belies the fact that the majority of Indian students in Britain, even those that were members of India House, did not believe that an independent India was imminent, and were willing to work within the British power structure.

Even so, the history of India House, and particularly Savarkar's role, provides a powerful counterpoint to contemporary understandings of the Indian independence movement that tend to be dominated by Gandhi and the politics of non-violence. Savarkar preached an extremely militant form of resistance and ran operations to smuggle bombs and firearms into India from London. Gandhi spent a significant amount of time at India House in the late summer of 1909 and surely felt Savarkar's influence as he wrote *Hind Swaraj*.

Setting the Stage: Early Indian Student Arrivals in Britain

In 1887, a young Mahatma Gandhi was determined to go to England to complete his studies and become a barrister. His decision was not unusual; by 1890 there were at least two hundred other Indian students in Great Britain, many of whom were studying at the Inns of Court.[28] Indian students, including Gandhi, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and Jawaharlal Nehru, traveled to Britain for many reasons, among them: prestige, the excitement of being abroad, a desire to live away from home, and the hope of engaging with "an English gentleman of good birth and education" at the heart of the empire.[29]

Many of the first Indian students in Britain were, like Gandhi, studying to be called to the bar. To become a barrister in Britain was extremely easy and this in part added to the attractiveness of studying in Britain. Gandhi's own experience offers an insight into the process through which one earned one's place as a barrister:

> There were two conditions which had to be fulfilled before a student was formally called to the bar: 'keeping terms', twelve terms equivalent to about three years; and passing examinations. 'Keeping terms' meant eating one's terms, *i.e.*, attending at least six out of about twenty-four dinners in a term. Eating did not mean actually partaking of the dinner, it meant reporting oneself at the fixed hours and remaining present throughout the dinner.[30]

---

[28] Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 5.
[29] Ibid., 4.
[30] Mahatma Gandhi and Mahadev Desai, *An Autobiography, or, the Story of My Experiments with Truth* (Ahmedabad, India: Navajivan Publishing House, 1996), 66.

Gandhi further explains that the required examinations, one on Roman Law and the other in Common Law, could be passed easily. The first by "scrambling through notes on Roman Law in a couple of weeks, and the Common Law examination by reading notes on the subject in two or three months."[31] This meant that in total, a prospective barrister had only to attend seventy-two dinners and study for no more than three months over a three-year period and still have a very good chance of being successfully called to the bar.[32] The amount of free time that being a student of the Inns of Court provided meant that many students, particularly Indian students without ready-made friends or family nearby, found themselves with a great deal of leisure time to fill.

One increasingly popular leisure activity for unoccupied Indian students was participation in politics. The foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 led to the creation, only three years later, of the Congress Political Agency (CPA) by Dadabhai Naoroji, a London-based organization intent on communicating the Congress's agenda directly to British officials.[33] The presence of the CPA provided Indians in Britain with their first real opportunity to engage with Indian political issues abroad. Although it is difficult to determine the involvement of Indian students in the CPA, there was certainly awareness of the organization's existence by India

---

[31] Ibid., 67.

[32] Gandhi notes that ninety-five to ninety-nine percent of all students passed the Roman Law exam, and that at least seventy-five percent passed the Common Law exam on their first attempt. Ibid., 67-68. Interestingly, Shompa Lahiri mentions that some Indian students secured the services of a "coach" named S.S.A. Cambridge "a barrister of Gray's Inn from British Guyana." It would appear as though Cambridge's appearance is more indicative of the students' tendency to cram before examinations, rather than the difficulty of the material itself. Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 8.

[33] The Congress Political Agency would later be called the British Committee of the Indian National Congress. Visram, *Asians in Britain*, 125.

Office officials, who were concerned about its influence over students.[34] Many Indian students evinced an interest in politics during this period; however, until the formation of India House in 1905, Indian student politics in Britain took on the moderate tone of the Congress during its early years.[35] Of course, not all Indian students in Britain adopted politics and many remained eager to become a part of English society, adopting the English style of dress, adapting to its seemingly bizarre customs, and abandoning many components of their Indian identities.

The socialization process began with arriving and settling in Great Britain, which was a complicated and confusing task for nearly all of the Indian students who traveled there throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most students followed the same route, traveling by sea from India to any number of coastal cities in southern Britain. From there they would take the train into London, before traveling on to their final destination, if they were studying outside of the capital.[36] It was then up to these young men, most of whom had never been outside India, to secure lodging, enroll in courses, and establish themselves socially in their new homes. Finding a place to live was of particular concern to Indian students studying in London, as housing was quite expensive and many of the landlords and landladies of more affordable housing refused to let rooms to Indian students.[37] An additional worry for Indian students upon first arriving in Great Britain was the lack of readily available vegetarian cuisine. Although some students, such as Gandhi,

---

[34] "Certificates of Identity for Indian Students and Others Visiting England," 1899, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/ L/PJ/6/515 1381, British Library.
[35] Visram, *Asians in Britain*, 149.
[36] Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 54. See McLane, *Indian Nationalism and the Early Congress*.
[37] Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*.

managed to continue to practice vegetarianism while in England, the majority was unable to find the appropriate cuisine.[38] Struggling to find both affordable housing and food, and thrown into a culture surprisingly foreign from their own, Indian students were quick to create local associations and groups designed to provide support for incoming Indian students.

Indian Student Groups

Indian student groups that did form tended to be associated with a specific university, although their reach and central aim varied greatly, with some groups focusing exclusively on themes such as politics or religion. One of the earliest and most prominent of these groups was the Edinburgh Indian Association (EIA), which was founded in 1883 by the only six Indian students attending Edinburgh University at the time. By 1900 the EIA had at least 200 members, some of them British, and was regularly holding debates on topics such as: "'That the further social emancipation of Indian women is desirable.'"[39] Besides hosting debates and dinners, the EIA provided Indian students with a forum in which to discuss their concerns and difficulties as members of the Edinburgh University community. Officials at Edinburgh University occasionally expressed concern that these discussions took on a slightly more radical bent than was desirable. In 1907, the EIA attempted to raise money for a "habitation," or clubhouse, by hosting an Indian Fair that would showcase native Indian music,

---

[38] Ibid., 208. Gandhi became an active member of the London Vegetarian Society, and managed to remain a vegetarian throughout his time in London. Perhaps surprisingly, the majority of the members of the society were English and not Indian. It is unclear why so few Indian students joined the Society, and why so many had such difficulty finding vegetarian food outside of their own communities.
[39] Visram, *Asians in Britain*, 91.

culture. The Indian Fair appears to have been an attempt to counter some of the suspicion of the Edinburgh University officials who saw the EIA as an insular group, as the EIA made it explicit in the Fair's pamphlet that the creation of a habitation, "will not lessen but rather increase the intermingling of the Indian with other Students by the former becoming members of the University Union in greater numbers than they do now."[40] Whether the members of the EIA were actually politically radical is unclear, although Shompa Lahiri provides the account of a British official and attendee of one of the EIA dinners who found the members to be loyal to the Empire and filled more with talk than actual plans of radical action.[41]

The British government's suspicion of EIA members continued at least until 1911 as evidenced by the application of JCJ Khambatta to the Indian Medical Service (IMS).[42] All applicants for the IMS were subject to a background check by Scotland Yard to ensure that the government was not hiring any Indians with overtly seditious histories. Khambatta's application was flagged because he had been the president of the EIA during his time at Edinburgh, and had been a subscriber to the *Indian Sociologist*, the radical publication from India House described in more detail below. Because of these connections to these potentially questionable organizations, Khambatta was first denied acceptance to the IMS and only after six months of

---

[40] "Indian Fair in Edinburgh," 1907, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/824 2751, British Library.
[41] Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 139.
[42] The IMS was a medical corps overseen by the British military in India.

surveillance was his application approved. Even after he became a member of the IMS, Scotland Yard continued its surveillance for an additional six months.[43]

Another group, the Cambridge and Oxford Maljis, received similar scrutiny during the period. Although formally a debating society, the Maljis, like the EIA, provided a venue through which Indian students could discuss political and other matters with other Indian students. The Cambridge and Oxford chapters, founded in 1891 and 1896 respectively, were advocates for Indian students' reputations, both academic and moral, on the two campuses that were well known for their competitive and xenophobic nature.[44] Members of the groups were also accused of seditious activities at the turn of the twentieth century, and again had to defend themselves from the suspicions of the student body and University authorities.[45] One such student, a Government Scholar at Cambridge named C. Reddi, was accused of attending Congress Party meetings and occasionally giving politically charged speeches at those events. British officials felt that it might be advantageous to point out "that his scholarship is paid by the Government, whose interests he must serve and that he should be discreet and regulate his conduct accordingly."[46]

Krishnavarma's India House, 1905-1907

Although sometimes challenged by the authorities, neither the Maljis nor the Edinburgh India Association received nearly as much official scrutiny as the group

---

[43] "Police Reports on Indian Students," 1908-1912, Military Department, IOR/L/MIL/7/141 49, British Library.
[44] Visram, *Asians in Britain*, 88.
[45] Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 176.
[46] "Mr. Reddi, Government Scholar in Cambridge, Political Speeches," 1906, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/756 1093, British Library.

that was known simply as India House. India House would come to represent the center of the radical Indian student movement in Great Britain, an organization that not only spoke about an independent India, but was willing to take up arms for the cause. Shyamji Krishnavarma founded India House in 1905 when he purchased the large building located at 65 Cromwell Avenue in London's Highgate neighborhood.[47] Born in western India in 1857, Krishnavarma was an avid scholar, excelling in the study of various Indian languages at Oxford before being called to the bar in London in 1888. From 1888 until his return to London ten years later, Krishnavarma worked throughout India as a court advocate in Madhya Pradesh, Saurashtra, and Rajasthan, while also purchasing three cotton ginning factories.[48] These various pursuits had allowed Krishnavarma to amass a considerable fortune by the beginning of the century, and his wealth allowed him to fund an endowed lecture at Oxford, as well as eleven fellowships meant to encourage and enable study for Indian students interested in receiving their education in England. In addition, Krishnavarma funded the political Indian newspaper the *Indian Sociologist*[49] and was in touch with likeminded Indians dispersed throughout Western Europe.[50] By 1905 Krishnavarma was squarely

---

[47] "Indian Students in the UK." Interestingly, in 1908, the India Office purchased a hostel for Indian students located on another Cromwell, in this case Cromwell Road in Kensington.
[48] A. M. Shah, "The Indian Sociologist, 1905-14, 1920-22," *Economic and Political Weekly* 41, no. 31 (2006): 3436.
[49] The newspaper's full title was: "*The Indian Sociologist: An Organ of Freedom, and Political, Social, and Religious Reform.*" In its first issue, Krishnavarma describes himself as an "Indian Sociologist" and explains that the paper will often refer back to sociological texts in its work and as the basis of many of its arguments. "Editor's Statement," *The Indian Sociologist*, January, 1905.
[50] Visram, *Asians in Britain*, 150.

committed to the cause of an independent India, creating the Indian Home Role Society to oversee his political aims and maintain his fellowships and India House.[51]

The rise of Krishnavarma and his various political endeavors can best be explained by the growing confrontation between the Indian political class and the British government in India, as well as the growing radicalization of certain elements of the Congress Party. The 1890s and early 1900s saw a surge in radical thinking amongst the educated and political elite in India, which brought with it a growing reluctance to accept purely constitutional methods of gaining control of the country from the British.[52] For many this meant a push towards active political agitation in India and abroad, and the period was punctuated by riots and thousands of political rallies throughout India against British rule.[53] In 1903, when Lord Curzon's proposal for the partition of Bengal was first made public, there was a tremendous outcry from all Indians, radical or not.[54] Although in Britain during this period, Krishnavarma was surely aware of the political situation in his homeland and, swept up in anti-imperial sentiment, established both India House and the Indian Home Rule Society just as the partition of Bengal was made official.

In the first two years of its existence, India House, under the stewardship of Krishnavarma, was not the bastion of extremism it would come to be known as, but served largely as a boarding house and community center for Indian students arriving

---

[51] Ibid., 151.
[52] Masselos, *Indian Nationalism: A History*, 94.
[53] Ibid., 109.
[54] Nemai Sadhan Bose, *The Indian Awakening and Bengal* (Calcutta: Sri Gouranga Press, 1969), 251. See Bose and Masselos for a more detailed analysis of the period leading up to and including the partition of Bengal. This brief description is meant to help explain why Krishnavarma had not taken any political action until this point even though he had been in Britain since 1879.

in London for study. Numerous students in these first few years noted that the political complexion of India House's boarders was not unanimously against British rule and that Krishnavarma's teachings were often quite tame compared to British fears.[55] These student assertions are supported by the lack of public or privately expressed British concern over Krishnavarma, India House, or the *Indian Sociologist* until at least the middle of 1907.[56] Krishnavarma himself repudiated violence and took a non-combative tone with the British public, often writing letters to London newspapers that spoke to the logic and justice of an independent India and used the arguments of British and Western thinkers as support.[57] In effect, the Indian Home Rule Society was conciliatory, open about its intentions, and convinced that public opinion would inevitably be on its side.

Krishnavarma's fairly moderate positioning was reflected in the pages of his newspaper, the *Indian Sociologist*, the first issue of which was released in January of 1905. The *Indian Sociologist* was published and edited monthly by Krishnavarma, first from London and then Paris throughout the first decade of the twentieth century.[58] The paper itself was written in English and as the first issue made patently clear, intended for a British readership:

> The political relations between England and India urgently require a genuine Indian interpreter in the United Kingdom to show, on behalf of India, how

---

[55] Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 126.
[56] India House is first mentioned in the India Office Records on September 2nd, 1908 while the *Indian Sociologist* is first mentioned July 30th, 1907.
[57] Owen, *The British Left and India*, 67. As noted below, Krishnavarma was particularly enamored with the ideas of Herbert Spencer, creating his endowed lectureship at Oxford in Spencer's name.
[58] Shah, "The Indian Sociologist, 1905-14, 1920-22," 3435.

> Indians really fare and feel under British rule. No systematic attempt has, so far as our knowledge goes, ever been made in this country by Indians themselves to enlighten the British public with regard to the grievances, demands and aspirations of the people of Indian and its unrepresented millions before the bar of public opinion in Great Britain and Ireland.[59]

Krishnavarma's goal was to humanize the plight of the British-Indian subject for the people of Great Britain, and through an appeal to the justice that the British held so dear, convince them that an independent India was the correct path. To reinforce that his position was not only the righteous one, but also supported by unsentimental, British logic, Krishnavarma placed two quotations from the recently deceased Herbert Spencer at the top of every issue: "Every man is free to do that which he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man," and "Resistance to aggression is not simply justifiable but imperative. Non-resistance hurts both altruism and egoism."[60] Krishnavarma believed that these simple, yet poignant, statements encapsulated the central aspects of the anti-imperial movement, explaining both the injustice of British rule and the justice of Indian resistance.

The mission statement of the *Indian Sociologist* was not of a radical, nor particularly seditious quality. The contents of the paper were also tame; articles were often simple commentaries on events or individuals that engaged with Indian affairs in London, or with other places of Empire that were similarly struggling for independence. A.M. Shah describes the *Indian Sociologist* as only "mild in its criticism of British Rule," pointing to Krishnavarma's common statement that "India

---

[59] "Editor's Statement."
[60] Herbert Spencer in ibid.

and England should sever their connection peaceably and part as friends."[61] The *Indian Sociologist* appears to have circulated widely, both in Great Britain, India, and the United States, even after the British authorities attempted to stop the import of the paper to India in September of 1907, and was read by individuals of all political leanings, including Dadabhai Naoroji and members of the India Office.[62] Krishnavarma went so far as to have British Socialist leader, H.M. Hyndman, not an Indian political leader such as Naoroji, provide the address at India House's opening ceremony.[63] The moderate tone of India House and its associated organizations and publications allowed Krishnavarma a significant amount of influence over the tenor of Indian political discourse in Great Britain.

Yet, by the summer of 1907 Krishnavarma had fled London and his position of power, for Paris, fearing arrest after the police interviewed the publishers of the *Indian Sociologist*. With Krishnavarma's departure, the British authorities noted that the tone at India House changed. India House had suddenly become a hot bed of "seditious chatter," with weekly speeches by Indian, Russian, Irish, Italian and other Continental radicals. One such speaker, an unnamed "Elderly Pole" with a socialist agenda, made the mistake of condemning anarchist and terrorist activities and was subsequently booed off stage by the gathered India House members.[64] In contrast, when it was announced at the same meeting that Narendranath Gossain had been

---

[61] Shah, "The Indian Sociologist, 1905-14, 1920-22," 3437.
[62] Ibid., 3437-38.
[63] Ibid., 3437.
[64] "Subversive Speeches at India House," 1908, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/ 890 3264, British Library.

assassinated at the Alipore Jail, India House was filled with rejoicing.[65] With surprising rapidity, India House had transformed from a fairly moderate Indian student group to one that denounced socialism and saw violence as the ultimate solution in what was now termed a fight against the British.

V. D. Savarkar's India House, 1907-1909

The growing radicalism present in India House was due almost entirely to the influence of one young Indian student, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar. Savarkar arrived in London in July of 1906 as the recipient of one of Krishnavarma's Shivaji scholarships and immediately became a central figure at India House.[66] Born in Maharashtra in 1883, Savarkar, unlike Krishnavarma and the majority of his peers at India House, had always shown an interest in politics. From his early teens onwards, Savarkar was a member or the leader of multiple political organizations, always maintaining an antagonistic attitude towards the British.[67] The most important of these groups was the Abhinav Bharat, a nominally secret society based in Maharashtra and led by Savarkar during his time at Ferguson College in Poona. Savarkar guided the Abhinav Bharat and its student membership to embrace the tenants of Swadeshi and boycott British goods, culminating in a massive bonfire of

---

[65] Gossain was shot to death by Kanailal Dutta and Satyendranath Bose inside the Alipore Jail in August of 1908. His assassins believed that Gossain had become an informant for the British. In fact, Gossain had provided the British with a substantial confession and appeared as an approver for the British during the early phases of the trial. Madan Lal Dhingra was said to have modeled himself after Dutta. Atis Dasgupta, "Centenary of Martyrdom of Four Militant Nationalists of Bengal," *Social Scientist* 38, no. 1/2 (2010): 84.; "Subversive Speeches at India House."
[66] Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, 29.
[67] Owen, *The British Left and India*, 66.

British-made clothing in October 1905.[68] In addition to leading the Abhinav Bharat, Savarkar was a prolific writer, publishing numerous poems, articles, and essays in local newspapers and university publications. The majority of these writings took on a decidedly political, and anti-British message.[69]

With his background as a political organizer and student leader, Savarkar found fertile ground at India House to continue spreading his ideas. An Indian student named Harnam Singh, who first encountered Savarkar on their steamer from India, was the first of many to fall under Savarkar's influence in Great Britain. Singh, the son of a district judge in the Punjab, had traveled to Great Britain to study agriculture and enrolled in the Royal Agriculture College at Circencester after his arrival.[70] Before enrollment he spent time with Savarkar at India House where the two became close.

In the summer of 1908, in order to mark the anniversary of the Sepoy Mutiny, Savarkar designed small medallions with the words "In Memory of the Martyrs of 1857" and "Bande Mataram" displayed prominently, which were to be worn by Indian students in support of the nationalist cause. Singh and another Indian student at Cirencester, Rafiq Mohamed, wore the medallions and refused to remove them when asked by their professors. This incident led to a confrontation between Singh and the Principal of Cirencester that was picked up by the London papers and pursued by the

---

[68] Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, 18-19. Keer's biography is quite laudatory in its treatment of Savarkar, making it difficult to distinguish fact from fiction as many of the anecdotes regarding Savarkar's youth that are mentioned are clearly inflated. Even so, certain events, such as the bonfire, did occur, and Savarkar was certainly an important student leader during his time in Poona.
[69] Ibid., 21-22.
[70] "Indian Students at Cirencester College," 1908, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/897 3787, British Library.

India Office.[71] Upon returning to London, members of India House feted Singh and Mohamed. Singh became an active member of the group, and was nearly denied being called to the bar along with Savarkar in 1909.[72] In contrast, Mohamed, who only had a limited relationship with Savarkar prior to the summer of 1908, quickly apologized to the requisite school officials, reenrolled and was not considered a suspicious individual by the India Office according to a follow-up report.[73] For his part, Savarkar was able to remain largely anonymous during his first years in London, instead motivating and manipulating peers such as Singh into more explicit displays of their political ideology.[74] It was not until after Krishnavarma's departure for Paris, at which point Savarkar was deputized as the leader of India House, that Savarkar's vision was able to become more widely manifest.

Savarkar's goal for India House, although similar to Krishnavarma's in ultimate ends, had a decidedly different character. The first change was symbolized by Savarkar's creation of the Free India Society to replace the India Home Rule Society. The name of Savarkar's organization alone helps clarify one of the major differences between Savarkar's and Krishnavarma's philosophies. Savarkar saw his

---

[71] Ibid.
[72] "Savarkar Denied Call to Bar Because of Sedition Activities," 1909, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/939 1849, British Library.
[73] "Indian Students at Cirencester College."
[74] Janaki Bakhle, "Savarkar (1883-1966), Sedition and Surveillance: The Rule of Law in a Colonial Situtation," *Social History* 35, no. 1 (2010): 52. Bakhle argues that Savarkar faced intense surveillance from Scotland Yard immediately upon his arrival in London. Bahkle's own evidence speaks to the contrary, as she only cites evidence from 1908 forward. As noted above, India House had only become a registered concern to the India Office in 1907, while Savarkar had been in London, participating in India House events since 1906. As will be seen in Chapter IV, Bakhle overstates the sophistication and integration of the British surveillance system of the early twentieth century. Until Madan Lal Dhingra's assassination of William Curzon-Wyllie, British surveillance techniques were of limited utility and scope.

activism as 'freeing India' from the oppression represented by British rule—thus the emphasis was placed on the work inherent in what was to be a struggle for an independent India. By naming his group the Free India Society, Savarkar made it obvious that Indian and British interests were diametrically opposed. As Jyotirmaya Sharma explains, "Savarkar's politics was one that divided the world between 'friend' and 'foe'. It was not material who the 'foe' was as long as an enemy could be found at all times."[75] Later in his career, Savarkar would identify this foe as Muslim, but during his time in London, the British represented the central evil for the Indian world.

Savarkar made it clear that he had no intention of extending even a front of cordiality with the British by his rejection of the precedent set by Krishnavarma with the British press, choosing to only write letters in Marathi to be published by local Indian newspapers.[76] Additionally, the inclusive atmosphere of Krishnavarma's India House disappeared with Savarkar's rise. David Garnett, a young Irish revolutionary living in London during the period, visited India House during the summer of 1909, and noted the distinctively non-British environment cultivated by Savarkar:

> Soon after my arrival we trooped into the dining-room and Savarkar, after addressing the company in Hindi, stood up and began to read aloud…The sight of those brown men, some sitting round a long table, others leaning against the walls, all listening intently to the staccato voice of the speaker, was very strange to me. When I was with Dutt or Mitter [Garnett's companions

---

[75] Jyotirmaya Sharma, "History as Revenge and Retaliation: Rereading Savarkar's 'the War of Independence of 1857'," *Economic and Political Weekly* 42, no. 19 (2007): 1718.
[76] Owen, *The British Left and India*, 67.

> from University] I could forget they were Hindus and I was an Englishman, but at this meeting I felt alone. My race and colour did indeed create a gulf between me and these brown men.[77]

A member of India House subsequently accused Garnett of racism and of being a British sympathizer, and although he maintained a relationship with some India House members, he was never again invited to India House itself.[78] As seen with Krishnavarma's decision to open India House with a British speaker, India House had often included the British in even its most important occasions. Where the India Home Rule Society had been modeled after a Victorian public association, with the goal of parting from the British "as friends," there now stood the Free India Society promising to "engage in a bloody and relentless war against the foreigner."[79]

Savarkar saw the Free India Society and India House as extensions of the Abhinav Bharat and the societies that he had left behind in Maharashtra. The fight for Indian independence was to be based in India, not London; India House's location

---

[77] David Garnett, *The Golden Echo* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1954), 144.
[78] Ibid., 145-46. Interestingly, it was through Garnett's newspaper connections that Savarkar was able to get Madan Lal Dhingra's statement published after his arrest. Additionally, Garnett assisted in arranging a failed escape attempt for Savarkar after his arrest in late 1909. Clearly, Savarkar had some use for Westerners when it served his purposes. In many ways Savarkar's self-representation is indicative of what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has termed "strategic essentialism," presenting oneself through one's culture as overly simplified for strategic purposes. As seen with his later interactions with Garnett, Savarkar was more than capable of appearing westernized and agreeable. It was only in front of his followers at India House, a group Savarkar hoped to instill with an overwhelming sense of nationalist pride, that an essential 'Indianness' dominated. See Sara Danius, Stefan Jonsson, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "An Interview with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak," *boundary 2* 20, no. 2 (1993): 35.
[79] This quote is taken from the "semi-religious oath of obedience" that all members of the Free India Society took before becoming a member. Owen, *The British Left and India*, 67.

was important because it allowed for a sense of liberty that could not be found in India. Krishnavarma's minimal ties to India had limited the amount of interaction between India House and Indian revolutionary groups in India. In contrast, Savarkar had maintained his connections with local Abhinav Bharat leaders throughout India and treated India House as a training ground to help facilitate and prepare for the battles to come once its members returned home.[80] Savarkar's training was both practical and philosophical, and took significant advantage of the freedoms proffered by British officials who, although somewhat concerned about activities at India House, were initially unwilling to actively interfere in the group's pursuits. Members of the Free India Society were taught how to make bombs, shoot firearms, and were often called upon to smuggle weapons into India on their return trips home.[81] A Russian bomb-making manual that had made its way to India House via Paris was copied and given to India House members with instructions to pass the information on to at least one hundred other Indians once they made it back to India.[82]

In turn-of-the-century London, a group of Indians at a shooting range might have raised suspicion, but that did not mean they would be denied their right to shoot. Nor did the fact that India House was described as a small "chemistry laboratory"

---

[80] Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, 36.
[81] "Information About the Revolutionary Party in London from H. K. Koregaonkar of India House." Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, 50. Keer states that Savarkar asked India House's chef, Chaturbhuj Amin, to bring "20 Browning pistols" with him when he went back to India and deliver them to the head of the Abhinav Bharat in Maharashtra.
[82] Owen, *The British Left and India*, 69; Patmanapan, *V.V.S. Aiyar*, 21. Aiyar believed that the bomb used in the Alipore bombing of April, 1909 had its origins in India House's bomb-making manual.

lead to any official action against the group's members.[83] The same actions in India would have been nearly impossible or led to imprisonment.[84]

The members of the Free India Society were not only entrusted with knowledge that could be used to physically fight the British, but were also inculcated with Savarkar's political ideology. Savarkar's political origins in India led him to look first to Indian texts for inspiration in the struggle for Indian independence. Although he occasionally cited Mazzini, Savarkar more often turned to Hindu scripture such as the *Bhagavad Gita*, arguing that the text justified violence against those who would harm Mother India.[85] Savarkar also came to use his own writings as justification, explaining in his revised history of the 1857 Mutiny, *The War of Independence of 1857*, that the best and only way to throw off the yoke of British rule was through violent means.[86] *The War of Independence of 1857* spends a considerable amount of energy describing the murders of British men, women, and children in gruesome detail. Savarkar describes one such massacre in Jhansi: "Women had little children on their laps and these children were clinging on to their mothers. These

---

[83] Owen, *The British Left and India*, 69.
[84] The India Arms Act of 1878 made it illegal for any Indian to possess a weapon of any kind without a license, a document to difficult to obtain for obvious reasons.
[85] Owen, *The British Left and India*, 67.
[86] Ibid., 68; Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, 40. *The War of Independence of 1857* is also often referred to as *The First War of Indian Independence-1857*. The translation I use is a more direct interpretation from the original Marathi title: *Atthharahasau Sattavanche Swatantrya Samar*. See Sharma, "History as Revenge and Retaliation: Rereading Savarkar's 'the War of Independence of 1857'," 1717.

women, infants, and older children clinging on to their mothers were guilty of being white and were decapitated with a black sword."[87]

Savarkar justifies the brutal acts of the revolutionaries time and again throughout the piece, identifying the British, regardless of their age or gender, as an enemy that must be removed by any means necessary, at one point having an Indian soldier explain his decision to kill British children along with their parents by saying, "Does anyone leave behind the litter of a snake after killing the snake?"[88] Savarkar extolled this radicalism at India House's weekly meetings, often reading directly from his history. As with bomb-making and pistol target practice, the dissemination of the ideas contained in Savarkar's revised history of the Mutiny would have been much more difficult to accomplish in India. Savarkar was able to have his work published in London in May of 1909, albeit anonymously, at which point copies traveled throughout Europe and eventually reached Abhinav Bharat leadership in India.[89] Comparing Savarkar's *The War of Independence* with the *Indian Sociologist* again signifies the dramatic change in political positioning that occurred in India House after Savarkar's arrival.[90]

By 1908, it was not only the British authorities who were aware of the growing radicalism of India House. A new genre of potboiler fiction, described at the

---

[87] Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, *A Guide to Indian Revolutionary Movement. Volume V* (Poona: Maharashtra Prantik Hindu, 1963), 202; Sharma, "History as Revenge and Retaliation: Rereading Savarkar's 'the War of Independence of 1857'," 1719.
[88] Savarkar, *A Guide to Indian Revolutionary Movement. Volume V*, 229.
[89] Visram, *Asians in Britain*, 151. Patmanapan, *V.V.S. Aiyar*, 31-32.
[90] Although *The War of Independence* was a historical text and the *Indian Sociologist* a newspaper, a comparison is valid as both represent the central vessel of textual propaganda produced under the two different leaders of India House. That their political messages were so distinct speaks more to the ideological differences of Savarkar and Krishnavarma, not to the differing media.

time as 'Anglo-Indian' in the popular press, highlighted a growing acknowledgement of the potential threat posed by disaffected Indians living and studying in Great Britain.[91] The focus of the titles written during this period, with names as varied as *Siri Ram, Revolutionist*,[92] *The Daughter of Brahma*,[93] and *The Unlucky Mark*,[94] was almost exclusively on Indians who had traveled to Great Britain to study, and either returned to India or remained in Britain with the goal of fomenting sedition against the Raj. Although it is unlikely that the characters in any of these novels were based on specific real-life individuals, the dates provided by Chandler for *Siri Ram*, reflect Savarkar's period of greatest activity, and Siri Ram himself carries out a political assassination in the hopes of achieving martyrdom, in a story that we shall see, is similar to Madan Lal Dhingra's.[95] It is also of note, as Shompa Lahiri points out, that the antagonists of these stories were almost exclusively Hindus, with a much more sympathetic tone taken towards Sikhs, and Muslims.[96] Although Savarkar had not yet defined his platform of Hindu nationalism, as represented by Hindutva,[97] India House and Free India Society membership was overwhelming Hindu.

---

[91] Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 91.
[92] Edmund Chandler, *Siri Ram, Revolutionist: A Transcript from Life, 1907-1910*, Second ed. (London: Constable & Company, LTD., 1914).
[93] I. A. R. Wylie, *The Daughter of Brahma* (London: Mills & Boon, LTD., 1912).
[94] F. E. F. Penny, *The Unlucky Mark* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1909).
[95] Chandler, *Siri Ram, Revolutionist: A Transcript from Life, 1907-1910*, 288-30.
[96] Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 92. Lahiri also includes Rajputs in her list of Indian characters depicted in a more sympathetic tone, an odd choice considering most Rajputs were Hindu.
[97] Hindutva, a term first coined by Savarkar, represents an ideology based in Hindu culture and history, meant to support a Hindu nationalism and rebirth in India. India was to become united as a Hindu nation. Savarkar completed his initial text on Hindutva while still in jail for his activities as leader of India House. It was published anonymously in 1922, under the pseudonym, "A Mahratta." 'A Mahratta', "Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu?; or Essentials of Hindutva," (1922). Accessed online via

Leading up to the summer of 1909, Savarkar had provided members of the Free India Society and India House with what he believed were essential theoretical and literal tools necessary to carry out a bloody revolutionary movement against the British, while also providing support to his compatriots in India. Yet aside from the few members who did smuggle weapons back to India, the first years of Savarkar's tenure as a leader were largely eventless. Although the character and intensity of the rhetoric may have changed, India House remained as physically passive as it had under Krishnavarma.

India House Membership

The relative peace that prevailed throughout India House and London during Savarkar's rise from 1907 to the summer of 1909 was not due to any intrusive action by British authorities, but can instead be explained by the membership of the group itself. Although Savarkar had changed the ideology of India House, the students that were a part of the Free India Society and India House were largely the same as they had been prior to Savarkar's rise. Nicholas Owen, working from British intelligence records of 1909, describes the composition of India House membership as almost uniformly male, upper class or upper-middle class, Hindu, and without previous political involvement.[98] These men were not like Savarkar: they and their families made up the social and intellectual elite of India, and although they were willing to

---

http://www.savarkar.org/content/pdfs/en/essentials_of_hindutva.v001.pdf on March 28, 2012.

[98] Owen, *The British Left and India*, 70.

discuss revolution, to actually act out against the British was a risk that most were not willing to take.

The danger inherent in the tasks that Savarkar had asked of India House members is revealed in the punishments faced by the Indian students that were caught smuggling the Russian bomb-making manual into India. After having been named by an approver who had been arrested on another charge, the two students went on the lam. One was able to escape the British authorities but was forced into a life of exile, while the other student was arrested and sentenced to a lengthy term at the Cellular Jail on the Andaman Islands.[99] For most members of India House, either law or medical students, even a minor offense, not nearly on par with weapons smuggling, could have jeopardized an entire career. It was extremely difficult for Savarkar to recruit members to the Free India Society that were willing to take on the sacrifices required to truly be a part of Savarkar's vision for the fight against British rule. Savarkar himself believed that only ten percent of the individuals in India House were truly committed to the political goal of an independent India.[100]

Because the majority of India House members were wealthy and focused more on career goals than Indian independence, Savarkar dispatched his most dangerous tasks to individuals that relied on India House for shelter or employment. As has already been mentioned, Savarkar was able to convince India House's chef to smuggle firearms into India, a task that no other India House member was willing to

---

[99] Ibid. The Cellular Jail became notorious as one of the harshest and most remote prisons in the British Empire. The majority of its inmates were political prisoners, and multiple members of India House and the Abhinav Bharat ended up serving time there, including Savarkar and his elder brother.
[100] Ibid., 71.

take on. Savarkar used a similar tactic with Chanerji Rao, paying Rao directly from India House funds for his services as a weapons smuggler. Men such as Rao only occasionally appeared in India House, while others, such as V.V.S. Aiyar, a wealthy law student recruited to India House by Savarkar and who eventually become Savarkar's most trusted associate, were rarer still. Most India House members were, instead, like T.S.S. Rajan, a medical student from a wealthy family in Madras, who regularly attended India House meetings while also keeping to his studies, but returned to India and withdrew from the world of anti-imperial politics. In Rajan's case, he became a Government Minister in Madras, a position that would have been impossible to acquire had he shown any explicit signs of disloyalty during his time in India.[101] For all of Savarkar's charisma and organizational skills, he lacked the foot soldiers required to carry out his plans.

Conclusion

Savarkar needed only one follower willing to carry out the violence that he believed was a necessary component in the fight for Indian independence. This individual arrived in the form of Madan Lal Dhingra, an engineering student and member of India House who assassinated an India Office official in July of 1909. However, Dhingra's action would not have the results that Savarkar had hoped for. Not only did the response of the British government overwhelm the infrastructure of India House and lead to Savarkar's arrest, the response of other Indian revolutionaries was almost unanimously negative. Dhingra's decision to shed blood would usher in the decline of

[101] Ibid.

militant anti-imperial politics in India and the rise of Gandhian non-violence. On Gandhi's visit to India House in the immediate aftermath of the Dhingra assassination he was motivated to write *Hind Swaraj*, a partial response to the bloodthirstiness he encountered among Savarkar and his followers.[102]

Prior to the assassination, Savarkar had cultivated an India House that was almost wholly separate from the influence of the British. The rigid separation of India House from its environs also meant that the British officials at the India Office were largely blind to the movements of what they considered the most radical sect of Indian students in Great Britain. The India Office attempted to correct this metaphorical blind spot in multiple ways throughout the period, an effort that became increasingly involved as Savarkar became more secretive.

---

[102] Anthony Parel, ed. *Hind Swaraj* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1997), xxvii.Writing about the assassination Gandhi opined: "Every Indian should reflect thoroughly on this murder. Mr. Dhingra's defence was inadmissible…he was egged on to do this act by ill-digested readings of worthless writings…It is those who incited him to this that deserve to be punished."

II

The India Office & The Bureau of Information for Indian Students

---

The growing presence of Indian students in Great Britain during the latter half of the nineteenth century precipitated a significant shift in British and India Office policy. The presence of politically active Indians in Great Britain was an entirely new phenomenon; where there had once been ayahs and lascars, there now stood Indian National Congress members and political dissidents.[103] The India Office reacted to the growing Indian student population by seeking to classify and control. This chapter focuses on how and why efforts to control the Indian student population evolved during the first decade of the twentieth century. The significance of this inquiry emerges in greater clarity in light of recent imperial scholarship that has identified the frameworks of information panic on one hand and imperial careering on the other.

[103]Visram, *Asians in Britain*, 51, 64.

'Information panic' as introduced by C.A. Bayly in his work, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870* and expounded upon by D.K. Choudhury[104] was initially intended to describe the growth of British surveillance and policing forces in India during the early nineteenth century; however Choudhury has brought this concept into the period ranging from 1880 to 1912 in order to discuss British officials' fears regarding the growing politicization of Indians both throughout Europe and in India.[105] The information panic, as Bayly and Choudhury explain, led to an increased British effort to gather intelligence, filling in 'information gaps,' by expanding existing infrastructure and geographical boundaries. As will be seen, the India Office encountered its own information panic when confronted with the growing number of Indian students in Britain. In response, the India Office created first the certificate of identity, an identification document meant to categorize and quantify the Indian student population in Great Britain. This scheme was followed by the creation of the Bureau of Information for Indian Students, an expansion of the India Office bureaucracy meant not only to order, but also control the actions of Indian students, in an attempt to assert British influence.

The model of the 'imperial career,' [106] a term used in Lambert and Lester's volume, *Colonial Lives Across the British Empire*, is defined as one that allowed a member of the British Empire to "transcend their initial impressions, to insinuate

---

[104] Bayly, *Empire and Information*; Choudhury, "Sinews of Panic and the Nerves of Empire."
[105] Choudhury, "Sinews of Panic and the Nerves of Empire," 973.
[106] Lambert and Lester, *Colonial Lives across the British Empire*, 2.

themselves into personal, business, official, religious and friendship networks."[107] These imperial careerists were able to bridge the distances between the various locales in which they worked, integrating their various experiences and impressions to create a cohesive whole. The result of an imperial career was the formation of a perspective distinct from that of the traditional official of the British Empire. This analytic perspective does not necessarily locate the metropole as central and places of empire as peripheral, but views both as equal components of a more unified empire. As the cases of William Lee-Warner and T. W. Arnold will attest, the imperial career acts as a counterpoint to the strict duality imposed by the framework of the information panic. Both of these men, central to the formation and operation of the Bureau of Information, were so influenced by their experiences in India that they altered the Bureau's course, shifting it from a structure focused on control to one focused on support.

The history of the imperial information order and imperial careering highlight two important facets of my understanding of India Office policy of the period. The first, as alluded to by the concept of the imperial career, is a shift away from viewing the process behind policy formation as exclusively based within the confines of the center of the empire. Lee-Warner and Arnold each influenced India Office policy because of, not in spite of, his individual experience in India. Their positive valuation of India and its people, particularly in the case of Arnold, was central to policy decisions throughout this period. The lives and work of these men underscore the importance of depicting the Empire as decentralized, with influences moving

[107] Ibid.

throughout the entire system, flowing not just from the center to the periphery. Traditionally, the center of the Empire is viewed as the creator and of the political policy, which is then followed and implemented by local bureaucracies. Here I seek to complicate the rigidity dictated by the center-periphery dichotomy. I argue that information and influence traveled bidirectionally throughout the Empire.

Secondly, this discussion calls attention to the differing motivations of institutions and the individuals that make up these institutions. The information panic and expansion of bureaucracy indicates a desire to dominate and control. The India Office constantly sought to expand their reach with Indian students, relentlessly pursuing possible avenues of control beginning in 1899 and continuing throughout the early twentieth century. However, individuals within the India Office hierarchy, here Lee-Warner and Arnold, aspired to conciliate and accommodate. It often appears as though the desires of the larger bureaucracy were thwarted by the actions of its individual members. This apparent contradiction is an interesting problem, the reconciliation of which will help differentiate between imperial bureaucratic superstructures and the individuals that ran the Empire.

The Certificate of Identity

The end of the nineteenth century saw a tremendous growth in the number of Indian student travelers to the United Kingdom. Although it is difficult to pin down exact numbers, the student population jumped at least threefold in the fourteen year period from 1880 to 1894.[108] As the Indian student population grew so did the interest of

[108] Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 5.

India Office authorities in creating a system under which this burgeoning population could be monitored and controlled.

The motivations for the development of such a system are various, but they all center around India Office officials' concern that unsupervised Indian students were likely to be cast into the net of the "evil influence of the congress party [sic] and sedition mongers in England."[109] Throughout the internal correspondence of the India Office during the late 1890s is a steady and growing fear of the presence of anti-imperial organizations in London. Growing numbers of Indian students served only to intensify this concern, and made the matter of initiating a program of control even more pressing. Furthermore, the ubiquity of the telegraph meant that one of the main limitations for politically active Indians in Britain was removed. The ability to contact compatriots in India easily and without great expense encouraged members of the Indian National Congress to travel to Great Britain.[110] The agitation of Congress members abroad, paired with the establishment, in 1889, of the Committee of the Congress, a London-based body of Englishmen and Indians that was meant to increase awareness of the Congress' ideas in Britain and that hosted meetings with provocative titles, such as "India: Her Misgovernment," aroused acute awareness of the politicization of Indians in Great Britain.[111] These factors led to the suggestion in 1898 that "Certificates of Identity" be initiated. These would be simple identification forms, which would supply British officials with minor biographical details of Indians

---

[109] "Personal Correspondence of William Curzon-Wyllie," 1898, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/515 1381, British Library, London.
[110] Choudhury, "Sinews of Panic and the Nerves of Empire," 973.
[111] "Certificates of Identity for Indian Students and Others Visiting England."; Gopal Krishna, "The Development of the Indian National Congress as a Mass Organization, 1918-1923," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 25, no. 3 (1966).

in Britain, while ensuring that the India Office would have a record of every Indian in Great Britain at any given moment. Systems did exist for certain types of travel, such as religious pilgrimage, but nearly all subjects were able to travel throughout the Empire undocumented and unprocessed.[112] Until 1915 and the anxieties of international travel created by World War I, the British Empire did not have a standardized passport system. This meant that until the development of the certificates of identity, all Indians traveling abroad were within their rights to travel without any identifying documents.

The certificate of identity scheme was met with rapid approval throughout the India Office and by October 1899, the Secretary of State for India, George Hamilton, had agreed to sign off on a resolution creating the certificate of identity as an official document.[113] Interestingly, the formal resolution specifically stated that a certificate of identity was to be issued to all Indians, not just students, traveling to the United Kingdom for any reason.[114] The language of the resolution itself, as well as the India Office's public insistence that the goal of the certificate was merely to ensure that the India traveler had proof of British citizenship, has led to a general dismissal of the certificate of identity's importance by scholars.[115] However, there is no doubt that the

---

[112] Singha, "A 'Proper Passport' for the Colony: Border Crossing in British India, 1882-1920".".

[113] "Personal Correspondence of George Hamilton," 1899, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/515 1381, British Library.

[114] "Certificates of Identity for Indian Students and Others Visiting England."

[115] "From 1903 Indians visiting England, in whatever capacity, were required to carry identity certificates which contained information about family background, pecuniary status and object of visit…. The scheme was an abysmal failure, however, as the majority of students neglected to obtain a certificate." Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 5. This description of the certificate of identity gets multiple details wrong (e.g., the date of origin) and either discounts or ignores the partial success of the certificate scheme

true intent of the certificate of identity was in relation to Indian students. H. Daly, writing to the Chief Secretaries of the Indian Provinces underlines the significance of the certificates of identity:

> I am to explain confidentially that the main object of the suggestion is to enable the India Office to exercise some supervision and control over Indian students who intend to compete for the public services. At present young Indians, on arrival in London, are, we are informed generally annexed by the Congress party, who are very active in London and are accustomed to use very violent language in discussion of Indian affairs.[116]

The direct language here stands in stark contrast to the solicitous language used in public India Office documentation throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Internal correspondence and unpublished reports belie the true feelings of the members of the India Office, consistently pointing to control as the true goal of their operations. The tension between the Office's public face and internal discourse is evident in many of the initiatives undertaken by the India Office regarding students. Public statements written in benevolent terms were, of course, designed to avoid raising the ire of Indian students, a group that British Officials believed were a threat

---

entirely, writing it off as an "abysmal failure." Other scholars, such as Radhika Singha have examined the certificate of identity as it pertains to the history of imperial identification documents, ignoring its larger social and political contexts. This lack of scholarly research on the certificate is particularly interesting when viewed in light of the criticism that Gandhi leveled on Indian identification documents required in South Africa, which Singha herself cites in her discussion. Singha, "A 'Proper Passport' for the Colony: Border Crossing in British India, 1882-1920"." Mahatma Gandhi, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi Online* (New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India), VI, 441.

[116] "Official Correspondence," 1898, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/515 1381, British Library.

both in the metropole and in India. By presenting an amicable face, there was a genuine hope that Indian students would embrace the Raj. This sincerity existed for two reasons. There was a general understanding that Indian students, upon returning to India after study in Britain, were treated with a greater level of respect within their communities, and therefore were increasingly important in influencing political discourse in India. A member of the East India Association expressed this concern thusly: "…they return to India imbued with a spirit of bitterness against British rule. Carrying with them the prestige of an English education, they become influential centres of disaffection, and exercise a baneful influence on public opinion in their neighbourhood."[117] Additionally, many of these students were to become lawyers or members of the civil service, representing a crucial component of the future of British India.[118] With this in mind, it is clear that the India Office sought not only to avoid antagonizing Indian students in Britain, but actively attempted to create an environment that exposed students to the virtues of British rule. However, as a further discussion of India Office policies will show, instead of dissipating the level of political tension amongst Indian students, the attempts by British officials to placate the suspicions of the Indian student population were entirely unconvincing, leading to a greater sense of alienation among Indian students in Great Britain.

The adoption of the certificates of identity is an excellent example of this failed duality of the India Office. Having attempted to establish that the certificates of

---

[117] "East India Association, Student Supervision," 1907, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/808 1296, British Library.

[118] Indian students traveling to Britain were predominantly students of law, medicine or were seeking to pass the Civil Service Examination, which was administered only in Great Britain. Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 9-10.

identity were not meant exclusively for Indian students nor as tools of political control, the India Office proceeded to create a certificate filled with questions that only appeared applicable to Indian students. The certificate itself contained eight questions[119] meant to provide the India Office with a broad outline of the individual's life, without appearing overly intrusive.[120] Crucially though, the certificate consisted of two items about the applicant's father—"Social and pecuniary status of father" and "Father's name and caste"—and none regarding the employment, social status, or income level of the applicants themselves. Paired with the absence of any questions about the applicant, the reference to the applicant's father is unusual, and hints at the disguised purpose of the certificate scheme. The omission of these more personal questions is glaring in the certificate filled out by an Indian trader, forced to explain his business and occupation in the section demarcated for a description of the object of the applicant's visit. In contrast, the answer for students was simply "to complete studies."[121]

Although its true motives were poorly concealed, some Indians, students and others alike, followed the India Office's recommendation and completed their application for a certificate of identity before their departure to Great Britain. Upon filling out the certificate, applicants were required to go to their district magistrate, commissioner of police or British political agent to receive an authorizing signature,

---

[119] These eight questions are, in order, 1. Name of Applicant 2. Father's name & caste 3. Residence 4. Age of applicant 5. Nationality of applicant 6. Social and pecuniary status of father (or guardian) 7. Date of probable departure of applicant from India 8. Object of applicant's visit to England (Europe)

[120] For example see the: "Certificate of Identity for Devi Dutt Pandya," 1900, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/547 1626, British Library.

[121] Ibid.

at which point a copy of the certificate was forwarded along to the India Office.[122] This was a fairly straightforward process, and did not even require confirmation of receipt on the part of the India Office before the traveler's departure. As Radhika Singha points out, the purpose of the Certificate was not to "[hold] the traveler back," but to increase information gathering opportunities for the government.[123] However, by 1903 it was apparent that most Indians traveling to the U.K. were not using the certificates of identity, so measures were installed to encourage their use. The India Office, having been reassured that very few, if any, Indians would travel to England without first discussing the prospect with a local British official, found that the majority of early users of the certificates of identity were in fact not students, but tourists and traders.[124]

An Imperfect Certificate System

To change course and increase the number of certificates of identity in use, the India Office placed advertisements in major Indian newspapers and encouraged local officials to remind students in their district of "the desirability of providing themselves with certificates of identity before their departure from India."[125] The general belief amongst India Office officials was that the certificates of identity were failing because of a lack of awareness amongst Indian students and a failure by local

---

[122] Singha, "A 'Proper Passport' for the Colony: Border Crossing in British India, 1882-1920"." 11.
[123] Ibid.
[124] "Internal Correspondence," 1900, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/560 256, British Library.
[125] "Internal Paper," 1903, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/647 1972, British Library.

administrators to encourage the certificates as necessary to, and beneficial for, prospective study in Britain. However, a more accurate reading of the situation is found in Curzon-Wyllie's comment that Indians found the entire philosophy behind the acquisition of the certificates "derogatory".[126] The form itself, at its most basic level, was little more than a background check, a fact that was not lost on those who completed it. Nearly every certificate of identity that I examined, has, in response to the prompt "Nationality of applicant", the words "British Subject by Birth" written in clear, black ink.[127] The assertion here of nationality as British, not Indian, indicates a belief that travel to England was an inherent right of being a British Subject, one that did not require an authorizing form. This is a sentiment that expanded to a more general belief after Queen Victoria's 1858 declaration that Indian subjects would be

---

[126] Ibid.

[127] Due to time constraints I was able to examine only fifty randomly selected certificates of identity with dates ranging from 1899 to 1910. It is difficult to state how many certificates of identity remain in the India Office Records held at the British Library in London. A simple search of the database for 'certificate of identity' yields a record of 233 individual certificates. An additional search of 'certificates of identity' yields a record of 573 results, each of which contains multiple certificates of identity. During my research I found that these plural records contained as few as four individual certificates and as many as twenty-five certificates grouped together. There is evidence then that there are at least one thousand certificates of identity in the India Office Records. The vast majority of (at least 80%) of the fifty records I looked at stated "British Subject by Birth", with the remainder stating simply "British Subject". Not a single certificate stated nationality as "Indian" or "British-Indian." In case the reader wonders whether fifty certificates is a representative sample. Assuming a 95% confidence level, a random sample of fifty certificates of identity in a population of 1,100 leads to a confidence interval of 10.84%, meaning it is statistically reasonable to conclude that at least 70% of all of the certificates state "British Subject" or "British Subject by Birth." I feel confident that this is a representative sample but further archival research is necessary in order to obtain better understanding of the record. Calculations made using: http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html.

treated as equal to all other members of the Empire.[128] It is understandable then, that Indians would find the process of securing a certificate of identity in order to travel to England denigrating.

Additional reticence towards the certificate of identity can be explained by its similarities to other forms of identification documents used by the Empire in order to assert imperial control. As Radhika Singha explains, the expansion of the administrative tasks of the Indian Civil Service and military after the Mutiny of 1857 led to an increase in British-employed Indians. Because of British concern that Indians would falsify their identity in order to receive the benefits of service, a new set of identification documents were created to ensure that there would be no subterfuge.[129] Identifying documents existed throughout the empire. Gandhi himself, commenting on the use of these documents in the Transvaal during the early 1900s, argued that the use of such permits set Indians apart as a separate, polluted class, akin to the treatment of *Bhangis* by upper-caste Indians.[130] These identifying papers took on a further pejorative connotation due to the association between forced identification, in the form of 'godna'[131] and fingerprinting, and criminality.[132] Indians seeking to travel to Great Britain associated these new certificates of identity with these earlier, negative identification documents.

---

[128] "Proclamation by the Queen in Council," 1858, Private Manuscript, MSS/EUR/D/620, British Library.
[129] Singha, "Settle, Mobilize, Verify: Identification Practices in Colonial India," 163.
[130] Ibid., 193. As Singha explains, Bhangis were: "those who removed filth from habitations - treated as a highly polluting social strata in India," and were forced to where distinguishing clothing. See Singha's Note 258.
[131] Godna was the practice of tattooing the crime and identification number of a prisoner with a life sentence on his or her forehead, used by the British in India until 1849.
[132] Singha, "Settle, Mobilize, Verify: Identification Practices in Colonial India," 175.

Therefore, although certainly not a complete failure, compliance with the certificate of identity scheme was not at a high enough level to subdue the India Office's fears regarding the Indian students in Great Britain. The India Office found itself lacking knowledge about the Indian student population, an unclassified group that had not existed in significant numbers only ten years previously. The India Office responded to this anxiety through the formation of the Bureau of Information for Indian Students in 1909, an official organization created specifically to identify, order, and control Indian students throughout the United Kingdom.[133] In the words of Bayly and Choudhury, the India Office, seeking information about a largely unknown entity and having failed in its initial attempts to gather intelligence, had no choice but to seek to extend its structural borders in an attempt to quell internal panic. This expansion of India Office bureaucracy to encompass peripheral communities, in this case Indian students, is in many ways similar to the failure of British intelligence communities in India during the middle of the nineteenth century and their subsequent growth.[134] That is not to say that Indian students in the United Kingdom existed on the periphery in any literal sense. Lambert and Lester have argued that the core-periphery dichotomy is an overly simplified framework, used specifically to explain motivation for physical increase of the Empire's boundaries.[135] Here I use information panic as a concept for understanding the foundation of a bureaucratic structure meant to expand imperial borders of knowledge, of a group that was

---

[133] "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."
[134] Bayly, *Empire and Information*, 165. Choudhury, "Sinews of Panic and the Nerves of Empire," 966.
[135] Lambert and Lester, *Colonial Lives across the British Empire*, 7.

physically located in absolute proximity to the metropole itself. The result, therefore, is not to seek an understanding of the motivation for imperial expansion into unknown territory, but to find one of the motivating factors behind the creation of a bureau meant to extend the limits of British control and intelligence.

The creation of the Bureau of Information for Indian Students was the outcome of an official report on the status of Indian Students in Great Britain.[136] This report, formally titled "The Report of the Departmental Committee on Indian Students," was the result of a committee established by the Secretary of State of India in 1907, in an attempt to determine how the India Office could fill in "information gaps" regarding Indian students. The result of the near year-long committee meetings and interviews[137] was to suggest the creation of an official government body that would be charged with the responsibility of supervising all relevant aspects of Indian students' lives.[138] The formation of the Bureau was a reaction to a structural deficiency of the India Office; a way to conquer the information panic associated with the growth of the Indian student population.

William Lee-Warner, 1846-1914

The Bureau was not only created due to the internal anxieties of the larger India Office bureaucracy. The role of the individual, particularly the chair of the

---

[136] "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."

[137] The committee interviewed thirty-five Indians and fifty-four Englishmen over the course of several months. The full transcripts of these interviews appear at the end of the official report.

[138] "Indian Students in the UK."

Departmental Committee responsible for advocating the Bureau's creation, William Lee-Warner, cannot be ignored. Although unmentioned in the Departmental Committee's report, none of the existing Indian Office departments were in a position to handle the Indian student question. The India Office, at the turn of the twentieth century, was divided into fourteen departments, only one of which, "Public Educational," appeared even tangentially related to dealing with students.[139] Perhaps unsurprisingly then, due to the close association between Indian students and political intrigue, prior to 1908 the role of crafting and maintaining policy regarding Indian students was under the sole purview of the "Political and Secret" Department. The undersecretary of the Political and Secret (P&S) Department, William Lee-Warner, became the de facto leader of the committee in charge of creating the Indian students report, and his influence was widely felt in all issues regarding Indian students abroad during the first decade of the twentieth century.[140]

Lee-Warner had been given the position of undersecretary of the P&S department in 1895, a position that he held until his retirement in 1912.[141] Along with his position within the P&S, Lee-Warner was also a member of the Council of India[142] from 1902 until his retirement, serving on the military, political, and revenue

---

[139] Kaminsky, *The India Office, 1880-1910*, 13.
[140] J. F. Fleet, "Sir William Lee-Warner, G.C.S.I," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1914): 517.
[141] Kaminsky, *The India Office, 1880-1910*, 239.
[142] The Council of India, also called the India Council, was a body of appointed officials intended to act as a counterweight to the Secretary of State for India. Located in London and formally a part of the India Office, the Council and the Secretary of State shared correspondence, and discussed policy decisions. Although its actual influence on policy formation is debated, membership was a sign of a "distinguished reputation." ibid., 55.

committees throughout that period.[143] Outside of his lengthy service in London, for which he earned the titles of K.C.S.I. and G.C.S.I.,[144] Lee-Warner had also spent a considerable amount of his early career in India, mainly in Bombay. From 1869 through 1885, Lee-Warner moved through the Indian Civil Service, serving variously in Bombay, Coorg, Kolhapur, and Mysore.[145] His time in India played a significant role in shaping his opinion of Indians and Indian policy, opinions that he laid out in various works he completed upon his return to London. These volumes, most notably *The Native States of India* and *The Citizen of India*, provide the reader with insight into Lee-Warner's life-long relationship with the Empire's role in India.[146] By examining Lee-Warner's imperial career, the "dynamic trajectories and networks of knowledge, power, commodities, emotion and culture that connected the multiple sites of the Empire to each other" as it impacted the development of Indian student policies can be further examined.[147] This framework allows the formation of the Bureau of Information to be situated not only in London, but in India as well, acknowledging the flow of information that emerged from diverse sites of Empire to influence the metropole.

---

[143] Ibid., 281.
[144] KCSI, Knight Commander, and GCSI, Grand Knight Commander, were chivalric titles bestowed to individuals for service related to the British Empire in India. GCSI was the highest title, normally bestowed only to "Viceroys, Governors, Secretaries of State, and Indian Potentates." Fleet, "Sir William Lee-Warner, G.C.S.I," 518.
[145] Kaminsky, *The India Office, 1880-1910*, 239.
[146] Fleet, "Sir William Lee-Warner, G.C.S.I," 518.
[147] Lambert and Lester, *Colonial Lives across the British Empire*, 24.

Lee-Warner published his two largest works, *The Native States of India*[148] and *The Citizen of India*,[149] in 1884 and 1887 respectively, just as his career was turning away from the Indian Civil Service and towards the India Office. In these two works Lee-Warner provides insight into his understanding of the inner workings of British rule in India, as well as his perceptions of the Indian population. *The Native States of India* and *The Citizen of India* are, on their face, very different texts. *Native States* is a contemporary history, written to help others understand British policy towards the semi-independent states of India, still ruled by native princes.[150] In contrast, *The Citizen of India* was meant as a Government-approved college textbook, presenting the history of British rule in India to Indian students.[151] The volume was also used by members of the Civil Service, as a primer on Indian affairs.[152] However, as different as these two volumes may appear on the surface, they each strongly support an activist policy for the British in India, and further describe the benefits of British rule for the Indian people. Lee-Warner's works, according to a book review in *The Spectator* were "a great defence of British rule in India."[153] As an advocate of intervention, Lee-Warner decries the "non-interference" policy of the early Raj, in *The Citizen of India*, positioning Lord Wellesley as a great hero of the early Empire

---

[148] This work was originally titled *The Protected Princes of India*. The title was altered after the publication of the first edition to reflect "a more neutral tint" after Lee-Warner received criticism that the title focused too heavily on the princely states' reliance on Britain. William Lee-Warner, *The Native States of India* (New York: AMS Press, 1971).
[149] This is the revised edition of the original 1897 version. The volume went through at least thirteen printings in the ten years from its initial publication to 1907. William Lee-Warner, *The Citizen of India* (London: Macmillan, 1907).
[150] Lee-Warner, *The Native States of India*, viii.
[151] Lee-Warner, *The Citizen of India*, vi.
[152] Fleet, "Sir William Lee-Warner, G.C.S.I," 519.
[153] Brown, "Sir William-Lee Warner (1846-1914)."

because of his interventionist policies: "the first British statesman to perceive what ought to be done to preserve peace throughout India was Lord Wellesley….He determined to make the British the supreme ruler of India, on whom would rest the responsibility of protecting the whole country from foreign invasion, of defending each of the smaller states from its enemies, and of maintaining peace and order everywhere."[154] In *The Native States*, Lee-Warner further devotes an entire chapter to the ills of non-intervention, concluding that the British must act as a benevolent protector when crafting policy that intersects with the native states.[155] This pro-interventionist ideology arose from Lee-Warner's own experiences in India, during his work in the Bombay secretariat. In this position, Lee-Warner was in charge of the administration of the princely states, a responsibility that engaged many "messy realities". He responded to the confusion surrounding the princely states by "impos[ing] order on the miscellany of treaties which constituted Indian political law," thereby streamlining and reinforcing the authority of British rule.[156]

This interventionist policy, formulated initially in India, reappears during Lee-Warner's tenure at the India Office in London. Regarding Indian students in Britain, Lee-Warner argued that the India Office should go beyond a certificate scheme and create the position of an advisor who would "get to know the students, to watch and help them." This would allow the India Office to "ascertain how far they [the Indian students] are being drawn into the vortex of political intrigue."[157] This train of thought extends through his internal India Office writing during the period. For

---

[154] Lee-Warner, *The Citizen of India*, 63.
[155] Lee-Warner, *The Native States of India*, 405.
[156] Brown, "Sir William-Lee Warner (1846-1914)."
[157] "Certificates of Identity for Indian Students and Others Visiting England."

example, in a 1906 note that he filed regarding the status of Indian students at Cambridge University, Lee-Warner points to the ostracized position of the Indian students as evidence for the need of the India Office to intervene in order to ensure that Indian students' experiences in Britain did not "add fresh discontent to our Indian visitors when they return to India."[158] In much the same way that he advocated for more direct involvement with the princely states, Lee-Warner saw the Indian student population as a group that fell directly under the purview of the India Office, allowing him to recommend a policy that would impose the order and control that had been lacking under the certificate of identity scheme.

The majority of Lee-Warner's published writing and internal notes make reference to a strict policy of involvement, with his notes from the India Office consistently referring to Indian students as potentially dangerous political dissidents. However, it is incorrect to characterize his attitudes as exclusively cynical, as within many of the same memos that detail his suggestions on how to better control students, Lee-Warner also expresses a genuine, albeit paternalistic, concern for student welfare and health.[159] Although camped in flowery verse, his respect for Indians is obvious when he writes:

> If we search the whole world through we shall find no braver or better soldiers and sailors, no more active traders and manufacturers, no more wealthy or enterprising merchants, no more skilful farmers, no cleverer engineers, doctors, and men of science generally than are to be found at the present day,

---

[158] "Note on Indian Students at Cambridge," 1906, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/789 4165, British Library.
[159] "Certificates of Identity for Indian Students and Others Visiting England."

> in India. They are drawn largely from the native races of the country, and they include as well many of the best representatives of the strength, the skill and the science of Great Britain.[160]

These are not the words of an oppressive despot, but a man who thought that Indian access to the educational treasures of Great Britain would lead to an improved India and an improved British Empire. This belief led Lee-Warner to consider ways in which Indian students in Britain could extract the best from the British university system. One of his grander ideas involved forcing or encouraging British universities to supply Indian students with sufficient funds to ensure that they were being fed and clothed. Lee-Warner empathized with the reality of exclusion that many Indian students faced upon arrival at British universities, arguing that it was due to an "inevitable reserve and hesitation which at the start draws a line between the children of the east and west," and not a defect in the Indian character as some of his India Office colleagues, such as William Curzon-Wyllie, believed.[161] Additionally, it was Lee-Warner's Departmental Committee that argued against the formation of a policing body and instead focused on the creation of a benevolent bureau that would:

> Answer inquiries in regard to educational facilities, keep a list of lodgings and boarding-houses suitable for Indian students and of private families willing to receive them on such terms as may be arranged, furnish students with references, bring to the notice of the advisory committee any cases in which the regulation of educational institutions bears hardly on Indian students and

---

[160] Lee-Warner, *The Citizen of India*, 124-5.
[161] "Note on Indian Students at Cambridge."

> generally to give all possible assistance either to students themselves or to their parents in India.[162]

As will become clear, the Bureau fulfilled all of these obligations, providing a significant amount of support for those Indian students willing to engage with it. It was through Lee-Warner's intervention that this accommodating side of the Bureau was developed. Clearly then, Lee-Warner was not a mere representative of the India Office in his capacity as chairman of the Departmental Committee, but spoke from a privileged position as a representative of the British Indian Empire, having lived, worked, and 'careered' in India.[163]

The complex and often conflicting nature of Lee-Warner's belief system, both his adherence to a conservative interventionism and his benevolent paternalism, is alluded to in his obituary in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic of Great Britain and Ireland*, in which it is noted that: "his influence and action in some directions unfortunately created a certain amount of ill-feeling against him on the part of the extremely progressive section of Indians," but that "in reality, the Indian people of all classes – in particular, the agriculturists out there, and here in England the students

---

[162] "Indian Students in the UK."

[163] See Lambert and Lester for a more extensive discussion of the meaning of 'career' during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Lambert and Lester, *Colonial Lives across the British Empire*, 22. Most senior level India Office employees of the time, amongst them Secretary of State Morley and Undersecretary Godley, had not worked in, or even traveled to India. This meant that India Office officials who had worked in India were highly respected and were asked to take a lead role in affairs that involved Indians in London. See Stephen E. Koss, *John Morley at the India Office, 1905-1910* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), 148, n 25.

who come to complete their education and training on European lines – have seldom if ever had a friend more warmly and actively devoted to their interests."[164]

The Bureau of Information for Indian Students

I have argued that The Bureau of Information for Indian Students, upon its formal inception in April 1909, was the result of two distinct but overlapping impulses: information panic and imperial careering. It would provide Indian students with information regarding their studies in the United Kingdom, while also serving to control, and gather information about, the same students. The Bureau, much like the certificates of identity discussed earlier in this chapter, has either been ignored or deeply misunderstood by earlier scholars.[165] Formed in the aftermath of Lee-Warner's Departmental Committee report, the Bureau became the India Office's most formal and comprehensive attempt to grapple with the growing number of Indian students arriving in Britain.

The Bureau itself officially began its work on April 27th, 1909, a full year after the decision was made to not publish the report of the Departmental Committee and only three months before the assassination of Curzon-Wyllie, a Committee member, by Madan Lal Dhingra. During the year between the final evaluation of the Committee report and the establishment of the Bureau, the India Office went into action, organizing the Bureau's structure, securing its employees and ensuring that,

---

[164] Fleet, "Sir William Lee-Warner, G.C.S.I," 520.
[165] For an extremely abbreviated description of the Bureau see: Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 15.

upon its creation, it would be able to begin working almost immediately.[166] By the beginning of the 1909, the goals of the Bureau were formally enunciated and described. They include the duties described above, as well as the direct guardianship of certain Indian students and interfacing with the British universities where Indian students were currently enrolled.[167] Of course, the implicit goal of the Bureau was to keep track of the students upon their arrival and during the remainder of their stay in Britain. Internally, it was hoped that the Bureau would succeed where the certificates of identity had failed. The Bureau would successfully quiet the seditionist chatter of Indian students throughout Britain.

The Committee report's fifth chapter explicitly discussed the highly politicized nature of the Indian student population, and noted the benefit that the creation of the Bureau would have in terms of organization and control.[168] This chapter was so strongly worded that the British Government in India feared that Indians, both in India and abroad, would react to the report's publication with an upswell of violence and violent rhetoric. Viceroy Minto,[169] acting on this concern, interceded just prior to the report's publication in 1908, stating:

> Much bitter feeling would be aroused resulting in angry discussion and agitation which would discredit any arrangements which government might make for protecting and helping Indian students in England to such an extent

---

[166] "Indian Students in the UK."
[167] Ibid.
[168] Chapter five of the Committee report. Ibid.
[169] The position of Viceroy can be best described as the Secretary of State for India's counterpoint in India, charged with the direct running of Indian affairs.

> that no student would take advantage of them…We are convinced that it would be nothing short of disastrous to publish the report.[170]

Minto's concerns were taken seriously, perhaps due to the growing political upheaval in India, including the burgeoning Swadeshi movement and the split between the extremists and moderates of the Indian National Congress in 1907. Therefore, the report was not officially made public until two decades later. Although the report that led to the Bureau's creation was suppressed, the Bureau's structure and stated goals adhered strictly to the recommendations made by Lee-Warner and his fellow Committee members.

Upon the suggestion of the Committee report, the Bureau was to operate through two means: the advisory committee and the Educational Advisor. The advisory committee was based in London, and was made up of seven members and one chairman, who were to meet on a semi-regular basis throughout the year in order to discuss the progress of the Bureau and suggest any changes to its procedures.[171] It was also suggested that the five Indian members of the committee could act as a social committee, providing Indian students with friendly, and familiar contacts as soon as possible after their arrival in Britain.[172] Furthermore, the Bureau had seven provincial committees under the advisory committee's domain, located throughout India. These provincial committees were meant to provide potential Indian student

---

[170] "Indian Students in the UK."
[171] "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students." The seven members of the committee were: Saiyid Ameer Ali, CA Latif, SP Sinha, MM Bhownaggree, Bhagwandin Dube, Theodore Morison, WH Curzon Wyllie (replaced by James Dunlop-Smith after his assassination). The chairman was Lord Ampthill.
[172] "Indian Students in the UK."

travelers with assistance and information before their departure, while informing the Bureau in London if they believed that a suspicious student was on the way to Great Britain. Additionally, the Bureau was to send the provincial committees information on students that had completed their studies in Britain and were returning to India.[173] Together, the Bureau and the provincial committees were to act as reciprocal information gatherers, sharing notes as necessary in order to ensure that Indian students did not fall into an informational blind spot.

In practice, the various components of the Bureau did not work together as planned, and the utility of both the advisory committee and the provincial committees appear limited at best. The advisory committee met only twelve times throughout the Bureau's three-year existence, assembling just twice in 1911. The provincial committees were also largely failures, due to a lack of communication between the advisory committee and the various provincial committees, as well as a lack of formal policy regulating the frequency of the committees' reports and meetings.[174] Even the advisory committee's role as a welcoming party could not be implemented as had been planned because arriving students were often met by India House members and other Indian students at the train station immediately upon their arrival in London.[175]

---

[173] The seven provincial committees were located in: Allahabad, Madras, Calcutta, Dacca, Bombay, Nagpur and Lahore. "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."

[174] Arnold's Report, ibid.

[175] There is evidence of Indians meeting incoming Indian students at their first arrival throughout this period. One British group, the East India Association, wrote to the India Office stating: "We are informed that an organized system exists under which young Indians are met on their first arrival in London, and are led away into circles where they hear nothing all day long but abuse of English rule." This system was run by India House, and included an invitation for cheap room and board, and Indian

This dashed the India Office's hopes of engaging Indian students before they had made contact with the existing Indian student population. The inefficiency of the Bureau's committees meant that the responsibilities of the Educational Advisor grew, until the position became the Bureau's focal point: in effect, by the end of 1909, the Bureau and the Educational Advisor were one.

The initial role of the Educational Advisor was to provide Indian students in Great Britain with information regarding courses of study and career options, while comprehensively advising those students enrolled in the direct guardianship program.[176] It was the Educational Advisor who was to be the figurehead of the Bureau, a public representative that would interact with Indian students, the universities that they attended, and their parents in Indian. To supplement the interpersonal nature of the position, the Educational Advisor, in tandem with the National Indian Association,[177] created a list of lodging houses that were available for Indian students and the "Handbook of Information," a pamphlet describing the

---

meals. The Bureau would eventually attempt to counter the actions of India House, hiring "Messrs. Thos. Cook & Son," a travel agency, to greet trains and steamers that were carrying Indian students. "East India Association, Student Supervision."; "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."

[176] Students under direct guardianship were required to meet with the Educational Advisor often throughout the year in order to update him as to the progress of their studies. In turn the Educational Advisor managed the student's funds, advocated for students when they encountered an issue, sent a written report to the students' parents at the completion of each semester, and guaranteed lodging for students. By the end of 1911, 137 students were enrolled in the program. "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."

[177] The National Indian Association, along with the Northbrook Society, were private organizations based in London meant to support Indians throughout Britain. The Bureau propped up these organizations, providing them with offices and limited funding.

various paths available to Indians wishing to study in Britain.[178] This handbook, distributed throughout India and available at local government offices, was markedly successful, selling 1500 copies and necessitating at least twelve printings in just nineteenth months.[179] The detailed chapters provide information about tuition and cost of living, admissions, and graduation requirements for twelve undergraduate institutions, five "Colleges for Women," and graduate programs in law, medicine, agriculture, engineering, and accountancy.[180] Although the information is presented largely without commentary, the pamphlet is prefaced by a section called "Advice to Students," which contains general suggestions for all students, regardless of their course of study. The chapter makes three major recommendations: that prospective students visit their local provincial committee before departing, that they apply for a certificate of identity while still in India, and that they keep in mind the great expense of attending university in Britain.[181] The parallels between the first two points and the Bureau's role as a structure of control are self-evident. The language used to describe the certificate of identity is exactly that which was used to first describe the scheme during its initial introduction. The final point's reference to monetary concerns is based in the India Office's belief that it was largely the impoverished Indian students

---

[178] "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."
[179] Ibid.; National Indian Association (N.I.A.), *Handbook of Information for Indian Students Relating to University and Professional Studies, Etc., in the United Kingdom* (London: J.S. Phillips, 1909).
[180] (N.I.A.), *Handbook of Information for Indian Students Relating to University and Professional Studies, Etc., in the United Kingdom*, 0.
[181] Ibid., 1, 2, 4.

that were turning to political radicalism, disgruntled and disillusioned with life in London or other university towns.[182]

Interestingly, the handbook makes only two references to the Bureau itself, instead referring variously to the Educational Advisor, advisory committee, and provincial committees.[183] The lack of explicit acknowledgement of the Bureau's existence appears to have been a concerted effort on the part of the National Indian Association and the India Office to distance the assistance proffered in the Handbook from the central bureaucracy of the British government. This effort to separate the advice in the Handbook and the India Office was due to a pre-existing level of skepticism surrounding the Bureau itself:

> From its [the Bureau's] inception it was regarded with considerable suspicion both in this country and in India. The general opinion among Indian students in this country appears to have been that it was instituted with the object of exercising a surveillance upon their movements and of providing the police with information regarding them.[184]

This suspicion was only deepened by the increased security measures in the India Office after the assassination of Curzon-Wylie, which occurred only three months after the Bureau began its work.[185] The Handbook, already in the planning stages prior to the Bureau's official opening, was published soon after the assassination, and

---

[182] "Certificates of Identity for Indian Students and Others Visiting England."
[183] (N.I.A.), *Handbook of Information for Indian Students Relating to University and Professional Studies, Etc., in the United Kingdom*, 11.
[184] "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."
[185] Ibid.

was thus thrown into an atmosphere in which Indian students were likely to be highly wary of any documents bearing the name of the Bureau or the India Office. The Handbook's success, as already mentioned, is even more surprising in this context, and is a testament to the ever-growing number of Indians interested in studying in Britain. It is less surprising that few prospective students met with the provincial committees and no more than before registered for certificates of identity.

Regardless of the success, or lack thereof, of the committees and the certificates of identity, the Bureau offices in London received a large amount of Indian student visitors throughout its operation. This total, over 1,000 students per year of its existence (see Table 2.1),

Year	Students Interviewed	Students Contacted
1909-1910	614	1343
1910-1911	674	1062

Table 2.1

led the Educational Advisor to estimate that the Bureau had been in touch with at least 62% of the student population in all of the Britain.[186] This reach extended well past that of the certificate of identity scheme both in terms of numbers and in the depth of the information collected. Each student that visited the Bureau had a file that included his certificate of identity (if he had one), notes from interviews with Bureau staff, and any notes from the student's British university or Indian officials.[187] In the Bureau, the India Office had been incredibly successful in creating the perfect structure to fill in the information gap. However, as the Educational Advisor noted,

[186] Ibid.
[187] Unfortunately these files have either been misplaced or destroyed. There exists only records of India Office and Bureau officials referring to these student files.

the more politicized Indian students expressly avoided the Bureau, fearing it as a possible front for British surveillance operations.[188] Thus, although the Bureau was not successful in penetrating India House and other hotbeds of Indian political intrigue, it must have managed to prevent some of those Indian students who arrived in Britain without a political bent from falling under the sway of the anti-imperialists.

The Educational Advisor took up the other responsibilities of the Bureau wholeheartedly. It was through the Advisor's efforts and influence that the Bureau became an advocate for Indian students throughout Britain, fighting university quotas and providing Indian students and their parents with help when needed.[189] T. W. Arnold, the man who received the post of Educational Advisor of the Bureau, like Lee-Warner, was an imperial careerist, immersing himself in Indian culture during the sixteen years in which he lived and worked throughout India.[190]

Thomas Walker Arnold and the Benevolent Bureau

T. W. Arnold's interest in oriental studies first developed at Oxford, where he spent a year studying Sanskrit and Arabic. In 1888 he was hired as teacher of philosophy at the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College (MAO College) at Aligarh. Arnold remained in Aligarh for ten years, before he moved to the Government College of

---

[188] "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."

[189] Watt, "Thomas Walker Arnold and the Re-Evaluation of Islam, 1864-1930," 3. Watt describes Arnold as a having "ever more vocally raised their [Indian students'] demands in the British political arena."

[190] H. A. R. Gibb, "Sir Thomas Walker Arnold (1864-1930)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Brian Harrison, HCG Matthew, and Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Lahore, where he was appointed professor of philosophy. In 1904 he returned to London and held the dual positions of professor of Arabic at University College and assistant librarian at the India Office.[191]

During his tenure in Aligarh, Arnold embedded himself in Indian culture. He "dressed like a Muslim and founded for students in the college the Anjuman al-Farz, or 'Duty Society'," a club whose members were meant to work towards the creation of a Muslim state.[192] He became friendly with his students and fellow faculty, actively questioned his Christianity identity and considered a conversion to Islam. Additionally, Arnold's writing took on a determinedly pro-Muslim stance while in India, and his first published volume, *The Preaching of Islam*,[193] was received with strong criticism in Britain, where it was derided as being naïve, simplistic and "too ideal." As one review put it, "all was not so pure and inoffensive as he seems to think."[194] However, in India his intellectual influence continued to grow, as did his support in Muslim communities, most notably represented by Muhammed Iqbal, a pupil and lifelong friend, who would later emerge as a central force behind the Muslim separatist movement.[195]

---

[191] Watt, "Thomas Walker Arnold and the Re-Evaluation of Islam, 1864-1930," 2-3. See Watt's article for an exceptionally detailed discussion of Arnold's early academic career and work in India.
[192] Gibb, "Sir Thomas Walker Arnold (1864-1930)."
[193] Thomas Walker Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam. A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith* (London: A. Constable & Co., 1896).
[194] H. Hirschfeld, "The Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith by T. W. Arnold," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, no. July (1899): 683.
[195] Watt, "Thomas Walker Arnold and the Re-Evaluation of Islam, 1864-1930," 67.

It was this enhanced reputation amongst Indians that led the India Office to appoint Arnold as the Educational Advisor of the Bureau.[196] Despite evidence of a somewhat radical philosophy, the India Office believed that the appointment of Arnold would help remove any doubts surrounding the Bureau's true motives: by placing a known and well-respected Indian sympathizer as one of its central figures, how could anyone doubt the Bureau's benevolence? Arnold was encouraged to socialize with his charges and was given an annual £100 stipend to be used exclusively for entertaining Indian students.[197] Additionally, the India Office purchased and converted a large building on Cromwell Road in Kensington to house Arnold's office and be the headquarters of an informal social club meant to encourage mixing between Indian students and interested English students.[198] This building, which would come to be called "Cromwell House," would host at least five gala receptions for Indian students and senior India Office officials, with Arnold serving as intermediary.[199] Because of the aforementioned ineffectiveness of both the provincial and advisory committees, the role of the Educational Advisor was not limited to being the public face of the Bureau. Instead of being only one-third of a larger power sharing structure, Arnold's increased dominance over the Bureau's

---

[196] Ibid., 76.
[197] "Indian Students in the UK." £100 in 1909 value.
[198] "Record of Cromwell House Purchase," 1910-1914, Legal Adviser's Records, IOR/L/L/2/1762-1767, British Library. The building, located on 21 Cromwell Road, sits directly across the street from the Natural History Museum, and is now the site of the French Embassy in London, an interesting location given France's role in Savarkar's arrest.
[199] "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."

functioning allowed him to shift the Bureau's intended policy away from control and towards paternal assistance.

Arnold's three-year stay at the Bureau was punctuated with moments that exposed a tense relationship between himself and the leaders of the India Office. Discussing the official response to the assassination of Curzon-Wylie in 1909, Arnold wrote in 1912, "The precautions taken by the authorities of Scotland Yard after the assassination of Sir Curzon Wyllie on the 1st July 1909, when every student who visited the India Office was closely watched by several detectives, caused many students to shun it [the Bureau]." Arnold believed that official surveillance contributed to the fact that "sinister intentions are still attributed to its [the Cromwell House's] operations."[200] In contrast, members of the India Office believed that the increased security installed after the assassination was insufficient, and Secretary of State Morley was considered foolish for refusing to take on a personal security detail.[201] One year after of the assassination, with the support of Theodore Morison, an advisory committee member and Arnold's colleague at MAO College, Arnold "refused to countenance any form of surveillance work, insisting on a signed pledge to this effect and discouraging support for such activities within the India Office."[202] This explicit rejection of what had become one of the India Office's main tools of control speaks volumes for Arnold's commitment to serving the interests of Indian students and not those of the India Office. Arnold had little power outside of the Bureau however, and had no way of influencing larger India Office policy, meaning

---

[200] Ibid.
[201] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 59.
[202] Watt, "Thomas Walker Arnold and the Re-Evaluation of Islam, 1864-1930," 77-78.

that he did encounter surveillance reports on Indian students and was expected to act on them. Arnold described the process of receiving evidence that a student had been involved in anti-imperial activities as such:

> I receive information about such students from the Secretary of State's department and from officers in India; notes are also sometimes attached to the certificates of identity. In the case of such students as happen to be under guardianship it has been found advantageous to place them in lodgings in a district not usually frequented by Indians, under conditions favourable to the formation of friendships with English persons. In other cases, care is taken that the student concerned does not get a footing in any of the associations connected with this house, and warnings have been given to other students who seemed to be running a risk of coming under his influence.[203]

Even Arnold, then, was not immune to the pressure of the larger imperial structures of control under which he worked. Yet, throughout his involvement with the Bureau, Arnold demonstrated a loyalty to the cause of Indian students, refusing the agenda of control that had been thrust upon the Bureau by the India Office. Instead, Arnold embraced the paternalistic aspects of Lee-Warner's suggestions, making them his own based on his personal experiences in India and his own imperial career.

Conclusion

---

[203] "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."

As the evolution of the certificate of identity scheme and the Bureau of Information for Indian Students show, it is difficult to describe the India Office's actions and decisions holistically. Although a current of control and knowledge assemblage ran through all of the events of this short period, individual actors and personal histories often counteracted this goal. To this purpose the India Office created two entities, the certificate of identity, a simple mechanism of information gathering, and the Bureau of Information, a complex bureaucracy meant to gather information, control, and alter the behavior of Indian students in Britain. In the end, both the certificates and the Bureau failed in their respective aims, one due to lack of use and the other largely because of the influence of the Empire itself on its subjects.

As has been glimpsed at the end of this chapter, the assassination of Curzon-Wylie in July 1909 marked a significant turning point in the India Office's handling of the Indian student question. A more proactive and direct approach would be taken in the form of secret surveillance and intelligence gathering.

III

The Assassination of Sir William Hutt Curzon-Wyllie by the Indian Student Madan Lal Dhingra

---

At eight p.m. July 1, 1909, a young Indian student named Madan Lal Dhingra left his room on the first floor of a lodging house on 106, Ledbury Road in the Bayswater neighborhood of London. He was on his way to South Kensington, and the Jehangir Hall in the Imperial Institute, where the National Indian Association (NIA) was hosting a party, an event they often held in order to encourage the "social intercourse between the English people and the Indian people in London."[204] Dhingra arrived within the hour and spent the evening speaking with other partygoers, many of whom

[204] Testimony of Miss Beck "Proceedings of the Central Criminal Court, 19th July 1909; the Trial of Madar Lal Dhingra," (Accessed via Old Bailey Proceedings Online (www.oldbaileyonline.org)). This source misspells Madan Lal Dhingra as "Madar Lal Dhingra" throughout.

he had come to know at previous NIA events, discussing his plans to take the A.M.I.C.E. exam[205] and return to his home in the Punjab. Nothing in his behavior signaled that he did not even plan on leaving the Imperial Institute, let alone never make it back to India.

At eleven p.m. William Curzon-Wyllie, honorary treasurer of the NIA and prominent India Office official, began to head for Jehangir Hall's exit, sending his wife ahead while he finished saying the appropriate farewells. As he left the main hall, Curzon-Wyllie stopped to speak to a young Indian student who had called for his attention. After just a few words, the student was suddenly holding a small Colt pistol in his right hand. Dhingra quickly fired off four shots from pointblank range, killing Curzon-Wyllie instantly. Cawas Lalcaca, a Parsee doctor, rushed to Curzon-Wyllie's aid upon hearing the first shot and was also struck and killed by the bullets.[206] Dhingra quickly turned the pistol on himself, only to find the magazine empty, at which point he was subdued and arrested.[207] In a few short moments the relationship between the India Office and the Indian student population had been irrevocably

---

[205] The A.M.I.C.E. certifies an individual as an associate member of the Institution of Civil Engineers.

[206] Testimony of Douglas William Thorburn, Sir Leslie Probyn, and Captain Charles Rolleston "Proceedings of the Central Criminal Court, 19th July 1909; the Trial of Madar Lal Dhingra."; "The Murders at the Imperial Institute," *The British Medical Journal* 2, no. 2532 (1909). Dhingra fired as many as eight bullets and as few as six. Four hit Curzon-Wyllie, while two hit Dr. Lalcaca. Lalcaca was trained at University College and had practiced medicine in Shanghai. Each witness reports hearing a different amount of gunshots and by 1909 Colt manufactured three models of semi-automatic pistol with magazines holding six, seven, and eight bullets. Dhingra was also in possession of a dagger, a revolver, and extra ammunition during the party, but it is unclear if he intended to use them.

[207] Testimony of Police-Constable Frederick Nicholls and Detective-Sergeant Frank Eadly "Proceedings of the Central Criminal Court, 19th July 1909; the Trial of Madar Lal Dhingra." Dhingra was brought to Marylebone Police Station.

altered. Madan Lal Dhingra had made it clear that the Indian students in Great Britain were not idle revolutionaries, but had the capacity, organization, and drive to undertake revolutionary action. From the assassination forward, the India Office would do all in its power to ensure Dhingra would be the last to display these capabilities.

Madan Lal Dhingra

But who was Madan Lal Dhingra and why was it him, not Harnam Singh, Savarkar, or another, more politically active student, who pulled the trigger? Of all Indian students in London during the period, Dhingra appears to be a particularly unlikely candidate for undertaking political assassination. Dhingra's name does not show up in any India Office or Scotland Yard reports about the Indian student population in London, and India House members mention him only as an infrequent, and largely silent, participant in India House events.[208]

Born in the Punjab in 1887, Dhingra spent his youth surrounded by the privilege and wealth afforded to certain Indian families who had proven their loyalty to the Empire.[209] Although Dhingra's own political sentiments during this early

---

[208] "Information About the Revolutionary Party in London from H. K. Koregaonkar of India House." This file contains the transcript of an interview with H. K. Koregaonkar, a former India House member who had been 'turned' by British officials. Koregaonkar provided information on a variety of India House activities as part of an effort to arrest Savarkar.

[209] Visram, *Asians in Britain*, 156; "Proceedings of the Central Criminal Court, 19th July 1909; the Trial of Madar Lal Dhingra." The Dhingra family went as far as to publically denounce Dhingra's actions during his trial: "I [have] here been instructed to say that they view this crime with the greatest, abhorrence, and they wish to repudiate in the most emphatic way the slightest sympathy with the views or motives which have led up to the crime."

period of his life remain unclear, it does appear as though he played the role of the dutiful son, first attending Municipal College, followed by Government College in Lahore, and then postponing his studies in order to play a part in the family business which he did until 1906 when he was shipped to London in order to study engineering at University College London, a course he was still pursuing at the time of the assassination.[210] Within this linear narrative there stands one stark deviation. Having been called upon to end his studies early in order to go into business, Dhingra was a less than willing participant, choosing instead to become a stoker on a merchant ship, a job that could not have been further from the tidy, professional world of his parents. During this short furlough, Dhingra traveled throughout eastern Asia, encountering the extreme poverty of the region.[211] However, Dhingra soon returned home to his family and began work at the Settlement Department in the Punjab. Forced to work when he would have much rather been at school, it was his experience at the Settlement Department that served as a catalyst for his anger towards British rule. As a part of the Settlement Department, Dhingra had been "treated badly by Englishmen and he then began to hate Englishmen."[212] Although there is no specific event mentioned, it is likely that Dhingra was often subject to racism and embarrassment from his British coworkers.

Unlike Savarkar, who had been a political player, with an articulated anti-imperial stance in hand well before his arrival in London, Dhingra had no known

---

[210] Visram, *Asians in Britain*, 156-7.
[211] Leena Dhingra, "Dhingra, Madan Lal (1883-1909)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. HCG Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[212] "Information About the Revolutionary Party in London from H. K. Koregaonkar of India House."

political associations in India and did not appear at India House until 1908. Yet in a statement given to the Criminal Intelligence Office in 1909, it is clear that the seemingly benign circumstances of Dhingra's youth had been sufficient to create a strong anti-imperial sentiment:

> His [Dhingra's] hatred of Englishmen was intense. This was fed by the articles against Indians that used to appear in the English papers from time to time. He used to read them over and over again, articles like 'Coloured men and English women' which appeared in London Opinion, 'Babu, Black Sheep', which appeared in Cassell's Weekly.[213]

The resentment and anger that Dhingra developed while working in the Punjab and through reading the British press were channeled perfectly by the violence espoused by the leaders of India House. Dhingra's absence at most India House events represents not his lack of interest in India House's radical message, but rather his own belief that that speakers and meetings were "mere talk" and not worth attending. To this effect Koregaonkar believed that Dhingra's role model was Kanai Lal Dutt, one of the assassins of the informant Narendranath Gossain at the Alipore Jail. Dutt embodied violent action, the antithesis of the intellectual theorizing that often dominated India House discourse.[214]

Dhingra was the ideal student that Savarkar had been searching for since his rise to the leadership of India House. Although Dhingra came from a similar

---

[213] Ibid. Although unavailable, Shompa Lahiri describes the *London Opinion* article as a "particularly crude and racist" example of common British newspaper articles that described Indians as dangerous sexual deviants. Lahiri, *Indians in Britain*, 89.
[214] "Information About the Revolutionary Party in London from H. K. Koregaonkar of India House."

upperclass social milieu as the other members of India House, he had personally experienced degradation at the hands of the British while working in the Punjab. Paired with the resentment Dhingra felt towards his family for making him alter his course of study, Dhingra was willing and ready to do anything for the cause that Savarkar had so passionately explained to his followers. Dhingra explained the reasoning behind his willingness to die in his final statement before his hanging:

> The only lesson required in India at present is to learn how to die and the only way to teach it is by dying ourselves. Therefore I die and glory in my martyrdom! This war of Independence will continue between India and England, so long as the Hindu and the English races last.[215]

Savarkar's rhetoric demanded just this sort of self-sacrifice, and Dhingra appears to have been aware that his action could provide the motivation for others to follow in his path, just as he had looked to Kanai Lal Dutt. Dhingra's saw the assassination of Curzon-Wyllie at his hands, as only the first in what he hoped would be a series of blows against British officials and the British Empire in general.

Because of the importance that Dhingra had placed on the assassination, he prepared for the murder fastidiously. According to court records, Dhingra had acquired a gun license and purchased ammunition for a Colt pistol as early as January 26th, 1909.[216] In April of 1909, Dhingra commenced target practice at a firing range on Tottenham Court Road, not too far from India House. Three times per week, for nearly three months, Dhingra went to the range, fired twelve practice shots, and

---

[215] Madan Lal Dhingra's Final Statement.
[216] Testimony of William Burrow "Proceedings of the Central Criminal Court, 19th July 1909; the Trial of Madar Lal Dhingra."

"acquired considerable proficiency."[217] On the day of the assassination, Dhingra arrived at the range with his pistol in hand two hours before he would leave his lodgings for the NIA event, and took his customary twelve practice shots, hitting the target eleven times.[218]

Additionally, Koregaonkar believed that Dhingra had joined the NIA upon his initial arrival in India in order solely to have the best opportunity to strike.[219] The intent was clear, by becoming a member of the NIA, Dhingra would have access to a large number of British officials at every NIA-sanctioned event, providing ample opportunity to plan and succeed in an assassination attempt. Although it has been argued that Curzon-Wyllie was not the ultimate target of the assassination, the deliberate manner of the assassination and Curzon-Wyllie's known affiliation with the NIA as well as with Dhingra personally make this unlikely.[220]

William Hutt Curzon-Wyllie

---

[217] Testimony of Henry Stanton Morley, Proprioter of the shooting range on 92 Tottenham Court Road ibid.
[218] Ibid.
[219] "Information About the Revolutionary Party in London from H. K. Koregaonkar of India House."
[220] Keer states that Dhingra had attempted to assassinate Lord Curzon in the weeks prior to Curzon-Wyllie's assassination, but that he had been thwarted in the final moments. Koregaonkar believed that Lee-Warner was the true target, as the more senior member of the India Office, but that Curzon-Wyllie was sufficiently important and a worthwhile target when Lee-Warner did not appear at the NIA event. Neither of these claims are verifiable, although the establishment of the Bureau of Information of Indian Students in April of 1909 at the impetus of the Lee-Warner Committee report does lend itself to a host of speculation and conspiracy theories about Dhingra's true target. Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, 52. "Information About the Revolutionary Party in London from H. K. Koregaonkar of India House."

Curzon-Wyllie had, in fact, made himself a potentially attractive target to many Indian students in just the few months leading up the assassination. In late April of 1909, Curzon-Wyllie had written personally to the Benchers of Gray's Inn in an attempt to dissuade them from calling Savarkar and Harnam Singh to the bar. In a series of letters throughout the month of May, Curzon-Wyllie supplied Gray's Inn with a plethora of information that condemned Savarkar, and singled him out as a particularly dangerous, seditious force. The Benchers of Gray's Inn eventually called Harnam Singh to the bar, but charged Savarkar with three violations—"condoning assassination, inciting revolution and advocating against the nation"—that prevented him from being called.[221] Additionally, it was Curzon-Wyllie who had spearheaded initial attempts to create an India Office-sponsored lodging house for Indian students that would have been a government-sanctioned alternative to India House. And it was Curzon-Wyllie who had traveled to France to collect information on Savarkar, Harnam Singh and others at India House.[222]

The liberty that the India Office had granted India House members during the first few years of its existence were being consistently threatened by Curzon-Wyllie as 1909 wore on. His role in preventing Savarkar's call to the bar was particularly damaging as it spoke directly to the fears of many India House members, who worried that participation in any potentially seditious groups would ruin their career prospects. Curzon-Wyllie had singlehandedly shown that the India Office had the power to destroy a career in one fell swoop. His decision to engage French

---

[221] The first charge is, of course, of particular note. "Savarkar Denied Call to Bar Because of Sedition Activities."
[222] "Information About the Revolutionary Party in London from H. K. Koregaonkar of India House."

intelligence was also a new step, expanding the reach of the British Empire to what had traditionally been considered a safe haven for Indian radicals; after all, Krishnavarma, India House's founder, had been living in Paris unmolested for nearly two years by the time of Dhingra's crime. Additionally, threatening the uniqueness of India House, by attempting to create a British lodging house for incoming Indian students would diminish the amount of new recruits Savarkar could gather and convert to the cause. All of these reasons help explain why an Indian student associated with India House would have found Curzon-Wyllie to be an ideal exemplar of all that was wrong with the British Empire. Curzon-Wyllie was viewed as meddling, pretentious, manipulative, and perhaps even dangerous, as he continued to press inwards on the freedom and privacy of those in charge of India House.

Curzon-Wyllie may have appeared particularly threatening to Dhingra because of their personal relationship. Dhingra's brother, having heard that Dhingra was associating with members of India House, wrote to Curzon-Wyllie in an attempt to persuade Dhingra to pursue a different path. It is reported that Curzon-Wyllie and Dhingra did meet to discuss his family's wishes, but the interview did not have the effect that the Dhingra family had hoped for.[223] For Dhingra, Curzon-Wyllie had not only persecuted India House but had challenged Dhingra's personal sovereignty. In so doing, he may have become a particularly potent embodiment of all that Dhingra despised about the empire.

The Aftermath

[223] "Murder of Wyllie Stirs All of England."

Condemnation of Curzon-Wyllie's assassination was immediate and nearly universal. British authorities were quick to link Dhingra to India House and India House to anarchistic violence. The American press was particularly harsh on Dhingra and his associates, with papers from coast to coast following the story from start to finish.[224] One *New York Times* editorial on the assassination, entitled "British Complacency and Crime," not only found fault in India House and Dhingra but also in British political policy towards Indian students in the period leading up to the assassination:

> But other things were done at India House. Every week a secret society there whose members called themselves "The Destroyers." This society was formed to put into practice Mr. Krishnavarma's principles…"The Destroyers" were so many kittens that must be kindly stroked and not restrained, it was said. They must be taught the error of their ways by tracts and editorial articles setting for the magnanimity of British rule in the mother country.[225]

As discussed in Chapter I, the British had taken a hands-off approach in dealing with India House, an approach that the world now saw as a deadly error. "A strong feeling had been aroused against a number of members of the House of Commons and others," who it was argued had not done enough to stop the growing radicalism of

---

[224] Ibid; "London in Fear of Indian Thugs," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, July 03, 1909; "British Complacency and Crime," *New York Times* July 19, 1909; "Col. Wyllie's Murder Stirs Englishmen," *The Hartford Courant*, July 03, 1909; "India Problem Acute," *The Washington Post*, July 04, 1909; "Pays the Penalty," *Los Angeles Times*, August 18, 1909.

[225] "British Complacency and Crime." It is unclear where the name "The Destroyers" comes from, although it is clear that the editor is discussing Savarkar and his followers. It is also interesting to note that it was Krishnavarma, and not Savarkar, who was blamed for India House's radical ideology. This was due, presumably, to Krishnavarma's common presence in the press and Savarkar's relative anonymity.

Indian students. British papers too called for immediate action to be taken by Parliament in order to crush the threat of Indian agitation at home.[226]

However, disapproval arose not only from the West. Indian leaders, both in India and in Great Britain were horrified at the violence of the crime, and were eager to distance themselves from India House. Within days of the murder both Dhingra's father and brother had renounced their relationship with Madan Lal, with Dhingra's father writing a personal letter to Lord Morley expressing his shame.[227] A group of Indians in London arranged a meeting in Caxton Hall on July 5th, just four days after the assassination, in order to censure Dhingra and India House in a public forum. Among the leaders present included Bipin Chandra Pal, an acquaintance of Savarkar's, a previously active member of India House and a well-known member of the 'Extremist' wing of Congress. Also present was the celebrated 'Moderate' leader Surendranath Banerjea.[228] Pal and Banerjea, who represented opposite ends of the Indian political landscape, were easily united against India House by Dhingra's act. Savarkar was the only member of the meeting who actively supported Dhingra, voicing his approval of the assassination in order to ensure that a resolution of condemnation was not passed unanimously. For his trouble, Savarkar received a broken nose, given to him by another attendee hoping to silence his unfailing commitment to revolutionary violence and political assassination.

Similar meetings were arranged in India; only members of the Abhinav Bharat appeared to stand in silence. And again, Indians of all political persuasions, from NC

---

[226] "London in Fear of Indian Thugs."
[227] Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, 53.
[228] Ibid., 53-54.

Kelkar, an associate of the Indian revolutionary Bal Gangadhar Tilak, to Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a more moderate reformer. Gokhale asked that Savarkar be arrested and India House be disbanded as soon as possible.[229] As has already been mentioned, Gandhi also denounced Dhingra and India House:

> I must say that those who believe and argue that such murders may do good to India are ignorant men indeed. No act of treachery can ever profit a nation. Even should the British leave in consequence of such murderous acts, who will rule in their place? The only answer is: the murderers. Who will then be happy? Is the Englishman bad because he is an Englishmen? Is it that everyone with an Indian skin is good?[230]

Conclusion

Within six weeks of the assassination, Madan Lal Dhingra had been convicted and executed. The British, hoping to avoid turning Dhingra into a martyr, sped through trial procedures. This, paired with Dhingra's refusal to offer a formal defense, meant that the assassination captured the public eye for only a short, albeit intense, period of time. However, for the members of the India Office and India House, Dhingra's act had repercussions that would extend well past the summer of 1909.

The immediate aftermath of the assassination saw the entire India Office adopt an attitude towards the Indian student population in Britain that mirrored the paternalistic and intrusive position of Curzon-Wyllie. The Bureau of Information for

---

[229] Ibid., 56.
[230] "Letter from London, after July 16, 1909" Gandhi, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi Online*.

Indian Students had only existed for two months, but its mode of procedure already appeared outdated because of the passivity with which it operated. Although allowing the Bureau to remain open, the India Office now believed that the best course in handling the Indian students in Britain, regardless of their political leanings, was an aggressive one. Its first decision was to pursue the members of India House, who they blamed for the assassination, and to increase the presence of spies and intelligence agents in areas populated by Indian students. The criticisms of the media and the encouragement of the majority of Indian leaders in India and in Britain made it much easier to justify the increased British presence in India affairs.

Using the information from their new sources of covert intelligence, British officials were able to shut down India House and arrest the leaders of its operations, including Savarkar and Aiyar. Savarkar had finally seen the action that he had hoped for, but at a tremendous personal cost. He would spend the next fifteen years either in prison or police custody, during which the role of militant anti-imperial politics would diminish considerably.

For their part, the British would never again let a group of India House's stature exist on British soil. Madan Lal Dhingra's action was all that was necessary for the British take on a much more active role in policing the metropole. Dhingra brought the two sides that had been circling each other since the arrival of the first Indian student in Britain into direct conflict. The freedom of being an Indian abroad was to be no more, and the rise of the British spies was at hand.

IV

The Rise of British Criminal Intelligence & the Fall of India House

---

The history of British criminal intelligence is, by its very nature, shrouded in secrecy. The British government had made the decision that the Empire would not have its own secret police force in the mode of the Russian empire, but would instead rely on organizations that already existed, such as Scotland Yard and, in India, the Department of Criminal Intelligence, in order to supply information on persons of political interest.[231] In the years prior to the assassination of William Curzon-Wyllie, these makeshift intelligence organizations were deemed sufficient. After all, until the assassination, Indian revolutionary terrorism had never occurred on British soil. Even the most extreme cases of Irish nationalist terrorism, a cause that would often be tied

[231] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 58.

to that of the Indian nationalists, were more often than not successfully monitored by the independent intelligence branches of the Dublin or London police forces.[232] No one in the British intelligence community believed that the Indian independence movement would need to be handled differently.

Madan Lal Dhingra proved this assumption wrong. The limited surveillance operations of the Special Branch of Scotland Yard, which were meant to collect information about the inner workings of India House, were utterly insufficient. The death of a high-ranking British official at the hands of an Indian student led to a drastic change in the manner of British intelligence gathering. An "Indian Secret Service" was created, an organization based in London, but with agents dispersed throughout Great Britain and Western Europe. Never before had the British created an organization with the sole intent of spying on members of the Empire. The Indian Secret Service would be a precursor to the highly sophisticated British intelligence organizations of World War I.[233]

As the British increased the power of their intelligence network, the reign of India House as the center of the radical Indian independence movement was coming to a close. India House itself was shut down by British police soon after the assassination, based on information gathered from a new intelligence operative, and Savarkar himself was doggedly pursued from London to Paris, and back again, before he was arrested and extradited to India. The details of Savarkar's arrest, which

---

[232] Bakhle, "Savarkar, Sedition, and Surveillance," 68. Bakhle cites the example of the bombing of the Clerkenwall Prison in 1867, in which a group of Irish nationalists attempted to free their compatriots locked in the jail. Although the bombing did lead to the deaths of twelve individuals, none of the Irish prisoners escaped due to information gathered by the Dublin police's intelligence gathering operations.
[233] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 71.

involved significant coordination between the various British intelligence organizations as well as international cooperation, are a testament to the significant changes the British made to their intelligence regime in response to a single act, the assassination of Curzon-Wyllie.

The Surveillance Pseudo-Network, May 1907-June 1909

The British government had made occasional attempts to infiltrate the world of the Indian student population in Great Britain prior to the assassination of William Curzon-Wyllie. The most significant of these early forays into spying began around 1907, with the rise of the more radical India House. Not coincidentally, India House was at the center of the burgeoning spy network's efforts, and various intelligence reports generated during this early period concentrate exclusively on India House and its membership. However, even the term 'spy network' to describe the organization of the various men, both British and Indian, that were involved in early attempts at intelligence gathering overstates the sophistication of the existing structure.

British officials hoped to gain more information about India House and its occupants. They took a scattershot approach in establishing the best method with which to gather information, securing the services of detectives from New Scotland Yard, former India Office employees, as well as Indian students themselves, in various spying assays.[234] The first of these preliminary attempts at surveillance occurred in May of 1907, when at least one member of Scotland Yard attended a meeting at India House and reported that "seditious" pamphlets had been

[234] Ibid., 56.

distributed.[235] A similar report was issued one year later: in September of 1908 a "confidential source" stated that the *Free Hindustan*, an American-based newspaper "devoted to the cause of Indian freedom" was distributed at the meeting.[236] In the more than yearlong gap between these two reports, there exists little to no evidence of any organized attempts at a sustained surveillance presence at India House. Nor do these reports suggest a comprehensive level of intelligence gathering, with the latter report only citing the name of the seditionist newspaper and general commentary as to the mood of those assembled for the meeting.[237]

Interestingly, neither report states the method of infiltration used in gaining access to India House during one of its meetings. The "confidential source" is never named, and it is unclear whether said individual represented a constant presence at India House or only one-time access. However, an earlier encounter between Shyamji Krishnavarma and one Detective O'Brien from Scotland Yard appears to provide some hint as to the utility of these infrequent ventures into India House. O'Brien, posing as a staff member of New York's *Gaelic American* newspaper[238] attended a meeting at India House in early 1907, where he met and spoke with Krishnavarma. O'Brien reportedly performed less than gracefully in his act as an Irish-American,

---

[235] "Internal Correspondence," 1907, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/994, British Library.
[236] "Subversive Speeches at India House."
[237] Ibid.
[238] *Gaelic American* was a prominent Irish-Catholic newspaper owned and operated by the Irish nationalist John Devoy. Devoy was a supporter of the Indian independence movement, and occasionally reprinted excerpts from the *Indian Sociologist* in the *Gaelic American*. Holding a position at his newspaper provided good 'cover' for an aspiring India House plant. R. V. Comerford, "Devoy, John (1842-1928)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

and Krishnavarma, fearing the worst, fled to Paris. Accordingly, Scotland Yard believed that it was because of O'Brien, not British pressure on the *Indian Sociologist*'s publishers, that Krishnavarma suddenly moved to Paris and never returned to Great Britain.[239]

Similar in nature to O'Brien's attempt at espionage was the work of retired Indian Civil Serviceman, William Coldstream. Coldstream had retired from active duty in 1895, and returned to London where he took up the cause of Indian students in Great Britain, first becoming a member of the National Indian Association and then serving as honorary secretary on the Indian Students Committee, a Christian organization founded in 1903 that sought to facilitate communication between newly arrived Indian students and interested British men and women.[240] Throughout the first decade of the twentieth century, Coldstream attempted to become more involved in the India Office's efforts to manage the Indian student population, offering policy advice, requesting files, and serving as one of the witnesses interviewed in the Lee-Warner Committee Report.[241] In order to further advance his role, Coldstream

---

[239] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 59, see note 24.
[240] "Indian Students Magazine Meeting," 1903, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/643 1680, British Library; "Request for Files on Indians."
[241] "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."; "Suggestions for Indian Students Bureau," 1909, Public and Judicial Department, IOR/L/PJ/6/947 2390, British Library. Coldstream suggested the Bureau of Information for Indian Students create a separate position to help those Indian students interested in engineering. He believed that many engineering students were traveling to universities in the United States, such as Purdue, which offered: "as many as twenty scholarships per year for Indian students seeking to study abroad," instead of to Great Britain, a situation that Coldstream believed was not "politically wise." The Bureau did in fact create a position entitled 'Special Adviser to Engineering Students' a few months later, which was filled by one J. M. Campion, who advised as many as sixty-nine students by 1910. Whether Campion's role was created as of a

notified the India Office whenever he was in touch with an Indian student, a role the India Office found particularly useful during the Harnam Singh and the Mutiny medal issue mentioned in Chapter I.

While investigating the Mutiny medal incident, it became clear to the India Office that Coldstream was a friend of Singh's family and had actually hosted him during his first few weeks in London. Having been made aware of Singh's run-in with the Cirencester College authorities, Coldstream contacted Singh and invited him to discuss the incident. Singh agreed and provided Coldstream with a detailed description of the events that had taken place; however, he may have been suspicious of Coldstream's true intentions as he avoided mentioning that the medal had originated with Savarkar, or that he had any association with India House whatsoever.[242] Singh's suspicions were warranted, as Coldstream produced a typed report of his encounter with Singh that became a permanent part of Singh's record, and made the recommendation that the India Office monitor Singh. Unsurprisingly, Singh would not attend a follow-up meeting that Coldstream had arranged that was to assist Singh in determining his options in response to Cirencester College's decision to suspend him.[243]

The Case of Kirtikar

---

direct result of Coldstream's prodding is unclear, but the link between the two exists. Additionally, it cannot be overlooked that Madan Lal Dhingra was an engineering student. The India Office may have sought to oversee other Indian engineering students specifically, in the event that Dhingra had converted any of his peers to his brand of extremism.

[242] "Indian Students at Cirencester College."

[243] Ibid.

Not all of the would-be spies that engaged India House and its members were as transparent in their ultimate ends as Detective O'Brien or Coldstream, as evidenced by the India Office's employment of Indian students for intelligence purposes. Richard Popplewell notes that William Lee-Warner had a personal informant, an Indian student named Fazlbhoy, although it does not appear as though he was able to infiltrate India House.[244] Another Indian student, named Kirtikar, was able to become an active member of India House and trusted confidante of Savarkar, all while sending reports back to the British on a regular basis.[245] Kirtikar arrived at India House in the months leading up to the assassination of Curzon-Wyllie, bags in hand, claiming to be from Maratha, and having grown up in the same circles as Savarkar.[246]

---

[244] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 58.

[245] Kirtikar's existence is confirmed by his presence in HK Koregaonkar's testimony, in which he stated that he introduced an Indian student 'Kirthikar' to Savarkar, only for it to be revealed later that he had been a spy all along. "Information About the Revolutionary Party in London from H. K. Koregaonkar of India House." Kirtikar also appears in Bakhle's account of surveillance during the period, but is conspicuously absent from Popplewell's thorough account, although Popplewell does mention an agent 'C' who appears to have infiltrated India House during the same months as Kirtikar. Why Popplewell includes only information about this mysterious 'C', while ignoring Kirtikar, is unclear. It is possible that they are the same individual under different aliases, although this presents its own question, as Popplewell was aware of Koregaonkar's testimony and thus, Kirtikar's name.

[246] This chapter's description of Kirtikar is a synthesis of the three accounts provided by Patmanapan, Keer, and Srivastava in their works. As there are no official documents describing Kirtikar's relationship with the British government, these three sources, which the authors claim are based on the personal documents of Savarkar and V. V. S. Aiyar, are the only sources available outside of Korengaokar's brief mention of Kirtikar in his testimony. I have attempted to focus on those aspects of the Kirtikar story that are consistent in all three accounts or that are in Korengaokar's account. Because of these issues, I am unable to supply certain details, for example, the actual date of Kirtikar's arrival at India House. The three accounts state that Kirtikar arrived sometime around March 1909, "the summer of 1909," and "the early summer of 1909," respectively. Importantly, all three do make clear that Kirtikar's arrival at India House was prior to the assassination. For brevity and clarity, subsequent citations will be from Patmanapan's account only; unless otherwise noted,

Kirtikar enrolled in courses to become a dental surgeon, and gained the confidence of another medical student at India House, traveling to the hospital with him on a daily basis.[247] Kirtikar eventually joined the Abhinav Bharat, attending meetings, and occasionally participating in political discussions. He even became romantically involved with India House's maid, often taking her out to dinner, and, as some India House members noted, distracting her from her work. Eventually, one of the members of India House came to visit Kirtikar at school, and was shocked to discover that Kirtikar, although enrolled, had only attended one week's worth of classes.[248] Entering his room, Aiyar discovered a half-written report, in English, that detailed that week's Abhinav Bharat meeting. Upon being confronted, Kirtikar admitted to being a spy, and agreed to write false reports for the British authorities in exchange for leniency.[249] Having turned Kirtikar, Aiyar and Savarkar elevated their counter-espionage by encouraging India House's cook, M. P. Tirumalachari to offer his services to Scotland Yard as a spy inside India House. Scotland Yard accepted, and Savarkar and Aiyar were able to feed Tirumalachari's keepers at Scotland Yard with information that corroborated the information that appeared in Kirtikar's reports.[250] With this method, India House was able to convince Scotland Yard that neither of their agents had been compromised.

Patmanapan's account speaks to the cleverness of its protagonist, V. V. S. Aiyar, and his ability to outwit Great Britain's brightest minds. Yet, it is unlikely that

---

the same details exist in Srivastava's and Keer's account. Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, 49; Patmanapan, *V.V.S. Aiyar*, 35; Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years*, 131.
[247] Patmanapan, *V.V.S. Aiyar*, 37.
[248] Ibid., 36-37.
[249] Ibid., 39.
[250] Ibid., 40-41.

the entire Kirtikar account occurred exactly as Patmanapan describes it. As Bakhle notes, Scotland Yard had British spies trailing all members of India House it deemed significant, a list that included those who were providing Scotland Yard with information.[251] All Indian students, regardless of their stated allegiances, were considered suspect, so it is unlikely that information received from an outsider, such as Tirumalachari, would have been given significant weight.

However, a more intriguing possibility for the Kirtikar story exists in the disorganization of the early British intelligence gathering and surveillance infrastructure. As noted by Patmanapan, Kirtikar arrived at India House directly from India, and had in fact, "been recruited in India as he was a Maratha and could gain Savarkar's confidence on that score. He was a Translator in the Bombay High Court and knew four or five Indian languages. He was to use this asset to follow discussions in Indian languages in India House, a thing that the British intelligence men could not do."[252] That Kirtikar received his assignment and had been recruited in India is a crucial piece of evidence in determining his place within the limited surveillance network of the time.

It should be noted the oft-referred to "Scotland Yard" was more specifically the Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police at Scotland Yard, a group that had been tasked generally with surveillance over "anarchists in London" –the political group into which the Indian student population had been pigeon-holed.[253] By the turn of the century, the Special Branch had only twenty-five detectives, all of whom were based

---

[251] Bakhle, "Savarkar, Sedition, and Surveillance," 60.
[252] Patmanapan, *V.V.S. Aiyar*, 35.
[253] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 57.

in, and operated from, Great Britain. The Special Branch's counter-part in India was the Department of Criminal Intelligence (DCI), an organization that worked with both the Home Department and local governments in order to collect and organize intelligence information on potentially criminal Indians, and if necessary pass this information on to authorities at Scotland Yard.[254] The relationship between the two organizations was limited, largely because of DCI concerns that the Special Branch was incompetent. The ineptitude of the Special Branch was well known even at the highest levels of the India Office, as Secretary of State Morley explained to Viceroy Minto:

> Experts from the Home Office and Scotland Yard pointed out that their men are wholly useless in the case of Indian conspirators. They have no sort of agency able to distinguish Hindu from Mahomedan, or Verma from Varma. The whole Indian field is absolutely unfamiliar, in language, habits, and everything else. In short, both you and I can easily understand that the ordinary square-toed English constable, even in the detective branch, would be rather clumsy in tracing your wily Asiatics.[255]

Considering the delicacy and specificity with which Kirtikar was selected as an operative, it appears quite unlikely that Scotland Yard had any involvement. Based on Morley's description, no one in the Special Branch would have understood the importance of Kirtikar's Marathi background, let alone know which individual in Bombay, with extensive knowledge of Indian languages, would have been amenable

---

[254] Ibid., 58.
[255] "Personal Correspondence of Secretary of State Morley," 1908, Private Manuscripts, IOR/MSS/EUR/D/1090/2, British Library.

to the call of the British empire. Kirtikar was then, an agent of the DCI, not Scotland Yard.

The DCI, according to Popplewell, was extremely guarded in their handling of the agent 'C', whom they had dispatched to India House at some point in the first half of 1909. Whether or not 'C' and Kirtikar are the same individual, the way in which the DCI handled 'C' is surely representative of the way they would have managed Kirtikar as well.[256] The DCI kept 'C''s existence a secret, fearing that the Special Branch would become resentful or blow 'C''s cover if it were alerted to the agent's presence in London. Because of this secrecy, the DCI was unable to share the information provided by 'C' in his dispatches, making the gathered intelligence largely useless. For example, the DCI received a report in June of 1909, which stated that India House members had accelerated their level of revolver practice at a shooting range on Tottenham Court Road.[257] This was of course the range that Madan Lal Dhingra frequented in the months leading up to the assassination. It appears as though the DCI, and only the DCI, received this detail about the shooting range. The information uncovered during the police investigation of the assassination about Dhingra's relationship with the Tottenham Court Road shooting range came as a complete surprise to Scotland Yard.[258] Shockingly, the intelligence gathered by the DCI in London was of an entirely different character than that gathered by Scotland

---

[256] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 67. Popplewell notes that in 1909 the DCI had dispatched agent 'C', as well as two other Indians to London. All three agents worked under the same guidelines, and one of these agents must have been Kirtikar.
[257] Ibid., 61.
[258] Ibid.

Yard. In this period prior to the assassination, Scotland Yard either did not recognize that it did not have the full story, or it simply did not care.

Although the historical record may make clear the disjunction between Scotland Yard and the DCI, Savarkar, Aiyar, and the other members of India House treated Kirtikar as the embodiment of a monolithic and all-knowing British surveillance network. With no reason to suspect that Scotland Yard was ignorant of Kirtikar's existence, Aiyar believed that the half-written report found in Kirtikar's bedroom was intended for Scotland Yard. Dispatching Tirumalachari to Scotland Yard in order to confirm the misinformation planted in Kirtikar's now-fabricated reports would have been a clever tactic, were in not for the fact that Kirtikar's reports were intended for the DCI in India, and were not communicated to Scotland Yard. The "complex web of surveillance whose span extended to Europe and India as well as England," that Bakhle argues ensnared Savarkar immediately upon his arrival in London, did not yet exist.[259]

Instead of a 'complex web' of sophisticated intelligence operatives, surveillance of the Indian student population in London was undertaken by what can only be called a disorganized pseudo-network of limited success. The Special Branch had no agents within India House and did not communicate with the one agency that did. The DCI, in turn, was in touch only with its own agents and unwilling to share sensitive intelligence information with the Special Branch. Additionally, India House members were not passive in their response to the presence of spies in their midst. The lack of subtlety in the Special Branch's surveillance methods, which included

[259] Bakhle, "Savarkar, Sedition, and Surveillance," 60.

such blatant shadowing that many Indian students were "compelled to leave their lodgings" in order to avoid detectives, promoted enough suspicion amongst India House members that Kirtikar's true background was eventually discovered.[260] The DCI continued to receive reports from agent 'C' until well into 1909, and never recognized that one of their agents had been compromised.

The seemingly haphazard method with which the India Office, Scotland Yard, and the DCI, interacted, and shared information should not surprise us. As we have seen, the India Office had already committed to the idea that the best way to monitor and contain the Indian student population was through the voluntary Bureau of Information for Indian Students. India House itself was not the bastion of radicalism that many in the British Press believed it to be, and until the assassination, it was only Savarkar's rhetoric that was violent. Scotland Yard's limited vision was trained on the seditious nature of both the *Indian Sociologist* and the speeches given during the weekly meetings of India House. With the assassination, this disjointed approach would end. The DCI and the Special Branch would come together in order to put an end to the sudden threat that India House appeared to represent. However, instead of pursuing Savarkar and his followers by focusing on the violence they espoused, it would be sedition and sedition law that would allow the British to swiftly strike down Indian student radicalism in Great Britain.

An Increasing Cohesiveness, July 1909-February 1910

---

[260] "Shadowing of Indian Students by Scotland Yard Detectives."

The assassination of William Curzon-Wyllie in July of 1909 sent shockwaves through the British Empire. The murder was not only unsettling for citizens of London, faced with political assassination in the name of India for the first time on British soil, but also deeply embarrassing for Scotland Yard and the British intelligence community.[261] As more details of Dhingra's history in London were revealed, many wondered how an Indian student with a firearms license and consistent presence at a firing range could have gone unnoticed and unremarked for so long. In the days following the assassination, both Secretary of State Morley and Viceroy Minto had strong words for Scotland Yard and Sir Edward Henry, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police: "I much fear that Henry has no real grasp of a situation that has caught him entirely by surprise…On the whole the police frame of mind strikes me as extremely casual; either making needless fuss or else not making serious fuss enough."[262] The Special Branch attempted to assuage these immediate concerns by dramatically increasing the amount of men tasked with surveillance duties. Within two weeks of the murder, Morley had his own personal retinue of three Special Branch detectives following him to and from work at the India Office.[263] Additional agents were posted outside the India Office, meant to shadow any Indian students that arrived and appeared suspicious. As T. W. Arnold noted, these agents apparently

---

[261] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 61.
[262] "Personal Correspondence of Secretary of State Morley," July 1909, Private Manuscripts, IOR/MSS/EUR/D/573/21, British Library.
[263] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 62.

made their presence known to Indian students, who were quick to dismiss the beneficence of the Bureau once it had been tied to Scotland Yard's detectives.[264]

The introduction of protective services for the India Office's most senior members and increased student surveillance were clearly only superficial changes that caused more harm than good for both innocent Indian students and the India Office's reputation. As pressure mounted for more significant and meaningful movement against India House and the Indian student population, Scotland Yard finally recognized that it was unable to adequately manage Indian intelligence operations on its own. After discussions with the India Office, the decision was made to ask the DCI for assistance, and Scotland Yard requested that two DCI agents be sent to London who could participate in intelligence gathering operations.[265] Unknown to Scotland Yard, the DCI already had three agents secretly installed in London; however instead of revealing their presence, the DCI instead chose to dispatch a new agents to London in compliance with the Yard's request. The decision was made to send the Special Branch an agent similar in nature to 'C', but one who would operate with both the knowledge of Scotland Yard and the DCI, sharing information between the two. This agent, Sajani Ranan Banerjea, known by his alias Suksagar Dutt, would operate in London inconspicuously for more than four years, and prove to be a vital asset for both Scotland Yard and the DCI.[266]

---

[264] "Indian Students in England; Appointment of Special Committee to Deal with Secretary of State's Organisation; Creation of Appointment of Secretary for Indian Students."
[265] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 64.
[266] "Sanjani Ranan Banerjea," 1909-1913, Political and Secret Department, IOR/L/PS/8/67, British Library.

Dutt left for London in August 1909, and enrolled in two courses, one the traditional law course, and the other a science course, which he selected because it "is the one that appeals to Indians with extremist tendencies."[267] Dutt's arrival coincided with the closure of India House and disbandment of the Free India Society. The increasingly aggressive surveillance of Scotland Yard, which was perhaps emboldened by the successful prosecution of Dhingra, as well as the newfound cooperation with the DCI, led to an air of ill feelings amongst India House members. For those in India House, the overt presence of Special Branch detectives may have been no more than a nuisance, but it appeared to have sowed seeds of doubt in the minds of many members, who began to accuse others of being British informants.[268] This infighting led to a rapid decline in the attendance of India House's meetings, and the all but abandonment of the house as a lodging, with not even Savarkar retaining his rooms there.[269] Dutt's presence in London gave Scotland Yard confidence that it would face little in the way of protest if it were to attempt to shut India House down, a decision it made in the fall of 1909. With India House closed, its members dispersed. Most notably, Savarkar moved to a room "over a small and extremely dirty

---

[267] Ibid. Dutt's decision to enter a science course is consistent with Coldwell's comment regarding Indian student enrollment in engineering courses, as well as Harold Gould's point, discussed in more detail below, that Indian student radicals in the United States were more commonly enrolled in engineering and technical courses than the law. Although the majority of India House members were law and medical students, it appears as though there was a trend towards a more diverse enrollment. These courses may have been of greater interest to radical Indian students because of their practical application as it related to anarchist activities such as bomb-making. Engineering and mining courses may have also been of particular interest for radical students because these courses provided training for careers necessary to the operation of an independent India, existing without British support.
[268] Owen, *The British Left and India*, 74.
[269] Ibid., 73. Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years*, 193.

Indian restaurant in Red Lion Passage," which he shared with another former resident of India House named, coincidentally, Sukh Sagar Dutt.[270] Dutt's lengthy, and apparently successful, operation is indicative of the growing efficacy of the British intelligence community. India House's closure led to a vacuum in organizational structure for Indian student radicals in London, allowing agents like Dutt to have a greater handle and influence on the radical elements that remained.

Savarkar's Arrest, March 1910-February 1911

In response to Scotland Yard's request for assistance the DCI's immediate decision was to dispatch Dutt and open up a more transparent line of communication between itself and Scotland Yard. But the DCI also took a more radical step. Another agent, sent to London two months after Dutt, would not be a part of Scotland Yard, but the head of a new "Indian Secret Service," an organization set to take the lead in all

[270] Garnett, *The Golden Echo*, 148. The appearance of another Indian student named Sukh Sagar Dutt during the same time frame and running in the same circles is one that I continue to find incredibly suspicious. However, the Sukh Sagar Dutt who lived with Savarkar after India House's closure had been present in London prior to 1909, while Suksagar Dutt, the spy, only arrived in London in September of 1909. Additional details, such as the fact that Sukh Sagar Dutt studied medicine while Suksagar Dutt studied law and science, also makes it unlikely that these two Dutts are one and the same. In seeking to clarify this question, I was in touch with Dr. Antonia Moon, an archivist of the India Office Records at the British Library. She also examined the records and agreed that the two Dutts are not the same. Interestingly though, Arun Bose, appears to have noted the same coincidence and attempted to contact Suksagar Dutt, who responded in a letter. Unfortunately, Dutt shed no light on his past involvement with the DCI or Scotland Yard. Further complicating the issue of the two Dutt's, neither Bakhle nor Popplewell mention Suksagar Dutt by name, a surprising omission considering their focus. Thus the mystery remains. "Sanjani Ranan Banerjea."; A. Bose, *Indian Revolutionaries Abroad, 1905-1927: Select Documents* (Northern Book Centre, 2002).

intelligence operations throughout Britain and the rest of the Continent.[271] The Indian Secret Service would act as a facilitator between the DCI and Scotland Yard. It would also have the power to pursue independent intelligence leads while receiving support from both the DCI and Scotland Yard.

The DCI's decision to send a second agent to create this secret service agency was motivated by their growing understanding that, with the closure of India House, other countries in Europe, specifically France, had become attractive as safe havens for Indian student radicals. Prior to the assassination, cooperation between the British and French governments regarding the extradition of perceived Indian criminals was nonexistent. This was why Krishnavarma, as early as 1907, had felt comfortable fleeing to Paris, and was able to remain there, unmolested, until well into the next decade.[272] The British were seemingly willing to tolerate Krishnavarma's escape; however, by late 1909, the British were concerned that those that they felt were responsible for motivating Madan Lal Dhingra would travel to France and, in essence, become untouchable. John Arnold Wallinger, the man selected to head the Indian Secret Service, instantly began working on increasing cooperation between Scotland Yard, the DCI, and the Paris police force.[273] This decision was fortuitous as Savarkar, who had finally been fingered as the most important piece of the India House network

---

[271] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 68-69.
[272] Shah, "The Indian Sociologist, 1905-14, 1920-22," 3437.
[273] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 70. Prior to being appointed chief of the Indian Secret Service, Wallinger was the superintendent of the Bombay Police. According to Popplewell he was considered an excellent choice for his new role because of his extensive knowledge of Indian languages and deep ties with Gujarati merchants, a group that had strong connections throughout Europe. Interestingly, Popplewell also notes that Wallinger was considered "socially acceptable" by senior officials at Scotland Yard and in the Paris police.

by both the DCI and Scotland Yard, recognized that a newly organized British intelligence machine was on his trail and quickly made the decision to sail for Paris.[274]

The British Government reacted to Savarkar's departure immediately, issuing a warrant for his arrest under the Fugitive Offenders Act and charging him with five crimes, the most important of which was: "delivering seditious speeches in India from January 1906 and in London from 1908-1909."[275] Thanks to Wallinger's intervention, the British now had at least the partial cooperation of the Paris police, and Savarkar was pressured to return to London, where Special Branch detectives immediately arrested him.[276] By March 20th, 1910, Savarkar was firmly installed in Brixton jail, and aside from a single, unsuccessful escape attempt, he would constantly remain in British custody for the next fourteen years. The disorganization that pervaded the British intelligence community at the beginning of the twentieth century was no longer evident. In less than six months the British authorities closed down India

---

[274] Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years*, 203.
[275] Ibid., 208. The other four charges involved arms distribution and conspiracy. As we will see it was the charge of sedition that was most important because it placed Savarkar's criminality in India as opposed to London.
[276] Bakhle, "Savarkar, Sedition, and Surveillance," 65. It is difficult to say why Savarkar so quickly returned to London knowing full well that he would be arrested. Although the Paris police may have pressured Savarkar to return, he could have attempted to remain in Paris and forced the Paris police's hand, as it would have been difficulty for them to extradite Savarkar to either London or India. Savarkar's decision to return to London is variously described as 'rash' or 'honorable' depending on the perspective of the author. Srivastava argues that Savarkar believed that the British would not extradite him to India, because, as Savarkar knew as a law student, there was no precedent for extradition based only on the charge of political radicalism. Great Britain had a reputation of harboring political criminals such as, "Orsini the Italian revolutionist who shot at Napoleon III, as well as a host of Russian, French, Chinese and other revolutionists." This was clearly a miscalculation on Savarkar's part, who misunderstood his position as a domestic terrorist, not a foreigner. Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years*, 212.

House, disbanded the Free India Society and the Abhinav Bharat, solidified a relationship with the Paris police, and most importantly, arrested Savarkar.

The rapidity with which these events occurred was made possible by the coordination present within and throughout the DCI, Scotland Yard, and the new Indian Secret Service. After India House was closed, one of its more senior members H. K. Koregaonkar returned to India and was arrested by the DCI in Bombay in December of 1909.[277] Koregaonkar's arrest, and his subsequent testimony, was seen as critical in building a case against Savarkar. The Director of Criminal Intelligence, C. J. Stevenson-Moore commented after the arrest that, "[Koregaonkar's] evidence would be that of an accomplice but there is a lot of corrorboration [sic] and I think I shall now be able to induce the Bombay Government to take action against V. D. Savarkar, a matter which is still under their consideration."[278] Koregaonkar pointed to Savarkar, not Krishnavarma, as the leader of India House, a belief that had still not gained widespread acceptance amongst British officials until months after Koregaonkar's arrest. Additionally, Koregaonkar provided significant details about Savarkar's pamphlets and writings, which had been smuggled into India from 1907 to 1909. Scotland Yard had paid considerable attention to these pamphlets, with titles such as 'Oh Martyrs!' and 'Bande Materam', which, like Savarkar's longer work on the Mutiny-Rebellion of 1857, consisted largely of applauding the efforts of those who undertook violent resistance against British rule. With Koregaonkar's testimony

---

[277] "Information About the Revolutionary Party in London from H. K. Koregaonkar of India House." Koregaonkar's testimony has been used throughout these chapters. His account remains as the most thorough and complete description of India House's inner workings during Savarkar's time as its leader.
[278] Ibid.

in hand, Scotland Yard was able to link Savarkar directly to the publication of these pamphlets.[279]

As noted above, the most serious of Savarkar's charges specifically mentioned seditious activities that he undertook in 1906, prior to his arrival in London. Scotland Yard had included this date specifically, because—although their case against Savarkar had been strengthened by the DCI's arrest of Koregaonkar—there remained a significant issue impeding prosecution: sedition law, under which Savarkar's writings fell, was largely unenforceable in Great Britain.[280] In India, however, sedition law was still widely used and convictions were common. As Bakhle explains, "since colonial sedition law made the boundary between non-violent words and violent actions porous, and made no distinctions between generalized resentment and anti-colonial politics, it could spread itself far and wide."[281] Trying Savarkar under colonial sedition law was a superior aim because it meant that Savarkar's pamphlets were sufficient for a successful prosecution. Yes, the DCI had uncovered a link between Savarkar's India House and the bombing in Alipore, and yes there appeared to be a relationship between Savarkar and Dhingra, but British Officials considered these connections tenuous. By transporting Savarkar to India, the nature of the law

---

[279] Ibid.
[280] For a more complete description of the use of sedition law in British criminal history see: Michael Lobban, "From Seditious Libel to Unlawful Assembly: Peterloo and the Changing Face of Political Crime C1770-1820," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 10, no. 3 (1990). In short, by the middle of the nineteenth century, juries appeared to be unwilling to convict individuals on a charge of 'seditious libel', particularly at a time when public opinion began to turn in favor of the belief that all personal political views, regardless of whether or not they conformed to current government policy, were acceptable.
[281] Bakhle, "Savarkar, Sedition, and Surveillance," 70.

made it likely that even these incomplete links would be enough to lead to Savarkar's conviction.[282]

On July 1st, 1910, exactly one year after Madan Lal Dhingra's assassination of Curzon-Wyllie, Savarkar was finally headed home, bound for India on a P&O ocean liner. This homecoming was not to be a happy one though, as Savarkar remained a political prisoner successfully extradited to India to face a Special Tribunal in Bombay. His companions for his voyage would be ten police officers, a Scotland Yard detective, and the assistant superintendent of the Bombay police.[283] The ship, the *S.S. Morea*, began its journey with no issues, but on the sixth day, off the coast of France, it was faced with mechanical difficulties and was forced to dock in Marseilles.[284] The ship remained in Marseilles for two days, during which Savarkar hatched the outlines of an escape plan. After asking to go to the bathroom, Savarkar shimmied through one of the ship's portholes and dove straight into the ocean, swam through the Marseilles Harbor and clambered onto dry, French soil.[285]

Exactly what occurred once Savarkar reached the shore remains unclear, both Keer and Patamanapan present different details, while Srivastava presents multiple sources, each of which describes events on the Marseilles shore in different ways.[286] However, significant details remain constant in each account, the most important of

---

[282] Ibid., 71.
[283] Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years*, 241. Here we again see the growing coordination and sophistication of the British intelligence community, with members of the DCI, Scotland Yard, and Wallinger's former assistant all involved in Savarkar's transportation.
[284] Ibid., 242.
[285] Ibid., 249.
[286] Keer, *Veer Savarkar*, 82-83; Patmanapan, *V.V.S. Aiyar*, 243-49; Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years*, 87-88.

which is that Savarkar made it to French territory, where he made contact with a French police officer and requested political asylum. The French officer either refused Savarkar's request or simply did not understand Savarkar's broken French, and either did nothing or helped to detain Savarkar until the British officers recaptured him and brought him back to the ship.[287]

Firmly back onboard the *Morea*, Savarkar spent the remainder of the trip under intense surveillance, as his police detail did not allow him to leave their sight. Having finally arrived in Bombay, the Special Tribunal largely proceeded as the British authorities had planned. In December 1910, Savarkar was convicted under section 121A and section 124A of the Indian Penal Code and sentenced to transportation for life at the Cellular Jail in the Andaman Islands.[288]

However, while British officials in Bombay continued Savarkar's trial as if all was normal, the rest of the world was in an uproar over Savarkar's ignored plea for political asylum during his momentary escape in France. The French, belatedly, had asked for Savarkar to be returned to France on the grounds of International Law and Savarkar's right to request asylum once he was on French soil.[289] The incident was brought to The Hague, where Savarkar, having already been convicted at this point by the Special Tribunal, was down to his last hope before he was transferred to the

---

[287] Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years*, 250.
[288] Bakhle, "Savarkar, Sedition, and Surveillance," 66; Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years*, 276. Interestingly, Bakhle mentions only Savarkar's conviction under 124A, which is concerned specifically with sedition, whereas Srivastava mentions only Savarkar's conviction under 121A, which is the charge of conspiracy. Bakhle's focus is of course on sedition law, while Srivastava argues that Savarkar was unjustly convicted, and the charge of conspiracy was much more equivocal than that of sedition.
[289] Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years*, 256.

Andaman Islands. However, The Hague would not come to his rescue, ruling in favor of the British government:

> While admitting that an irregularity was committed by the arrest of Savarkar and by his being handed over to the Police, there is no rule of international law imposing, in circumstances such as those which have been set out above, any obligations of the power which has in its custody a prisoner to restore him because of a mistake committed by a foreign agent who delivered him up to that power.[290]

The arbitral tribunal's decision was based largely on the presence of a series of communications between the French police and Scotland Yard in the days prior to Savarkar's departure. Scotland Yard had notified the French of the impending journey, and asked for French assistance in case of an escape attempt. The French agreed, having already established a strong relationship with Wallinger and the still relatively new Indian Secret Service. The arbitral tribunal believed that because the French had agreed to help in the event of Savarkar's escape, political asylum on French soil could not be granted.[291]

After Savarkar's Arrest

It was the increasingly sophisticated structure of the British intelligence organization that led to Savarkar's downfall. Every aspect of the Savarkar's arrest and prosecution would have been impossible had it not been for the integrated efforts of the DCI,

---

[290] The Permanent Court of Abritration, The Arbitral Tribunal, The Hague, *The Savarkar Case*, February 24, 1911. Accessed via *http://*untreaty.un.org/cod/riaa/cases/vol_XI/243-255.pdf on April 7, 2012.
[291] Srivastava, *Five Stormy Years*, 289.

Scotland Yard, and Wallinger's Indian Secret Service. Wallinger had established a strong enough connection with the French that they were willing to help in the event of Savarkar's escape, while Scotland Yard had had the foresight to contact the French and secure a promise of cooperation. Wallinger's position had not existed prior to the assassination of Curzon-Wyllie, and Scotland Yard had not considered the members of India House serious threats to British safety and therefore may not have even thought to reach out to another government for assistance. Madan Lal Dhingra's violent act had been the catalyst necessary to lead the British to create a "complex web of surveillance." The pseudo-network of just three years prior had been replaced by a highly effective intelligence operation.

The Indian Secret Service would continue to grow throughout the second decade of the twentieth century. Wallinger established intelligence agents at Edinburgh, Oxford and Cambridge, and at least one agent within what remained of the radical base in Paris.[292] Of course, operations still did not always go exactly as planned, for example one of the agents dispatched to Oxford, named Chamder, was recalled to London after the India Office received the following report:

> Chamder is doing much harm. He seems to be an incompetent person of no social standing and his presence is greatly resented by his countrymen. As to his efficiency as an Intelligence agent-he began by announcing his mission, in private "confidential" conversation to several of the Indian students. They

[292] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 69.

> would have ducked him in the river if one of the most influential of them had not prevented it.[293]

However, the majority of agents did appear to succeed as operatives, and by 1914, the Indian Secret Service was seen as a widely successful, and crucially important, aspect of British intelligence operations. Wallinger was made the Director of Indian Intelligence at the outbreak of World War I, and his operations continued throughout Britain and the rest of Europe, most notably in Switzerland.[294]

Although Savarkar's fate was sealed, the British government did not pursue other known members of India House. Those who worried that their ties to the organization would lead to professional failure found their fears baseless. Even Shyamji Krishnavarma was able to continue operating in Paris, and the *Indian Sociologist* continued to be printed.[295]

Conclusion

With the situation in Great Britain seemingly under control, the attention of British intelligence turned towards North America, where a small group of Indians, both in Northern California and Western Canada, had begun preaching anti-imperialism. These Indians, the majority of whom were students, shared many characteristics with their India House counterparts: they were upper-middle class or upper class, nearly all

---

[293] Chamder was dispatched to Oxford in 1916, and although he appears to have had no relation to the agent Sukh Sagar Dutt, this letter describing Chamder's failure as an intelligence operative was located within the same file. "Sanjani Ranan Banerjea."
[294] Popplewell, "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries," 70-71.
[295] Shah, "The Indian Sociologist, 1905-14, 1920-22," 3437.

men, and from major urban centers.[296] These students even formed an organization in 1910, called the Nalanda House, which was located on the University of California-Berkeley campus, taking obvious cues from India House.[297] The British government was aware of the growing radicalism on the west coast of North America and dispatched an agent, William Hopkinson, to infiltrate the radical Sikh community in Vancouver. Like Wallinger, Hopkinson had been a member of the police force in India, was an expert on Indian languages, and was therefore considered an ideal individual to head an intelligence operation.[298] In 1913, Hopkinson began a series of communications with Wallinger's intelligence organization, in an effort to organize the extradition of Har Dayal to India from the United States, to stand trial for sedition. Dayal was, like Savarkar, an Indian-born, London-education radical leader who had been able to propagate his anti-imperial politics outside of India.[299]

As we can see, the end of India House and the successful suppression of the radical movement in Great Britain did not mean the end of radical Indian politics elsewhere. The parallels between the Indian independence movement in North America and in Great Britain are many. The similarities indicate the systemic vulnerabilities of the British government to anti-imperial politics, and the strident desires of Indians to end the British Raj by any means necessary.

---

[296] Harold Gould, *Sikhs, Swamis, Students, and Spies: The India Lobby in the United States, 1900-1946* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006), 143. Although the groups were similar in many ways, it is important to note that the students traveling to the United States were mainly enrolling in agricultural, engineering, and mining courses, as opposed to medicine and the law.
[297] Ibid., 144.
[298] Ibid., 135. See Gould for a complete description of the anti-imperial movement in North America, and the British response.
[299] Hugh Johnston, "The Surveillance of Indian Nationalists in North America, 1908-1918," *BC Studies* 78(1988): 16.

Conclusion

Epilogue

By 1912 all of the stated goals of the India Office in dealing with the Indian student question had been resolved. India House no longer existed and the vacancy it left had not been replaced by another student organization, Savarkar was safely in jail, and the remainder of the Indian student population in Great Britain had been infiltrated by a growing number of surveillance operatives who were able to contain any rumblings of radicalism.

After coming up for review in 1911, the Bureau of Information for Indian Students was closed and replaced by the Indian Students Department. T. W. Arnold, the Bureau's champion of reform, was also replaced, although he remained with the

India Office until 1920.[300] Arnold's vision for the Bureau appears to have been taken up by the Indian Students Department; with greater emphasis placed on facilitating strong academic and social environments for Indian students at specific universities. With the British intelligence mechanism at work, less pressure was placed on extraneous organizations to gather information about Indian students.

Meanwhile, the Indian student population continued to grow, with well over 1,700 Indians studying throughout Britain by 1913, nearly double the amount present at the time of the assassination.[301] For Indian students the benefits of an education in Britain far outweighed its costs. The increased surveillance and overt prejudice faced by Indian students during the second decade of the twentieth century led to disillusionment with the mystique of Great Britain for many who had made the journey. Many completed their course of study and anxiously returned home hardened against the British.[302] The British may have been successful in quelling militant radicalism, but discontent with the Raj remained.

The Nature of Empire

But what does the relationship between the Indian student population and the British bureaucracy tell us about the nature of the Empire? Most significantly, it exposes that the Empire was highly dynamic and integrated. The main concern for the India Office was the effect that Indian students in Great Britain would have on their peers in India

---

[300] H. A. R. Gibb, "Sir Thomas Walker Arnold (1864-1930)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Brian Harrison, HCG Matthew, and Lawrence Goldman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[301] Shompa Lahiri, *Indians in Britain : Anglo-Indian Encounters, Race and Identity, 1880-1930* (London; Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2000), 5.
[302] Ibid., 207.

once they returned home. The British understood that the Empire could not be separated into distinct locations because the events that occurred in Great Britain or India could easily influence the other.

Both Indian students and many India Office officials carried with them an identity as an imperial citizen. In much the same way that T. W. Arnold and William Lee-Warner were influenced by their careers in India, Indian students were shaped by their academic careers in Great Britain. The policy of the India Office, particularly as it pertains to the Bureau, not only shaped the Empire, but was shaped by it. India House too was not only the domain of extreme Indian nationals, but housed individuals such as T. S. S. Rajan who were willing to discuss radicalism, but unable to take up violent action while in Great Britain because they understood that their actions in London could not be separated from their lives in the rest of the Empire.

The growth of the imperial intelligence gathering operations also signal a growing comprehension on the part of the British that the Empire could not be governed as distinct spheres. Although it required Dhingra's assassination of Curzon-Wyllie to catalyze an increasingly cohesive criminal intelligence organization, the maneuverings of Scotland Yard, the DCI, and the Indian Secret Service, reveal an Empire that was rapidly integrated. From the summer of 1909 forward, Savarkar was unable to escape the seeming ubiquity of imperial agents, whether in London, Paris, Marseilles, or India. The coordination required in Savarkar's arrest and transportation indicate that Curzon-Wyllie's assassination had helped transform the Empire from the metropole and discrete places of Empire, into a unified whole.

However, a more unified Empire was not necessarily imbued with a more cohesive political policy. The history of the Bureau represents the complex nature of the bureaucratic structures of the Empire. The motivation behind the Bureau's formation was clear; to create an agency that would collect information about India students in Great Britain in such a way as to not increase the growing tension between the Indian student population and the India Office. Yet, in practice, the Bureau became an advocate for Indian students in Great Britain, and focused less and less on information gathering. The individual actors, in this case William Lee-Warner and T. W. Arnold, were unwilling to follow blindly down the path laid out for them by the larger bureaucracy of the India Office.

Here we see that the desires of the Empire did not always coalesce with the goals and aims of its citizens. The Empire inevitably discovered a way to collect the intelligence on Indian students that it had so desperately wanted, not in the form of the Bureau, but through intelligence organizations. The Bureau, created and run by two imperial careerists with a benevolent eye towards Indian students, was replaced by police offers and spies whose goal of making arrests neatly with the Empire's larger goal of collecting intelligence.

The Bureau's 'failure' at its stated aim speaks to a larger systemic issue of the Empire's knowledge gathering schemes. The Empire's persistent attempts at subtle intelligence gathering were unworkable. As Radhika Singha explains in her study of the identification documents of British-India, the Indian population met all forms of required identification, even those that were not strictly enforced, such as the

seemingly benign certificates of identity, with distrust and anger.[303] The actions of men like Coldstream, who attempted to assist the British in their intelligence gathering operations to be met with suspicion from students such as Harnam Singh further indicates that the Empire was unable to learn more about its citizens without provoking suspicion or resentment. The Empire's desire to control and categorize its subjects would never find willing participants.

Finally, in India House's fall, we can see the end of the militant Indian independence movement. The unanimous outcry from Indian political leaders in the wake of Curzon-Wyllie's assassination included both Extremists and Moderates, those who had previously advocated violence and those who had always preached peace. India House had been plagued by infighting, and Savarkar's arrest was the last blow to what had already become an organization with little left. Although the British authorities dealt the final blow to the Abhinav Bharat, the Free India Society, and India House, the anti-imperial movement had already begun to turn towards Gandhian non-violence. The publication of *Hind Swaraj* in late 1909 signaled a new beginning for Indian independence, not focused the violent destruction of the British, but on self-reliance and passive resistance.

Postscript

---

[303] Radhika Singha, "A 'Proper Passport' for the Colony: Border Crossing in British India, 1882-1920"," *Colloquium Series, Program in Agrarian Studies*(2006), http://www.yale.edu/agrarianstudies/papers/16passportill.pdf accessed October 20, 2011; Radhika Singha, "Settle, Mobilize, Verify: Identification Practices in Colonial India," *Studies in History* 16, no. 2 (2000).

I hope that I have shed some light on the most active period of the Indian student population in Great Britain. The previously untold histories of the Bureau and the certificate of identity scheme represent only the tip of the iceberg of the stories present in the India Office Records. Although I have focused on Savarkar and Krishnavarma as the two major leaders of India House, there exist many and more Indians with equally fascinating stories. Further research into Madan Lal Dhingra and his complex decision also remains vital. In the end we see the assassination and the Empire, and all of the players in between.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Manuscripts and Records

India Office Records, The British Library, London (IOR):

Legal Adviser's Records: L/L Series

Military Department: L/MIL/7 Series

Public and Judicial Department: L/PJ/6 Series

Political and Secret Department: L/PS/8 Series

Political Department: Indian States: R/R Series

Private Manuscripts: MSS EUR Series

Newspapers

Chicago Daily Tribune

The Free Hindustan

The Hartford Courant

The Indian Sociologist

Los Angeles Times

The New York Times

The Washington Post

Official Proceedings

"Proceedings of the Central Criminal Court, 19th July 1909; the Trial of Madar Lal Dhingra." Accessed via Old Bailey Proceedings Online, http://www.oldbaileyonline.org.

The Permanent Court of Arbitration, The Arbitral Tribunal, The Hague. "The Savarkar Case," February 24, 1911, http://www.*untreaty.un.org/cod/riaa/cases/vol_XI/243-255.pdf.*

Books, Pamphlets, and Articles

'A Mahratta.' "Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu?; or Essentials of Hindutva." 1922.

Arnold, Thomas Walker. *The Preaching of Islam. A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith*. London: A. Constable & Co., 1896.

Chandler, Edmund. *Siri Ram, Revolutionist: A Transcript from Life, 1907-1910*. Second ed. London: Constable & Company, LTD., 1914.

Fleet, J. F. "Sir William Lee-Warner, G.C.S.I." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1914): 517-20.

Gandhi, Mahatma. *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi Online*. New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India.

Gandhi, Mahatma, and Mahadev Desai. *An Autobiography, or, the Story of My Experiments with Truth*. Ahmedabad, India: Navajivan Publishing House, 1996.

Garnett, David. *The Golden Echo*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1954.

Hirschfeld, H. "The Preaching of Islam: A History of the Propagation of the Muslim Faith by T. W. Arnold." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, no. July (1899): 682-85.

Lee-Warner, William. *The Citizen of India*. London: Macmillan, 1907.

Lee-Warner, William. *The Native States of India*, rev. ed. New York: AMS Press, 1971.

"The Murders at the Imperial Institute." *The British Medical Journal* 2, no. 2532 (1909): 99.

The National Indian Association. *Handbook of Information for Indian Students Relating to University and Professional Studies, Etc., in the United Kingdom*. London: J.S. Phillips, 1909.

Penny, F. E. F. *The Unlucky Mark*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1909.

Savarkar, Vinayak Damodar. *A Guide to Indian Revolutionary Movement. Volume V*. Poona: Maharashtra Prantik Hindu, 1963.

Wylie, I. A. R. *The Daughter of Brahma*. London: Mills & Boon, LTD., 1912.

Secondary Sources

Books and Articles

Bakhle, Janaki. "Savarkar (1883-1966), Sedition and Surveillance: The Rule of Law in a Colonial Situtation." *Social History* 35, no. 1 (2010): 51-75.

Bayly, C. A. *Empire and Information : Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Bose, A. *Indian Revolutionaries Abroad, 1905-1927: Select Documents*: Northern Book Centre, 2002.

Bose, Nemai Sadhan. *The Indian Awakening and Bengal*. Calcutta: Sri Gouranga Press, 1969.

Brown, F.H. "Sir William-Lee Warner (1846-1914)." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by Brian Harrison, HCG Matthew and Lawrence Goldman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Choudhury, D. K. Lahiri. "Sinews of Panic and the Nerves of Empire." *Modern Asian Studies* 38, no. 04 (2004): 965-1002.

Comerford, R. V. "Devoy, John (1842-1928)." In *Ocford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by Lawrence Goldman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Danius, Sara, Stefan Jonsson, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. "An Interview with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak." *boundary 2* 20, no. 2 (1993): 24-50.

Dasgupta, Atis. "Centenary of Martyrdom of Four Militant Nationalists of Bengal." *Social Scientist* 38, no. 1/2 (2010): 77-87.

Dhingra, Leena. "Dhingra, Madan Lal (1883-1909)." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by HCG Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Gibb, H. A. R. "Sir Thomas Walker Arnold (1864-1930)." In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, edited by Brian Harrison, HCG Matthew and Lawrence Goldman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Gould, Harold. *Sikhs, Swamis, Students, and Spies: The India Lobby in the United States, 1900-1946*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006.

Johnston, Hugh. "The Surveillance of Indian Nationalists in North America, 1908-1918." *BC Studies* 78 (1988): 3-27.

Kaminsky, Arnold P. *The India Office, 1880-1910*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1986.

Keer, Dhananjay. *Veer Savarkar*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1966.

Koss, Stephen E. *John Morley at the India Office, 1905-1910*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969.

Krishna, Gopal. "The Development of the Indian National Congress as a Mass Organization, 1918-1923." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 25, no. 3 (1966): 413-30.

Lahiri, Shompa. *Indians in Britain : Anglo-Indian Encounters, Race and Identity, 1880-1930*. London; Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2000.

Lambert, David, and Alan Lester. *Colonial Lives across the British Empire : Imperial Careering in the Long Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Lobban, Michael. "From Seditious Libel to Unlawful Assembly: Peterloo and the Changing Face of Political Crime C1770-1820." *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 10, no. 3 (1990): 307-52.

Masselos, Jim. *Indian Nationalism: A History*. Elgin, IL: New Dawn Press, 2005.

McLane, John R. *Indian Nationalism and the Early Congress*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977.

Owen, Nicholas. *The British Left and India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Parel, Anthony, ed. *Hind Swaraj*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Patmanapan, Ra A. *V.V.S. Aiyar*. New Delhi: National Book Trust, India, 1980.

Popplewell, Richard. "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries in Great Britain and on the Continent, 1905-1914." *Intelligence and National Security* 3, no. 1 (1988): 56-76.

Shah, A. M. "The Indian Sociologist, 1905-14, 1920-22." *Economic and Political Weekly* 41, no. 31 (2006): 3435-39.

Sharma, Jyotirmaya. "History as Revenge and Retaliation: Rereading Savarkar's 'the War of Independence of 1857'." *Economic and Political Weekly* 42, no. 19 (2007): 1717-19.

Singha, Radhika. "A 'Proper Passport' for the Colony: Border Crossing in British India, 1882-1920"." *Colloquium Series, Program in Agrarian Studies* (2006), http://www.yale.edu/agrarianstudies/papers/16passportill.pdf accessed October 20, 2011.

Singha, Radhika. "Settle, Mobilize, Verify: Identification Practices in Colonial India." *Studies in History* 16, no. 2 (2000): 151-98.

Srivastava, Harindra. *Five Stormy Years: Savarkar in London, June 1906-June 1911*. New Delhi: Allied Publishers Private Limited, 1983.

Visram, Rozina. *Asians in Britain : 400 Years of History*. London; Sterling, Va.: Pluto Press, 2002.

Watt, Katherine. "Thomas Walker Arnold and the Re-Evaluation of Islam, 1864-1930." *Modern Asian Studies* 36, no. 1 (2002): 1-98.