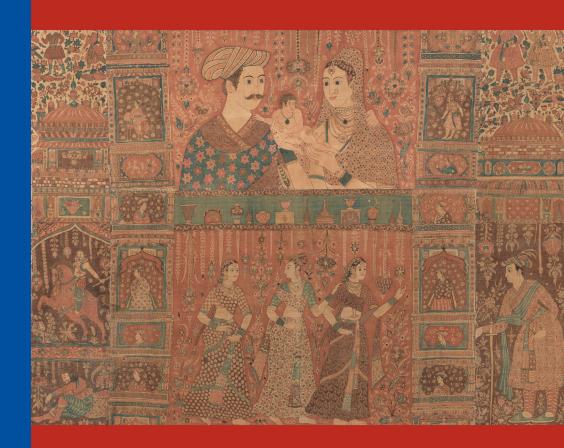# The Corporation as a Protagonist in Global History, c. 1550–1750

EDITED BY

WILLIAM A. PETTIGREW & DAVID VEEVERS

The Corporation as a Protagonist in Global History, c. 1550–1750

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Introduction

William A. Pettigrew and David Veevers

Establishing the Field: Global History

For almost two decades, historians and academics from a wide-range of sub-disciplinary backgrounds have been situating their research within a global context, crossing boundaries both geographically and methodologically, in such large numbers as to necessitate the emergence of a recognisably new field of enquiry: Global History. From comparative to connective histories, the field is still regarded by many as protean, full of potential possibilities and opportunities to provide a heritage to our own globalised and intensively connected world.[1] However, after almost two decades, this vogue perspective has, in many respects, held the field back from presenting more formalised answers and solutions to the almost unending questions and problems historians continue to throw up as they globalise their research. As recently as 2016, the Scottish Centre for Global History's conference on 'Writing Global History' asked far more questions than one might expect in a field maturing into its third decade. Whilst it is absolutely essential that Global Histories continue to problematise the processes of globalisation, as recently demanded by Sebastian Conrad in his survey of the field, nonetheless the contributions in this volume do seek to provide answers – rather than questions – to some of the key challenges which have been posed by the emergence of Global History.[2] Many of these answer questions directly raised by the notion of the corporation as a protagonist in global history, of course.[3] But each contribution also seeks to address issues which have emerged from the longer heritage of Global History as a methodological field. It is therefore necessary to briefly map these before they can be addressed.

Attempts to formally map the heritage of Global History have proliferated in recent years. Unlike, for example, New Imperial History, which has unfortunately seen very few major methodological survey volumes outside of those by

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1 Lynn Hunt, *Writing History in the Global Era* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014), 1.
2 Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 67.
3 We use the term 'protagonist' to emphasise the significance of corporations to global history without any triumphalising of their historic role

Kathleen Wilson and Stephen Howe, there is now no shortage of historiographical reviews of the major trends and constituencies of Global History over the past two decades.[4] So much so, in fact, that as the truly protean and formative period of Global History continued to spin out into almost boundless directions, the outcome of Oxford's 'New Directions in Global History' conference in 2012 attempted to provide, almost perversely, boundaries, by breaking the field down into three methodologies of analysis: comparativeness, connectedness, and globalisation. These separate analytical fields as outlined by James Belich, John Darwin, Margaret Frenz and Chris Wickham are valuable in helping to delineate what have previously been somewhat interchangeable approaches to writing Global History.[5] Nonetheless, whilst these categories represent distinct approaches, they should not be regarded as exclusive. The transregional processes of globalisation, for example, demand an analysis of connections which cross regions, alongside the integrative dynamic of comparative models of, say, constitutions, empires, or, in our case, corporations. Whilst untangling analytical categories is useful, they should not be treated exclusively. Thus the contributions in this volume employ all three analytical approaches. It employs a novel comparative approach in studying a multitude of overseas corporations, and in so doing uncovers a transoceanic corporate sociology which integrated a common global framework in the years 1550–1750.

It has become almost customary to begin any review of this field with Kenneth Pomeranz and the Great Divergence debate which, for many, impressed the need to situate their research more globally to answer long-standing questions which had remained beyond the historian's reach.[6] However, the emergence of historians' concern with situating their research within an increasingly global context depends entirely on the somewhat contentious understanding of the distinctions – or similarities, as it were – with World History, a field which has been transforming our understanding of the global much earlier than the Great Divergence debate of the late 1990s and early 2000s.[7] As Merry Wiesner-Hanks has recently pointed out, the notion that World History is the preserve of teaching whilst Global History has emerged as a research

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4   Kathleen Wilson, ed., *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660–1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Stephen Howe, ed., *The New Imperial Histories Reader* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010).

5   James Belich, John Darwin, Margaret Frenz, and Chris Wickham, eds., *The Prospect of Global History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

6   Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence Debate: Europe, China, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

7   Bruce Mazlish, 'Global History and World History', in Bruce Mazlish, ed., *The Global History Reader* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), 16–20.

field is quite reductive.[8] One need only look as far as Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper's recent *Empires in World History* to know that such an argument is specious.[9] Indeed, despite a tendency for World History to be more comparative, there is little in terms of both methodology and subject-matter to separate the two fields.[10] With that in mind, the 'Great Divergence' debate was very much a product of comparing continental civilizations, such as Europe and Asia, and thus the demarcation between World History and Global History as separate fields of enquiry is far less obvious, and rightly so. The work of Eric Jones and David Landes, for example, whilst promoting global comparisons, was also interested in the structural and natural differences between what were fundamentally different civilizations.[11]

Connections and Networks: Trade, Knowledge and Material Goods

Most scholars associate the emergence of a more distinct Global History with Kenneth Pomeranz's work on the Great Divergence. Although it rests on a comparative analysis of parts of Asia with parts of Europe, it also suggested tentative links between the two distinct economic structures.[12] Pomeranz returned to a more traditional understanding of the suddenness of the Industrial Revolution that was not the product of European exceptionalism, highlighting that the economies of Europe and Asia had shared a range of 'interactions and connections' for centuries.[13] To some extent, Pomeranz reshaped the debate to consider the convergence of global economies, too. Although largely dominated by economic historians, the Great Divergence debate soon transformed itself into a much wider field of investigation. Indeed, histories of the production and circulation of goods and material culture had also become a popular line of enquiry and in itself a new direction in Global History. Prominent

8   Merry Wiesner-Hanks, 'Review: What is Global History?', *Journal of Global History*, vol. 11 (2016): 483.

9   Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

10   Compare Burbank and Cooper with, for example, John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: the Global History of Empire since 1405* (London: Penguin, 2008).

11   Eric Jones, *The European Miracle: Environments, Economies and Geopolitics in the History of Europe and Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); David Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some are so Rich and Some so Poor* (New York: Abacus, 1998).

12   Pomeranz, *Great Divergence*.

13   Pomeranz, *Great Divergence*, 25.

amongst these have been the work of scholars such as Maxine Berg whose focus on luxury and consumerism has traced the production of oriental goods
and their impact on European society, transforming tastes, demands and even
sensibilities.[14]

The formation, exchange and circulation of knowledge has also emerged
as a similarly burgeoning field of enquiry. From the medical to the technological, the production and distribution of knowledge relied on global networks,
agents and audiences in the early modern period. Such histories bring into
sharp relief the crucial role played by subaltern actors in global exchange, as
these 'go-betweens' or 'brokers' mediated and channelled the local and the
global.[15] In tracing such actors, scholars have been able to uncover the sheer
breadth of geographical, cultural, national, linguistic, religious and sovereign
borders crossed to produce everything from culinary recipes to travel accounts.
The latter proved a particularly significant format of knowledge, as they also
incorporated histories, anthropological observations and even diplomatic intelligence that was then distributed to a global audience.[16] However, knowledge was not always an intentional construct created for a domestic intellectual or commercial audience, but rather could be formed through the practice
and experience of global environments and patterns of weather in determining maritime routes and port settlements.[17]

Finally, and perhaps most obviously, the role of trade and commerce in establishing global connections and integrating global actors has been arguably
the most significant direction of enquiry in Global History, and one that very

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14   Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (OxfordL Oxford University Press, 2005). See also Maxine Berg, Felicia Gottmann, Hanna Hodacs and Chris Nierstrasz, eds., *Goods from the East, 1600–1800: Trading Eurasia* (London: Palgrave Macmillan,
      2015); Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, eds., *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016);; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Europe's India: Words, People, Empires, 1500–1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard
      University Press, 2017). For earlier approaches, see Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of
      Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York: Knopf, 1987) and
      Joan Thirsk, *Alternative Agriculture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

15   C. A. Bayly, and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Portfolio Capitalists and the Political Economy
      of Early Modern India'. Indian Economic and Social History Review 25, no. 4 (1988): 401–
      24; Simon Schaffer, Lissa Roberts, Kapil Raj, and James Delbourgo, eds., *The Brokered-
      World: Go-Betweens and Global Intelligence, 1770–1820* (MA: Sagamore Beach, 2009).

16   See, for example, Anna Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge and the Early East India Company World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

17   For instance, see Richard Drayton, 'Maritime Networks and the Making of Knowledge',
      in David Cannadine, ed., *Empire, the Sea and Global History* (Basingstoke: AIAA, 2007),
      72–82. Also Parker, *Global Crisis.*

much unites histories of material culture and knowledge. As Claude Markovits points out, one of the key criticisms aimed at Global History is that it often lacks the empirical foundation of other fields, a critique that can easily be discredited through a study of trading networks, 'as they extend across vast distances and often left significant archival traces'.[18] For Rila Mukherjee, the establishment of long-distance commercial networks created the 'first global age' in the fifteenth century, in which Europe, the Americas, Africa and Asia became connected into 'an open, complex, dynamic, nonlinear system' of trade and exchange.[19]

The study of networks has become an all-pervasive methodological approach in the study of global commerce and trade. Networks serve not only to trace the connections between actors, communities and diasporas, but more critically they help us to understand the relationship between these global actors, especially in explorations of transnationality and cross-cultural exchange.[20] The normalisation of networks with global exchange and movement has of course mirrored our twenty-first century integration of networks into everyday life. And, like the latter, despite some concerns, there nonetheless seems no end in sight for the utility of networks as both methodological tool and historical actor in Global History.[21] The sophistication of network analysis, both quantitative and qualitative, by historians over the past two decades has been especially fundamental in understanding the relationship between the local and the global on a number of levels. Historians have shown how particular regions, spaces or people become nodes or integrated into wider circuits depending on the intensity of exchange taking place. Thus the entirety of the British Empire can be reconceptualised as a global 'web' of circuits with nodes in the Atlantic and Asia through which knowledge, goods, people and

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18   Claude Markovits, 'Trading Networks in Global History', in Catia Antunes and Karwan Fatah-Black, eds., *Explorations in History and Globalization* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 63.

19   Rila Mukherjee, ed., *Networks in the First Global Age, 1400–1800* (New Delhi: Primus Books, 2011), 6.

20   For an excellent survey of networks in the eighteenth century, see Natasha Glaisyer, 'Networking: Trade and Exchange in the Eighteenth-Century British Empire', *Historical Journal*, vol. 47, no. 2 (2004): 451–457.

21   For the failure of networks as a historical actor, see David Hancock, 'The Trouble with Networks: Managing the Scots' Early-Modern Madeira Trade', *Business History Review*, 79, 3, 2005: 467- 491. For the concern with networks as a methodology of Global History, see David A. Bell, 'This Is What Happens When Historians Overuse the Idea of the Network', *New Republic*, https://newrepublic.com/article/114709/world-connecting-reviewed-historians-overuse-network-metaphor, accessed 26 October 2017.

expertise travelled and transformed.[22] Some of the most empirically rich stud-ies have uncovered the expansive networks of Sephardic Jews and Armenian merchants that have operated through multiple oceanic spaces and across numerous continents.[23] The role played by individuals, families and kinship groups in establishing commercial networks was clearly substantial in the ear-ly modern period, especially with their ability to negotiate complex interper-sonal relationships.[24,25]

Networks were connective, but more importantly they were often transfor-mative, and became key agents in processes of globalisation. Emily Erickson's recent study of the decentred commercial strategy of East India Company captains in Asia observed how networks 'link individual behaviour to larger macro-level social and organisation outcomes'.[26] Becoming part of a wider network, whether commercial, theological, scientific, political or social, inte-grated the individual into larger institutional structures. Thus when Europeans and non-Europeans joined global networks, they adopted the group's norms and values, but as a member of that collective institution, were also able to exercise agency to reshape the larger network.[27] This could create networks of exchange and interaction, but it also created a conflicted institution in which the rules governing participation were contested by its members. As Francesca Trivellato has pointed out in her study of Sephardic networks, tracing global networks can sometimes 'evoke a romanticized view of merchant communi-ties as harmonious, cohesive, and full of pride'.[28] Even the understanding and practice of trust was amorphous and negotiated.

22   Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

23   Trivellato, *Familiarity of Strangers*; Sebouh David Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: the Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (Lon-don: University of California Press, 2011).

24   Charles H. Parker, *Global interactions in the early modern age, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cam-bridge University Press, 2010), 78–9.

25   David Veevers, ' "Inhabitants of the Universe": Global Families, Kinship Networks, and the Formation of the Early Modern Colonial State in Asia', *Journal of Global History*, vol. 10, no. 1 (March, 2015): 99–121.

26   Emily Erickson, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: the English East India Company, 1600–1757* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 22.

27   For the debate on transformative networks, compare the following: Avner Grief, 'Rep-utation and Coalition in Medieval Trade: Evidence on the Maghribi Traders', *Journal of Economic History*, vol. 49, no. 4 (1989): 857–82; Douglass North, 'Institutions', *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 5, no. 1 (1991): 97–112.

28   Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: the Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (London: Yale University Press, 2009), 12.

Finally, the role of trade not only helps us understand global dynamics of exchange and relationships of negotiation, but essentially provides goods and objects themselves with global histories. New research on cotton, for example, has recast it from a colonial resource imported by European metropoles, to a global commodity that transformed the early modern world economy, with Asian manufactured cotton-goods spreading as far afield as Japan and the Atlantic, and even contributing to the industrialisation of Europe.[29]

New Directions: Integrative Histories

Whilst far from proclaiming that we are all global historians now, the fundamental shift modern globalisation has created in our approach to, and understanding of, the past (as well as the way in which we research and write it), makes it increasingly unlikely that Global History will plateau or become contented with the tracing of global connections and interactions. Rather, it appears that the field is in a period of crescendo. The formative period of Global History was undoubtedly one of comparisons and connections – breaking free from strictly national perspectives and methodologies, and situating historical places, events and people within a wider, interconnected geographical context. The result has been to appreciate the way in which nationally or locally driven processes possessed unknown global contexts and dimensions. There appears, however, an increasing need to appreciate the distinction between the global connections of objects, people, places and events, for example, and the process of intensification and concentration of connections which was capable of durable and broad global transformations. Beyond the macro-economic of, for example, the Great Divergence debate, the large-scale integration of separate regions and networks is a meta-narrative of globalisation which still remains largely pervasive despite over two decades of Global History.

Indeed, the past decade has witnessed the emergence of a new direction in Global History that has moved beyond the comparative and the connective, and is now concerning itself with perhaps the ultimate task of this field: the integrative.[30] This transition has involved moving deeper, beyond the novel appreciation of the global, to a far more complex and profound exploration of transoceanic integration, in which, for example, the Atlantic and Asia did not

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29   For example, see Giorgio Riello, *Cotton: the Fabric that Made the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A New History of Global Capitalism* (London: Penguin, 2015).

30   Conrad, *What is Global History*, chapter 5.

just share globetrotting connections, but were actually integrated into wider spaces of, for example, migration, trade, governance, and knowledge. That is not to suggest that histories of global integration have not existed. As early as the mid-twentieth century with the French historian Fernand Braudel's conceptualisation of a Mediterranean World, a host of conceptual and analytical frameworks of regional integration have gradually sprung up, especially that of the Indian Ocean World.[31] There is undoubtedly a regionalism to such research, one of seas, oceans and bounded maritime spaces. But they are also intensely aware that they are working towards an even deeper integrative methodology. The transition of national based studies of the Atlantic to a broader 'Atlantic World' is perhaps the most prominent (and certainly most popular) example. As David Armitage and Michael Braddick have argued, such a region was created by 'a complex of evolving connections' which drew not just on the European and American seaboards, but also of West Africa, South America and the Caribbean.[32] This has been the enduring appeal of a broader 'Atlantic World', one that clearly 'displays more openness to multidirectional effects'.[33]

There are, of course, problems with Mediterranean, Indian and Atlantic 'Worlds', as those historians who adopt such analytical and conceptual frameworks are well aware. As Carole Shammas notes of the 'British Atlantic World', it is difficult to evaluate transnational connections, spaces and networks 'if it is prefaced by the name of an empire or nation-state'.[34] It is important to recognise that few historians of the Atlantic or Indian Ocean 'Worlds' would consider themselves strictly operating within the field of Global History, but rather more often those of Postcolonial or New Imperial Histories. Nonetheless, their integrative approach to a variety of national and geographic constituencies ensure that, as Armitage and Braddick were conscious when they promoted the oceanic framework of a 'British Atlantic', such work is part of a broader contribution to 'global histories'.[35] Belich *et al.*, however, would argue that these

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31   The conceptualisation of an Indian Ocean World owes much to K. N. Chaudhuri, *Trade and Civilisation in the Indian Ocean: An Economic History from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge, 1985). For a synthesis of recent research, see Michael Pearson, ed., *Trade, Circulation, and Flow in the Indian Ocean World* (Basingstoke, 2015).

32   David Armitage and Michael Braddick, eds., *The British Atlantic world, 1500–1800* (Basingstoke, 2009), p. 5.

33   Carole Shammas, 'Introduction', in Elizabeth Mancke and Carole Shammas, eds., *The Creation of the British Atlantic World* (MA: Baltimore, 2005), p. 2. Robert Appelbaum and John Wood Sweet, eds., *Envisioning an English Empire: Jamestown and the Making of the North Atlantic World* (Penn, 2005).

34   Ibid.

35   David Armitage and Michael Braddick, *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800* (New York, 2002), p. 9.

crucial frameworks are nonetheless 'sub-global', and as such fail to provide a broader narrative for globalisation.[36]

Of course, the alternative integrative histories to 'sub-regions' are those that follow Immanuel Wallerstein's *World Systems*, in which a network of global economic exchange eventually tied the world into a single capitalist order.[37] However, the fundamental reason why such research does not lend itself as a foundation for a new direction in integrative global history is its Western-centric analysis. As Maxine Berg has recently argued in her review of the field, 'the challenge is to convert Europe from a knowledge subject to an object of global history'.[38] Unfortunately such Euro-centric analysis permeates most 'integrative' histories. As the opening salvo of Armitage and Braddick's *British Atlantic World* makes clear, 'This new social and economic world was mostly a European creation'.[39] This statement can hardly be sustained in light of expansive research on the hybridity of European settlement, as well as the prominent agency of non-Europeans, in the Atlantic.[40] Though this is perhaps largely due to the volume's predominant focus on the North Atlantic, at the expense of its southern counterpart. Nonetheless even more admirable attempts to break free of the narrow Atlantic World and integrate various basins into the wider concept of an 'Oceanic Empire' have continued to perpetuate Europe as a 'knowledge subject', choosing to analyse 'diverse peoples' only within the context of how they 'found themselves pulled within British spheres of influence'.[41] Moving forward, integrative global histories present a tantalising opportunity to recast Europe's agency and bring to the fore a narrative of globalisation which reflects (though not necessarily privileges) the more realistic contribution of non-Europeans to processes of transoceanic integration. It is the intention of this volume to address this important issue by rethinking what has previously been depicted as the quintessential European agent of expansion, the overseas corporation, and instead to recast it primarily as a transnational vehicle for concentrating and promoting the agency, actions and interests of non-Europeans in the Mediterranean, Atlantic, Asia and Pacific regions.

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36   Belich, et al., *Prospect of Global History*, pp. 3–4.

37   Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System* (New York, 1974).

38   Maxine Berg, ed., *Writing the History of the Global* (Oxford, 2013), p. 5.

39   Armitage and Braddick, *British Atlantic*, p. 1.

40   An excellent example is Ray A. Kea, 'From Catholicism to Moravian Pietism: The World of Marotta/Magdalena, a Woman of Popo and St. Thomas', in Mancke and Shammas, *Creation of the British Atlantic*, pp. 115–138.

41   H. V. Bowen, Elizabeth Mancke and John G. Reid, *Britain's Oceanic Empire: Atlantic and Indian Ocean Worlds, c. 1550–1850* (Cambridge, 2012), p.3.

Corporations as Cross-Regional Actors

This is the juncture at which the field largely arrives today: a need to converge the diverse enquiries of Global History with the local, regional or national histories of other fields. Far from subsuming these categories, a 'New Global History' must confront and adapt these traditional narratives, especially those of a national perspective. Indeed, the current nationalist renaissances in places such as the United States and Britain are predicated on the false conceptualisation of globalisation as an unwanted interloping force in modern society. And yet, the very intensity of the emergence of the nation-state and national histories from the nineteenth century onwards were themselves products of increasing global connections and comparisons. As the late C. A. Bayly argued, 'all local, national or regional histories must, in important ways … be global histories'.[42] But global histories ought not to lose sight of the significance of local, regional, as well as national identities and institutions to the way in which the globe was experienced and imagined. Global trading opportunities have often been sought to advance national interests, and national concerns have more often compelled states to place barriers across global trade.

No single institution integrates the local, regional, national, and global settings more than the trading corporation. If global history continues to focus on global comparisons, connections, and globalisation, the corporation ought to be a protagonist in global history. These bodies have long been of great interest to historians of various sub-disciplinary persuasions. For historians of empire, trading corporations have been depicted as innocent commercial prefaces to full-blown state-sponsored empire – as self-financing dress rehearsals for the deployment of colonial power without the need for state subsidy.[43] Business historians – whose primary chronological focus has been the nineteenth and twentieth centuries – have occasionally looked back to the seventeenth and eighteenth century trading corporation for evidence of the early modern inspiration for modern joint stock corporations.[44] As such, they have anachronistically projected modern governance arrangements – board room power – onto more complex and decentred institutions and have overstated false

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42   C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (London, 2005), p. 2.

43   See for example James D. Tracey, ed., *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires: State Power and World Trade, 1350–1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

44   A conspicuous example is Nick Robins, *The Corporation that Changed the World: How the East India Company Shaped the Modern Multinational* (London: Pluto Press, Second Ed., 2012).

distinctions between centre and periphery. They have also written histories of separate firms – rather than comparative histories of the corporate type. Both liberal and Marxian strains in economic history have – following Adam Smith – used trading corporations as evidence of the capitalist desire to siphon economic opportunities into privileged silos. As such, they have grossly over-emphasised the extent to which the trading corporations were monopolies that had to be liberated by free trade.[45] Historians of corporations in general have too often reduced the meaning and significances of corporate activity to the corporations' own mercantilist posturing in print.[46] The propaganda of the companies simplifies and obscures their complex global dynamics. Legal historians have been the most resourceful in noting the similarities between the trading corporations and their municipal forbears, but they have been myopic in using narrow and strictly juridical interpretations of corporations that limit these complex institutions to their charter provisions or the initiatives of their directors – ignoring the corporation's unique aptitude for relationship formation.[47]

Despite its significance in managing and governing Europe's overseas trade, the corporation has been analysed and understood within a predominantly national context: as Dutch, or English, or French companies, competing around the world for a slice of the mercantilist spoils.[48] Interest in Europe's East India Companies, for example, has never been stronger, and yet with every new monograph the gulf between what were essentially common (and often interlocked) models of overseas monopoly becomes wider and more

45   David Ormrod, 'The demise of regulated trading in England: the case of the Merchant Adventurers, 1650–1730', in *Entrepreneurs and Entrepreneurship in Early Modern Times. Merchants and industrialists within the orbit of the Dutch staplemarket*, ed. C. Lesger & L. Noordegraaf (Amsterdam: Stichting Hollandse Historische Reeks, 1996), 253–68; R. C. Nash, 'The organization of trade and finance in the British Atlantic economy, 1600–1830', in *The Atlantic Economy during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Organisation, Operation, Practice, and Personnel*, ed. Peter A. Coclanis (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005), 97–8. For the Marxian tradition see Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550–1653* (London: Verso, 2003); and A. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), V.1.98–119.

46   Steve Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

47   For recent examples see Edward Cavanagh, 'Corporations and Business Associations from the Commercial Revolution to the Age of Discovery: Trade, Empire and Expansion without the State, 1200–1600', *History Compass*, vol. 14, 10, (2016): 493–510.

48   For European corporate competition in Asia, see Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600–1800* (Ontario: University of Minnesota Press, 1976).

nationally-focused.[49] Even more narrowly, the various corporations of any particular nation, and especially those of the English, have largely been understood as individual entities, following separate developmental trajectories in different cities, regions, and oceanic basins. For example, Phil Withington's powerful study of the enfranchisement of corporations in early modern England focuses on the role of civic corporations and livery companies, but hardly mentions overseas corporations, whose own enfranchisement had arguably the biggest impact on state formation, the Crown, and political economy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[50] More crucially, the global enfranchisement of overseas corporations through their engagement with non-European states and communities ensured that the latter had a role to play in England's domestic state formation. Histories of England's overseas trading companies have similarly failed to draw upon the longer history of the domestic corporation, whilst companies operating in different oceanic regions have only recently been opened up to comparative (but not integrative) treatment, those operating in the Atlantic and their counterparts in Asia meeting analytically for the first time.[51]

The corporation therefore has been proscribed differentiated histories: business, mercantilist, national, domestic or foreign; civic, humanistic or commercial; European, Atlantic or Asian. Whilst these distinctions are vital, they have nonetheless led to the absence of an independent global history for the corporation itself, in favour of its subordination to larger national or regional narratives of governance, society, exploration, liberty, commerce, and conquest.[52] And yet the durability of corporate governance styles associated with regulated companies rather than joint stocks challenges this view.[53] Indeed,

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49   For new research on the French Company, see Felicia Gottmann, Global Trade, *Smuggling, and the Making of Economic Liberalism: Asian Textiles in France, 1680–1760* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); for the Swedish and Danish Companies, see Hanna Hodacs, *Silk and Tea in the North: Scandinavian Trade and the Market for Asian Goods in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); for the English Company, see Emily Erikson, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: The English East India Company, 1600–1757* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

50   Phil Withington, *The Politics of Commonwealth: Citizens and Freemen in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

51   See the contributions in Bowen et al., *Britain's Oceanic Empire*.

52   An excellent example of this is James D. Tracey, *The Rise of Merchant Empires: Long-Distance Trade in the Early Modern World, 1350–1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

53   William A. Pettigrew and Tristan Stein 'The Public Rivalry between Regulated and Joint Stock Corporations and the Development of Seventeenth-Century Corporate Constitutions', *Historical Research*, vol. 90, 248, (2016): 341–362

Henry Turner's recent *Corporate Commonwealth* has demonstrated that the sheer breadth and longevity of the corporation in domestic English history demands a far more open and overarching approach to the study of corporations. For Turner, the corporation was a durable actor that encompassed not just the joint-stock or regulated companies, but indeed included the state, the *universitas*, the theatre, and other artificial persons. The corporation, he argues, 'focuses our attention on this problem of scale; it invites us to analyse the forces of translation whereby wholes become parts and parts become wholes again'. The durability and longevity of the corporation in all its forms 'provoke a necessary shift in our account of political agency and will result ... in a displacement of the concept of the state'.[54] In this light, corporations were networked institutions which operated across scales at an ontological level. In essence, corporations made ideal global actors, capable of integrating the local, the national and the global.

The corporation as a global actor has yet to be explored, although recent research has shed light on the considerable agency exercised by corporations in certain global theatres. Most significantly, Phil Stern's *Company-State* exposed corporations as sovereign and constitutional actors, capable of acquiring, negotiating and projecting social, political and judicial authority autonomous of the nation-state.[55] Whilst Stern focuses on the English East India Company, nonetheless his study sheds light on the rich range and heritage of corporate rights, structures and foundations that transformed early modern England, shaping wider debates about sovereignty, political economy, jurisprudence, sociability, morality and civility.[56] As valuable as such research is in recognising the significant agency of corporations as independent political actors, these new directions are still, essentially, national and imperial histories. And yet some scholars have depicted the corporation as an agent of (and vehicle) for transcultural interaction. Rather than viewing these companies exclusively as projectors of European power or as the precursors to modern multinational companies, for Sanjay Subrahmanyam corporations have provided a means to depict European expansion into Asia as a political discourse that connected two regions (in much the same way that Atlantic history stressed how

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54   Henry Turner, *Corporate Commonwealth: Pluralism and Political Fictions in England, 1516–1651* (London: University of Chicago press, 2016).

55   Philip J. Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

56   For the impact of overseas corporations on these elements within the domestic state, see William A. Pettigrew, Fr*eedom's Debt: The Royal African Company and the Politics of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1672–1752* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

European and indigenous American contact produced a 'new world' for both groups).[57] Far from peaceful, however, these connected histories show how international migration affected the power dynamics of groups in both areas of embarkation and disembarkation and produced arenas of 'contained conflict' rather than cross cultural partnership.[58]

Corporations, then, have yet to be proscribed a global analytical framework. Yet if corporations acted uniformly and simultaneously in the seventeenth century in Europe and across the Mediterranean, Atlantic, Asia and Pacific, as this volume will demonstrate, then they present the prospect of a transoceanic global history that has not yet been considered, one that provides us with a clear framework of global integration. Corporations were extremely adaptive, and trading companies especially 'integrated the diverse constitutional mechanisms granted to them from the various states they subordinated themselves to'.[59] Yet in doing so, corporations were themselves reshaped by the non-European communities and states to whom they became subordinate. Operating across national, sovereign and oceanic borders, Europe's vast range of corporate bodies spread across the globe in an integrative and adaptive dynamic that bound together a staggering number of social, political, cultural and economic constituencies. David Armitage has recently expostulated upon the possibilities of a new 'constitutional turn' in Global History, one that provides a unique opportunity to rediscover the considerable global role played by that quintessentially global actor: the corporation.[60] In understanding the ways in which seemingly European enterprises were reshaped by their engagement with non-Europeans in every corner of the globe in the seventeenth century, it will be possible to fulfil the two most significant aims of Global History as stated here: exploring transnational contexts and connections, and understanding globalisation as an integrative process on a transoceanic scale. The contributions in this volume take up this unique opportunity to propose a conceptual and analytical framework based upon the notion that the corporation acted as a protagonist of globalisation in the years 1550–1750.

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57   The classic example of this is Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

58   Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Connected Histories: Notes towards a reconfiguration of early modern Eurasia', *Modern Asian Studies*, 31, 3, 1997: 735–762.

59   William A. Pettigrew, 'Corporate Constitutionalism and the Dialogue between the Global and the Local in Seventeenth-Century English History', *Itinerario*, vol. 39, no. 3 (January, 2016): 491.

60   David Armitage, 'Wider Still and Wider: Corporate Constitutionalism Unbounded', *Itinerario*, Vol. 39, no. 3 (2015): 501–503.

Of course, the methodology proposed by this volume, of using European corporations to construct a meta-history of globalisation, opens itself up to accusations of the very Eurocentrism which this volume attempts to address. A key aim of this volume is to redefine the traditional conceptualisation of the overseas corporation as a uniquely European construct, attempting to project narrow nationalist interests, to a transnational enterprise in which over the course of the early modern period, non-Europeans not only became key stakeholders in trading companies through European dependence on their commercial expertise, diplomatic access, sources of knowledge, powerful cultural practices and overwhelming military resources – to name a few – but in actual fact assumed controlling stakes to the extent that even metropolitan European authorities were forced to concede to the interests and demands of non-Europeans in distant communities and markets. European corporations may have originated in London, Paris and Amsterdam, but their desperate need to adapt to overseas environments made them more susceptible and vulnerable to outside influence, and, ultimately, to a degree of control. This volume therefore proposes a narrative not of European influence or expansion in the early modern global world through the study of the corporation, but a process of globalisation in which Native American chieftains, West African slavers, Persian monarchs, Arab merchants, southern Indian *nayaks*, Sumatran pepper farmers, Chinese migrants and Japanese officials became major stakeholders in the same trading companies, transforming them into something not entirely European or non-European, nor entirely local or national, but what this volume would argue as something that became truly global. This volume proposes that the overseas corporation presents the best opportunity to capture the integration of the globe in the early modern period, both archivally and in the historical processes of globalisation these facilitated.

The Corporation as a Protagonist in Global History

This book offers a new account of the distinctive role that corporations played in global history in the period 1550–1750. It also offers a re-appraisal of what the corporation was in its global setting. This period provides the critical time for the intensification of cross-cultural relationships between European and non-European cultures. It was also the phase in which corporate bodies played the most important part. The prominent global historian, John Darwin has called this period the age of 'equilibrium' during which European and non-European states and empires interacting on roughly equal terms and therefore structured global relationships that were not simply

colonial or imperial in character.[61] Corporations played a central role in calibrating this equilibrium and facilitating these relationships. As agents of commercial and knowledge exchange and the default means for European states to integrate their commercial interests in this period, trading corporations ought to be essential actors in any account of global exchange. Although their leadership was at times cultural supercilious to non-European peoples, corporations (and the people who worked with and for them) did not typically seek imperial overlordship in this period and instead understood that their commercial successes depended upon their ability to encourage trade that satisfied European and non-European interests.[62] Corporations moved peoples, knowledge, goods, ideas, buildings, art, literature, scholarship across cultural barriers, around continents; they traded with and governed diverse communities. Corporations integrate the comparative, connected, globalised imperatives of Global History into a single, formal, institutional framework. They were protagonists in global history.

Andrew Zimmerman has urged the need for historians to 'think rigorously about the categories we use to analyze the past', suggesting that a new global historical sociology and transnational history could work to erode traditional Eurocentric models.[63] This book proposes to emphasise the underappreciated features of the overseas corporation's distinctive global sociology.[64] Whether as regulated trading companies, as joint stock trading corporations, as the colonising corporations, or as the municipal corporations established overseas, corporations brought a distinctive civic culture to overseas activities; they brought characteristically deliberative and responsive constitutional mechanisms to cross-cultural interaction, and combined commercial and governmental ambitions into creative tensions in ways that integrated European and non-European interests. This distinctive global sociology can best be

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61   Darwin, *After Tamerlane: The Global History of Empire since 1405*, ch. 3.

62   For the failure of corporations and their servants to satisfy non-European constituencies, and the disastrous impact this could have, see the expulsion of the English East India Company from Bencoolen, in David Veevers, ' "The Company as their Lords and the Deputy as a Great Rajah": Imperial Expansion and the English East India Company on the West Coast of Sumatra, 1685–1730', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, vol. 45, no. 5 (2013): 687–709.

63   Andrew Zimmerman, 'Conclusion: Global Historical Sociology and Transnational History – History and Theory Against Eurocentrism', in Julian Go and George Lawson, eds., *Global Historical Sociology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 241.

64   Philip J Stern, 'Parasites, Persons, and Princes: Evolutionary Biology of the Corporate Constitution', *Itinerario*, Vol. 39, no. 3 (2015): 512–515. Stern here stresses that while the corporation shared the same biology with the state, it exhibited a different sociology.

understood by adopting a comparative and even integrative approach to trading corporations. Although these two approaches may seem distinct, they are actually reinforcing. Only by comparing the broad range of England's corporations can the common global framework which they established be traced. Corporate history has most often been written with reference to a single corporation.[65] Our approach tests some of the insights developed with reference to single corporations – and most often this has meant the English or Dutch East India Companies – with reference to the other corporate entities to assemble a global field of view for corporate history. Trading corporations sometimes targeted each other's privileges, they often shared legal foundations, commercial strategies, and courtroom representation, overlapping personnel, and resources of capital.[66] Such cross-corporate interdependence was, in some ways, even more prominent between foreign corporations. England's largest corporation, the East India Company, benefitted substantially from foreign investment. By the end of this period, in the mid-eighteenth century, almost a third of Company stock was foreign owned, approximately 88% of which was held by those resident in the United Provinces.[67] Similarly, its settlements in Asia were heavily funded by foreign merchants. This was the case for Fort St. George in India, where the interest alone on loans largely contracted from Portuguese merchants in the first three years between 1639 and 1642 was estimated at £5,000.[68] The transnational constituencies of the Company were also reflected in its personnel, its expertise and its shipping resources.

While the corporation's iconography, their domestic governance practices, and their personnel looked homogenous at home, the corporations experienced, however, very different careers overseas. These differences can only be explained by the global circumstances of their trades. Some lasted for only a few years – such as the Virginia Company (1607–1624). Different nation's corporations were supposedly locked into ruthless competition overseas. The rivalry between the Company of Royal Adventurers trading to Africa (1660–1671) and the Dutch West India Company in Africa prompted a series of wars between the Dutch and English during the second half of the seventeenth century.

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65 Stern, *Company-State.*

66 William A. Pettigrew and George Van Cleve, 'Parting Companies: The Glorious Revolution, Company Power, and Imperial Mercantilism', *Historical Journal*, vol. 57, 3, (2014): 627.

67 H. V. Bowen, 'Investment and Empire in the Later Eighteenth Century: East India Stockholding, 1756–1791', *Economic History Review*, vol. 42, no. 2 (May, 1989): 200.

68 Consultation held at Fort St. George, Madras, 29 December 1642, in William Foster, *The English Factories in India, 1637 to 1641: A Calendar of Documents in the India Office, British Museum, and Public Record Office* (Oxford, 1912, 8 vols.), vol. 7, 70.

Certain companies were much more commercially successful than others. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the English Levant Company was the most successful company by revenue. By the early eighteenth century, the English East India Company had emerged as the only viable trading company and endured for over a hundred and fifty years. But the ability to make money did not – on its own – determine longevity. Part of the explanation for this longevity is that domicile states could not entertain the possibility of corporate failure because they would lose access to the overseas infrastructure that these companies had established. The Royal African Company famously made little profit, but became the largest single contributor to the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans and endured for eighty years because the English state feared the results of abandoning the company's West African forts.[69]

The integration of a broader corporate framework which emerges from a comparative treatment of corporations suggests that the main explanations for corporate success derive, however, from a careful assessment of the relationships that corporations formed overseas – not just with their own officials, but also with their non-corporate constituencies, from interlopers to non-European hosts.[70] Their divergent fortunes were often the result of commercial and constitutional differences in their overseas trading hinterlands. In this, the ultimate victor was the English East India Company and its distinctive mode of operation can only be understood if placed into the context of its Dutch and French rivals, as well as its English forbears and antecedents. The East India Company more successfully defended its monopoly privileges at home by merging with its lobbying opponents and erecting a grand superstructure for free English trade on the Indian subcontinent that enfranchised the entrepreneurial instincts of its overseas factors and their Indian trading partners.[71] Corporations were homogenous franchises of state authority at home. It was their *sui generis* qualities as global protagonists that determined their careers. Take, for instance, Thomas Pitt. In the 1670s and 1680s, Pitt proved one of the most successful interlopers in Asia, trading freely between Persia and the Bay of Bengal, even gaining his own trading concessions from the Mughal governor of Hugli, where he set up a trading factory in 1683. Despite attempts to prosecute Pitt in England, and even arrest him in Asia, ultimately the East India

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69   Pettigrew, *Freedom's Debt*.

70   Soren Mentz, *The English Gentleman Merchant at Work: Madras and the City of London, 1660–1740*, (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2005), 264; Chris Nierstrasz, *In the Shadow of the Company: the Dutch East India Company and its Servants in the Period of its Decline (1740–1796)*, (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

71   Erikson, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade*.

Company chose to integrate Pitt into their operations. As the Court of Directors declared to their servants in Bengal in 1694, 'we have agreed with the Principall Interlopers … and that we hope is the end of all our long quarrels and contentions'.[72] Three years later, Pitt was offered the governorship of Madras, which he took up and administered until 1707.

The Distinctive Global Sociology of the Corporation

What did this distinctively corporate sociology for global interaction consist of? We highlight five qualities: First, corporations were subordinate to state authority at home and abroad.[73] This allowed them to establish durable trading relationships overseas. Second, corporations were – in effect – processes of negotiation with external constituencies: foreign merchants, interlopers, European rivals, and foreign states. In their global operations, they were not monopolies. They were subject to intense competition wherever they operated. Nor were they exclusive entities. Their membership was porous and responsive to outside influence and their interactions with internal and external constituencies was deliberative. Third, corporations were constitutions that facilitated the effective structuring of these international relationships (which were themselves constitutional in character). Fourth, in their global operations, corporations were autonomous from the oversight of their domicile state. This allowed them to act with the juridical agility to develop styles of governance overseas that were unthinkable at home. This autonomy allowed corporations to be jurisdictionally evasive. They occupied the jurisdictional free-space between nation states and assumed their own corporate identities and aspired to sovereignty. This meant that they could shed their national skin. Fifth, corporations were integrative; they connected global realities with local, regional, and national interests, debates, and posturing.

i   *Corporations as Subordinate*
Such corporations, of course, were not the only European means for governing overseas trade and cross-cultural interaction. The English, to take one national tradition, used multiple constitutional forms to interact with non-European contexts. These included proprietary grants (based on feudal principles),

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72   British Library, APAC, IOR/E/3/92, court of directors to Bengal, London, 3 January 1694.

73   Attorney General Sir Robert Sawyer described corporations as 'subordinate governments' in the *quo warranto* proceedings against the Corporation of London in 1683. See Howell, *State Trials*, Vol. VIII, 1158–66 and 1178 and Halliday, 207.

which conferred considerable autonomy on proprietors. The English state used proprietaries in much of colonial North America, in Maryland, New York, New Jersey, and the Carolinas. However, there were important structural differences between proprietary colonies and corporations. Corporations mixed governmental and commercial agendas and set the two into creative tension. They raised money from (hundreds and sometimes thousands of) investors and would need to uphold the interests of those investors to endure. This capital (as well as the company's ability to borrow large sums of money) provided them with the resources to cultivate state support. The state renegotiated the corporations' privileges on several occasions. Proprietary colonies participated in trade, but they were primarily conceived as land holdings and mechanisms for settlement. The personal property of a few absentees, they had to satisfy far more narrow concerns. The proprietary colonies were often the result of state payments (to settle debts – as with those to William Penn's family) and did not lend money to the Crown. Their charters were less frequently re-negotiated. The state took sporadic interest in these ventures and so they became largely personal fiefdoms. William Courteen's proprietorship of Barbados, which was granted to him in 1627, had to contend with a rival claim from the Earl of Carlisle. Despite initially colonising the island, Courteen effectively lost control following a military coup by rival agents in 1629, with the loss of some £10,000 worth of investment.[74] Following his violent ejection from the Caribbean, Courteen and his sons adopted a joint-stock corporate model for their subsequent venture into Asia, launching the Courteen Association in 1635 with support from the Crown. Much like Thomas Pitt later, the East India Company ultimately merged the Courteen stock and its personnel into their own operations in 1657.[75]

The English and other European states also resorted to direct state intercession – such as the Portueguese state's *Estado da India* to manage overseas interests. Direct state rule was expensive and inhibited the infusion of non-European interests into the commercial relationships that trading corporations established. Furthermore, states could not subordinate themselves to foreign states – a problem that corporations – as subordinate entities – did not have. The comparison between the two territories in Catherine of Braganza's dowry to the English King Charles II confirms this. In 1661, the dowry brought the North African port town of Tangier and the islands of Bombay into English

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74   Matthew Parker, *The Sugar Barons: Family, Corruption, Empire and War* (London: Windmill Books, 2011), 14–24.

75   See Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550–1653* (London: Princeton University Press, 1993), 170–179.

control. Both were ruled by the English Crown initially, but the Crown transferred Bombay to the East India Company in 1664.[76] In Tangier, the Crown officers struggled to provide the necessary fealty to the expanding Moroccan empire of Moulay Ismael.[77] The East India Company, however, could readily subordinate itself to foreign states in India. The same was true of the Royal African Company in Cape Coast. The Corporations were uniquely predisposed to subordinating themselves to foreign states.[78] Similarly, states could not justify their control over foreign territories with reference to their subordination to the local rulers of those territories. Corporate entities often justified their existence and explained their power with reference to the trading privileges they had established overseas – effectively arguing that they owed more to their international relationships than their domestic ones.[79] Merchants could also interact with non-European environments as free agents. While this was widespread in practice, most global interactions took place under the formal umbrella of state governance in one form or another and interloping merchants often relied upon the infrastructure of corporations – such as forts or remittance structures – to prosper. The interloper Thomas Bowrey travelled to Asia on an East Indiaman in 1668, was employed by the Chief of Masulipatam, had his pepper purchased by Company factors, traded under a Company pass, and enjoyed the rights and protections which came with living at Company settlements. When he was imprisoned by the Indian governor of Porto Novo in 1687, he appealed to the Company's factory there for succor, 'as hee own'd the Right Honble. Companys Protection'.[80]

ii   *Corporations as Processes of Negotiation*

Despite their monopolistic pretensions successful transnational trading corporations learned to operate in ways that favoured those beyond their

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76   Tristan Stein, 'Tangier in the Restoration Empire', *The Historical Journal* 54, no. 4 (December 2011): 985–1011.

77   John F. Richard, *The Mughal Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 239–242; Om Prakash, *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-Colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

78   Paul Halliday, *Dismembering the Body Politic: Partisan Politics in England's Towns, 1650–1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

79   For an example see 'Reasons humbly offered by the Governor & Company of Merchants trading into the Levant Seas', TNA SP 105/144, p. 80; and *Argument for a Regulated Company or Open Trade to the East-India Answered*. See also Philip J. Stern, ' "A Politie of Civill & Military Power" Political Thought and the Late Seventeenth-Century Foundations of the East India Company-State', Journal of British Studies, vol. 47, 2, (2008), 266–7.

80   Porto Novo to Madras, 14 May 1687, in Thomas Bowrey, *A Geographical Account of Countries Round the Bay of Bengal, 1669 to 1679* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1903), 31.

membership. In this, they followed the tendencies of their municipal forbears. Scholars of municipal corporations have been most sensitive to the corporation's traditional deliberative, participatory culture. Philip Withington, has stressed the internal civic traditions within the corporation and has viewed these traditions as formative of national state political repertoires.[81] Withington regarded the corporation's civic culture as the provider of the 'social depths' of state authority. But historians of early modern Europe have not, on the whole, projected this understanding of the distinctively inclusive sociology of the corporation onto the global field of view of the trading corporation. Scholars have instead focussed excessively on the internal governance of corporations – and especially the 'agency problem' of managing overseas officials in ways that benefitted the corporate whole. These scholars have continued to fixate on the trading corporation's exclusive, monopolistic veneer.[82]

Corporations as global actors ought therefore to be understood primarily in terms of their changing relationships with internal and external interests. Early modern corporations were not static institutions but processes of negotiation between various interests: with the states at home and abroad who extended commercial privileges to them; with their workforces, with lobbyists, interlopers, and the non-European suppliers and brokers who facilitated their trade. Corporations boasted deliberative governance rules that allowed owners to influence their activities. But corporations were much more than the narrow interests of their directors and governors. Successful corporations proved highly responsive to a variety of outside interests including their labour force, as well as the state officials.[83] They were also acutely sensitive to their moral and social profile and the need to be seen to contribute to the social fabric of their communities through charitable schemes, principally in Europe.[84] Corporations were designed to be structures that bound individuals into one legal personality, but careful study of the prosopography of corporate communities

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81   Philip Withington, 'Public Discourse, Corporate Citizenship, and State Formation in Early Modern England', *American Historical Review* 112, no. 4 (Oct., 2007): 1016–1038.

82   Ann M. Carlos, 'Bonding and the Agency Problem: Evidence from the Royal African Company, 1672–1691', *Explorations in Economic History*, 31, (1994): 313–335; Santhi Hejeebu, 'Contract Enforcement in the English East India Company' *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 65, No. 2 (Jun., 2005): 496–523.

83   Edmond Smith, 'Socially Responsible and Responsive Business in Seventeenth Century England' in William A. Pettigrew and David Chan Smith, eds., *A History of Socially Responsible Business c. 1600–1950* (London: Palgrave, 2017), 65–93

84   William A Pettigrew and Aske Laursen Brock, 'Leadership and the Social Agendas of the Seventeenth Century English Trading Corporation' in Pettigrew and Smith, eds., *A History of Socially Responsible Business,* 33–36.

proves that corporate entities provided a structural form for diverse groups of people – often with conflicting ideas and differing political persuasions – to enter and exit corporate membership. They allowed for the formation and reformation of commercial networks. As a negotiated and inclusive constitutional actor, the corporation provided durability and longevity through the 'immortality' of its corporate identity, allowing new sets of individuals with different adaptive views to consistently reshape it.[85]

These deliberative, responsive, and protean characteristics of corporations also extended to the corporation's external relationships. For these bodies to succeed commercially, they had to establish effective relationships with outside constituencies which included interlopers, European competitors, and most important, foreign merchants and states. Their commercial imperatives encouraged corporations to serve the interests of non-European peoples. In so doing, trading corporations appeared to finesse a double standard. At home, company members justified their monopolistic corporate trading privileges with reference to the need to intimidate the non-Europeans they traded with.[86] Overseas, however, corporate actors learned that non-Europeans provided the 'social depths' of their political power and, therefore, the sources of their commercial durability.[87] Company officials stressed the need to supplicate their commercial ambitions to the local commercial interests of their non-European hosts.[88] They often cemented relations with those hosts by describing how their corporate activities advanced the commercial ambitions of their local merchant contacts and their society at large.[89]

iii   *Corporations as Constitutions*

Their inclusivity, their responsiveness to outside influence, their skill at forming relationships with external constituencies and capturing differences within

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85   Aske Laursen Brock 'The Company Director: Commerce, State, and Society', PhD. Thesis University of Kent, 2017.

86   See especially Josiah Child, *A Treatise Wherin is Demonstrated* (London, 1681), 38.

87   Philip Withington, 'Public Discourse, Corporate Citizenship, and State Formation in Early Modern England', 1024; Miles Ogborn, *Global lives: Britain and the world, 1550–1800,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 87–93; Farhat Hasan, 'Indigenous Cooperation and the Birth of a Colonial City: Calcutta, c. 1698–1750', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (February, 1992): 73.

88   Ralph Preston to court of committees, Amadaver, 1 January, 1614, in Foster, *Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East*, 261.

89   BL, APAC, IOR/G/19/21, Yale to 'his most Imperial Majesty Jeanepatwan [?] Emperor of the Island of Sumatra and Territories thereof' Madras, 12 Sept. 1687, (f. 33v); IOR G/19/21, Yale to the 'Emperor of the Island of Sumatra and Territories thereof' [the ruler of Bengkulu], Madras, 12 Sept. 1687, (f. 33v).

their membership all depended upon the corporation's inherently constitutional quality. Trading corporations were – in essence – constitutions that mobilised capital at home and facilitated commercial relations overseas. Trading corporations codified constitutional practices at home – such as the rights of members and the powers these members were subject to – and exported these to non-European contexts where they experimented with and adapted to unusual constitutional techniques.[90] Their charters were early examples of written constitutions. Their privileges derived from their place of subordination to the state. They used their autonomy from state oversight overseas to become constitutionally creative entities overseas.[91] English corporations integrated spaces enfranchising non-Europeans with one constitutional device and alienating the English with others. The East India Company used its sovereignty overseas, for example, to develop corporate spaces with constitutional provisions that would have been unthinkably tolerant at home. In 1667, for example, the company sustained the English Crown's policy of extending subject rights to Portuguese Catholics in Bombay[92] The attempts to use their jurisdictional agility made overseas contexts into test cases for the practical possibilities of various forms of government. Trading corporations fetishised the written contracts they negotiated with foreign states. These became constitutive of what the corporations purported to be. Taken together, trading corporations' distinctively adaptive constitutional arrangements became constitutive of a composite, and pluralist, transoceanic framework. Trading companies thus helped structure what Lauren Benton has described as a 'single international legal regime' that integrated the globe on the basis of the common and mutually understood practice of permitting corporate and communal groups' legal authority and autonomy.[93] But within this transnational corporate constitutional framework, remarkable constitutional diversity developed. The trading corporation could be both the agent of constitutional coherence but also the harbinger of constitutional diversification. Just as Michael Braddick and Steve Hindle have noted corporations' roles in helping to form an English state structure based upon the relationships between multiple participatory institutions,

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90   Philip J. Stern, 'Rethinking Institutional Transformations in the Making of Modern Empire: The East India Company in Madras', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, vol. 9, 2 (2008).

91   Pettigrew, 'Corporate Constitutionalism'.

92   Stern, 'A Politie of Civill and Military Power', 253.

93   Lauren Benton, 'The Legal Regime of the South Atlantic World' in Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures: Legal Regimes and World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 49–59.

their constitutional activities on the global stage wove together a global framework for cross-cultural interaction.[94]

iv   *Corporations as Autonomous and Jurisdictionally Evasive*

While trading corporations experimented with different forms of government for their investors, for their servants, and for their trades, they also acted as states in their own right. Historians of early modern England have shown how corporations – as autonomous entities – assisted in actualising state power.[95] Some of these insights have been projected onto a global context by Philip J Stern in his account of the seventeenth century history of the East India Company.[96] For Stern, the international setting encouraged the corporation to assume the role of a state whose activities reflected back onto its domicile state, but who would often associate itself with its own transnational and separate corporate interests. The Royal African Company of England, for example, worked like other trading corporations in siding with non-European states and used evidence of constitutional subordination to them to advance their commercial and political agendas at home. To this end, corporations often assumed transnational powers. They operated on behalf of the state, but also apart from the state. In 1705, for example, the Royal African Company sealed an alliance with the French Senegal Company in Africa at a time when the English and French states were at war in Europe. The Royal African Company propagandist, Charles Davenant, defended that company from allegations that it made a separate peace with the French on the basis that trading companies 'are impowered to make Treaties of Peace and Commerce (and War too upon occasion) in any of those parts; according as they find the same suit best with their respective Circumstances at the time; without regard to Peace or War in *Europe*'.[97] Corporate power could therefore extend beyond state to transnational power. The constitutional malleability of corporations allowed them to both subordinate and exert themselves at the same time across multiple sovereign, national and cultural spaces. As such, trading corporations channelled

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94   Michael Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England*; Steven Hindle, *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England, 1550–1640* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2002).

95   Kathleen Wilson, 'Rethinking the Colonial State: Family, Gender, and Governmentality in Eighteenth-Century British Frontiers', *American Historical Review*, vol. 116, no. 5 (2011): 1294–1322.

96   Stern, *The Company State*.

97   Charles Davenant, *Reflections upon the Constitution and Management of the African Trade, etc.*, in Charles Whitworth, ed., *The Political and Commercial Works of That Celebrated Writer Charles D'Ave- nant, LL.D. …,* V (London, 1771), 34.

agency for both European and non-European initiative and provided opportunities for the pooling of both.

v   *Corporations as Integrative of the National and Global*

Corporations integrated local, national, and global contexts more than any other single institutional type. The corporation had been, since the Middle Ages, a primary tool for local government in England and throughout Europe. It was the legal entity used to govern particular towns, guilds, fraternal organizations, and colleges.[98] During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, these entities transformed themselves into global organisations. Just as corporations brought the world to European cities – in the form of goods, ideas, and peoples, they also brought English people and cultures to non-European contexts and helped alter their character.[99] Corporations also often depicted themselves as bodies designed to further the national interest. In print, they often described how they would ensure that the international trades they participated in would be managed to further the interests of their domicile nation. A full appreciation of their global sociology suggests, however, that corporations often succeeded when they learned to assist foreign commercial interests and often placed their own commercial concerns ahead of the national interests.

Central to the corporation's distinctive integration of the separate global, national, and local settings for corporate activity was the constant dialogue between the corporation's constitutional privilege at home and abroad and a commercial strategy that calibrated the trading interests of the corporation and its extra-European trading partners. Corporations required political support and constitutional privilege to gather and protect investment. Sustaining this support and privilege depended upon the establishment and maintenance of trade. Durable trading relationships depended upon the countenance of foreigners. Corporations therefore relied upon the agency and initiative of their non-European customers and suppliers. In bridging corporate, national and supranational contexts, trading corporations appeared to finesse a double standard. At home, they justified their monopolistic corporate trading privileges with reference to the need to intimidate the non-Europeans they traded with.[100] Overseas, however, corporations learned that non-Europeans

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98   See especially Phil Withington and Alexandra Shepard, eds*., Communities in Early Modern England: Networks, Place, Rhetoric* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001); Withington*, The Politics of Commonwealth: Citizens and Freemen in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

99   Batavia is the best example, as explored by Leonard Blusse, *Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* (Dordrecht: Floris Publications, 1986).

100   Child, *A Treatise Wherin is Demonstrated…*, 38

provided the 'social depths' of their political power and, therefore, the sources of their commercial durability.[101] Brokering this double standard of exclusivity at home and inclusivity overseas became intrinsic to the corporation's survival by the end of the seventeenth century. This brokerage – and the ways it integrated local and global worlds – became a determinant for corporate success.

Scope and Breadth

The corporations' significance as protagonists in Global History therefore stems from the interplay between different regions with different interests all operating under the umbrella of the corporation, but not with its full cognisance. The corporation was a network of interests – both inside and outside the corporate membership – tied together by trade and constitutional agreements and supported by multiple states. Subordinate to the domestic and foreign states it negotiated with, but also autonomous of both and with sovereign constitutional powers in its own right, the corporation straddled sovereignty and subordination in often-creative ways. Collapsing the distinctions between the public and private realms, blending centre and periphery, deployed in Atlantic and Asian zones of operation, the companies asserted, mutated, hybridised governmental thinking and practice throughout the seventeenth century. Instead of stressing either the trading corporation's impervious, state-like features or its business operations, our approach views the corporation as shifting, porous communities across and within which various forms of cross-cultural dialogue occurred. Our depiction of corporations broadens the field of view of corporate history away from a narrow juridical interpretation of corporate activity that views trading corporations as vehicles established solely to further the interests of their owners to a more capacious view that notes the breadth and complexity of corporations' relationships with constituencies outside their formal membership such as rival merchants, non-European states and hosts.

Trading corporations were neither rigidly nationalist nor monopolist entities who operated without responding to the interests of external constituencies. They learned that various ostensibly rival entities – including other European companies and interlopers themselves could help to advance their trades. The English East India Company became successful in comparison to other English companies and, eventually, its European counterparts, because

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101   Withington, 'Public Discourse, Corporate Citizenship, and State Formation in Early Modern England', 1016–1038, 1024.

it learnt how to motivate its overseas officials through liberating their access to private trade – effectively turning malfeasance into corporate strategy. This was in contrast to the Dutch VOC, who struggled to compete with the English Company in the eighteenth century largely due to its strict regulations against the private trade of its servants.[102]

By facilitating private trade, the English East India Company could establish durable commercial relations in its trading hinterlands, something that the Royal African Company could not.[103] Nor were corporations solely global, nor statist, nor forerunners of modern companies. Although trading corporations originated in Europe, they were quickly reshaped and reformed through their subordination to, and growth within, non-European spaces, markets, sovereignties and societies. Corporations were less European agents of trade and expansion, but rather global conduits for the importation and redistribution of non-European ideas, goods, people, and practices. Corporations therefore recast Europe from the 'knowing' subject to the 'object' of Global History, and that is how this volume analyses them.

This volume assembles this new account of what the global significance of trading corporations was largely with reference to a single cohort of companies – those established in England. The English used corporations to establish durable commercial relationships with three continents: Africa, North America, and Asia. These corporations moved peoples and goods into global circulation and helped England establish lasting diplomatic relationships with two of the world's most powerful empires: the Moghul and Ottoman Empires. Beginning with the joint stock Russia (or Muscovy) Company in the 1550s, which established a privileged trading relationship with the Russian Tsars, continuing with the Levant (or Turkey) Company in the 1580s, which traded to the Ottoman Empire, and culminating in 1600 with the East India Company, which sought access to the spice trade in South East Asia but settled into a bullion and textiles trade with the Indian sub-continent, corporations provided the English with their default spearhead to the non-European world.[104] Corporations also established the first waves of sustainable English settlement in

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102   See Nierstrasz, *In The Shadow of the Company*.

103   Pettigrew and Van Cleve, 'Parting Companies'.

104   On the early histories of the Muscovy, Levant, and East India Companies, see T. S. Willan, *The Early History of the Russia Company* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1956); A. C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (Oxford: Routledge, 1935); Susan Skilliter, *William Harborne and the Trade with Turkey, 1578–1582* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977); K. N. Chaudhuri, *The East India Company: The Study of an Early Joint-Stock Company, 1600–1640* (London: Routledge, 1964).

mainland North America with the Virginia Company from 1607 and the Massachusetts Bay Company from 1629 and established commercial relations with the fur traders of the North American Arctic via the Hudson Bay Company from 1670.[105] From 1660, the Royal African Company (originally the Company of Royal Adventurers Trading to Africa) monopolized England's trading relationship with West Africa and became the largest human trafficking organization of the period of the transatlantic slave trade and played a critical part in financing the development of the English Caribbean.[106]

However, this volume does not suggest that English corporations were any more or less important than those of their European counterparts. This is partly due to the fact that, as all overseas corporations underwent substantial change through the participation and agency of non-Europeans, different European corporations adapted to and adopted similar trajectories of development overseas as they engaged with the same non-European communities and states. This dynamic served to erode the differences between them. Furthermore, while English corporations may have emerged economically and politically dominant in some regions of the globe after 1750, such as the Indian Ocean, for most of this period they were often weak latecomers to global regions, attempting to emulate their European predecessors or failing to rival them altogether, learning painful lessons along the way. Rather, it puts forward English overseas corporations as a representative case-study of the way in which all European enterprises overseas were transfigured and transformed by non-Europeans. And while the English case studies form the main contribution to the analytical framework put forward in this volume, it seeks to place these within the context of French, Iberian, Scandinavian and Dutch experiences in a number of responses by specialists of overseas corporations from those countries in the latter part of the volume.

Part One – Aspects of the English Corporation

Part One of the book examines how ten sub-themes of corporate activity offer particular insights into how corporations acted as global protagonists. These themes are: building, family, gender, governance, literature, migration, political-economy, religion, scholarship, and science. In each case, these

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105   See also Elizabeth Mancke, 'Chartered Enterprises and the Evolution of the British Atlantic World', in *The Creation of the British Atlantic World*, ed. Elizabeth Mancke and Carole Shammas (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2005), 237–262.

106   Davies, *The Royal African Company* and, more recently, Pettigrew, *Freedom's Debt.*

thematic examinations of global corporate activity illuminate the distinctive international mechanisms that corporations provided for cross-cultural inter-action. Each chapter shows the global fruits of the corporation's distinctive global sociology.

In the first chapter, William Pettigrew, examines how corporations focussed debates about political economy – prevailing ideas about the relationships between commerce and governance – in their European and non-European fields of operation. From the outset, trading corporations had to justify their privileges with reference to the broader social and commercial advantages they generated for the state and public. In making their case, they developed a recognisable corporate discourse of political economy that proved formative for mercantilist ideologies and policies. The tropes of this discourse structured opposing arguments that proved formative for liberal political economies of the eighteenth century. A central focus of this discourse was the debate about monopoly, but the debate also confronted questions about sociability, the ci-vility of non- European peoples, and theories of economic growth. The cor-poration's inherent calibration of commercial and governmental agendas sus-tained a role for constitutional and political variables in economic outcomes. As structures that gave individual personality to dynamic networks of individ-uals, the corporation helped to absorb and shape writing about political econo-my and gave that writing a public role. As an intermediary institution between cultures, these debates about political economy channeled the experiences of international contexts into domestic public debates. In this way, corporations can help us to demonstrate the global contexts in which mercantilist doctrine emerged and altered and can show how non-Europeans peoples interactions with European corporations prompted and structured transnational debates about political economy.

In chapter two, Michael Bennett, examines the prominent role that cor-porations played in transporting free and unfree migrants across the Atlantic and Indian Ocean worlds. The global networks of exchange forged by overseas trading corporations during the early modern period facilitated the move-ment of people over long distances, and directed migration flows to regions of America, Africa, and Asia which were of commercial interest to English colo-nisers. By using their chartered monopolies to integrate these various colonial regions, and by successfully negotiating the competing interests of both the English state and non- European empires, corporate bodies were particular-ly effective in mobilising free planters, co-religionists, overseers, artisans, ser-vants, slaves, and coolies to 'people' nascent English colonies and trading out-posts. The constitutional and governmental structure of corporations, which encouraged the sharing of expertise and the regular changeover of members,

enabled policies relating to labour and migration to constantly evolve and be re-shaped to better suit the shifting economic and geopolitical circumstances of the early modern world. The dynamic approaches taken by corporate bodies towards empire-building encouraged experimentation and transnational interaction. An inclination to learn from other European and non-European empires meant that corporations were especially effective at inventing new methods of stimulating migration and producing innovative labour systems during the seventeenth century.

In chapter three, Aske Laursen Brock, assesses the importance of networks to the distinctive global sociology of corporations. Brock explores how trading companies relied on global networks to ply their trade and secure the position far from British shores. The companies constituted a very fertile and durable global space for exchange and dissemination of commodities, information and ideas over large distances. To successfully do this, the forming and strengthening of networks with other numerous agents, companies, and English trading companies with knowledge of long distance extra-European trade became increasingly important. Between 1550–1750 new connections were formed to answer the changing political and commercial realities globally and domestically. England developed from a peripheral power in Europe to a country at the centre of a global commercial imperial web. Corporate interests spanned from America and the Caribbean to South-East Asia and from Russia to southern Africa. Some corporations were designed to participate in colonial ventures and brought about vast migrations and placed large landmasses under direct corporate control. Others were dedicated to trade and shipping, exporting and importing products from England and around the world. The early modern corporations were created by networks and would come to facilitate a space globally where new networks was formed and, in time, strengthen the corporations. Partnerships and other looser associations did not create durable ties that lasted multiple decades and generations like corporations. For Brock, it is only by studying the social networks of company employees in Britain and overseas it is possible to understand how decision making worked, how the early modern knowledge economy developed and how knowledge became a commodity for commercial agents tied together in patronage and/or kinship networks. The networks were not stronger than their weakest links, and the study of them emphasize the agency of otherwise overlooked people such as corporate women and local people. Global corporate networks are crucial to understand the development of the British political economy and the later British Empire.

In chapter 4, Liam Haydon considers the role of the global corporation in making literature, and the role of print culture in making the corporation.

Historians of the corporation have recognised the importance of writing to corporate activity, and the creation of corporate identity, but have not considered the corporation's relationship with fictional, or literary, texts. Conversely, literary scholars have noted the profound impact of global political economies in early modern literature, though often without observing the centrality of the corporation to the development of that political economy. Moreover, these sorts of studies have tended to be historicist in approach, aiming to embed the literary text in economic activity without a conceptualisation of literature's role in creating the fictions and narratives on which the early modern trading company relied. Haydon considers a varied set of texts, including drama, pageantry, and poetry, as well as fictional and 'factual' prose from across the globe, to try and capture something of the interplay between fiction and economics. The functioning of a state or economy, the relationship between Europe and its 'others', even the ontology of the corporation itself, relied on language which was deployed, tested and refined in contemporary literature. Corporate ideas about trade and international relations took on cultural capital in early modern London, and around the globe. This process was part of a larger intellectual network, in Europe and beyond, which, through history, theology and early attempts at anthropology, sought to understand and historicise European relations with their new trading partners. At stake in all of these texts is the language of social, political and economic development, and the creation of a narrative framework which allowed the representation, and testing, of corporations and their ideas.

In Chapter 5, Haig Smith, examines how throughout the early modern era, corporations provided the main institutional framework to organise and police the commercial, political and religious lives of their members. English company charters for the majority of the seventeenth century gave general religious and social obligations, both domestically and abroad, to advance English Protestantism in America, India, Japan and the Levant. Extending Protestantism into religiously cosmopolitan and diverse environments abroad led to attempts to police the religious lives and behaviour of the companies' English personnel to secure the company's leaders various religious, political and commercial aims. The commercial and religious aims of the company became entwined as the companies' flexible governments developed various forms of religious control shaped by local circumstances and global experiences. Corporate structures both provided the legal space and protection to establish diverse but connected forms of autonomous English governmental authority across the globe. An assessment of religious control in England's overseas companies allows further analysis into how overseas companies developed into corporate political bodies that established and advanced their own sovereignty. By understanding

how corporate control of religion became a mechanism through which corporate structures directed and governed people overseas we can see how companies formed governments over its own employees. Moreover we can see how company employees as well as, local peoples and foreign environments, shaped the religious and governmental identities of those in the trading corporations. By doing so this expands our understanding into how early modern English people regulated the political and religious behaviour of its employees, corporators and the communities it governed. Furthermore, through an assessment of how religious governance and control regulated interaction between religious communities, we are better able to recognise the role and involvement of numerous faiths, including Hindus, Muslims, Catholic, Jews and Armenian, in the development of English Protestant authority abroad.

In chapter 6, Edmond Smith views corporations through the lens of governance. The development of new forms of trading and colonial corporation in the latter half of the sixteenth century provided an effective means of regulating the behaviour of people in England and overseas. Livery and urban corporations had played an important role in how commerce was organised in England, providing a framework for commercial education, institutions and law that became central pillars of the new corporate bodies that facilitated global exchange. Across the multiplicity of corporations that governed English activities across the world we can see a set of shared social and cultural conditions that provide an effective means of approaching global history. Through corporations the early modern world became increasingly connected; examining how they were governed in a comparative framework reveals what different corporations shared, but more importantly how they negotiated and adapted to different environments.

Effective corporate governance helped establish and integrate transoceanic frameworks that facilitated migration, commerce, and knowledge exchange on a global scale. This chapter will examine the role of governance in four distinct areas: how the corporation was a process of negotiation between its internal constituencies, within states, and between communities around the globe; the ways corporate discourse and opposition shaped non-corporate spaces through debates about free trade, interloping, sovereignty, the state, and jurisprudence; how constitutional malleability of corporations allowed them to both subordinate and exert themselves at the same time across multiple sovereign, national and cultural spaces; the process by which they were quickly reshaped and reformed through their subordination to, and growth within, non-European spaces, markets, sovereignties and societies. To assess these four key areas, the paper will survey how corporate governance developed between 1550 and 1750, focussing in particular on how it sought to regulate

the behaviour of employees oversees in Europe, the Levant, the East Indies and the Atlantic World. From this foundation, the chapter will examine three case studies about how governance adapted to different circumstances. First, it will examine the ways the East India Company sought to build the governance practices of London's traditional companies into the disparate trading environment of the East Indies – particularly focussing on the challenges faced of integrating ambassadorial, naval and merchant authority in dealings with the Mughal Empire. The second case study will consider how corporate governance provided a flexible structure for employees that allowed them to interact effectively with diverse peoples and societies overseas. Using the Levant company as a focal point this case study will explore the different way English people in the Ottoman Empire interacted with numerous ethnic, religious and political groups, adopting new modes of doing business and living while remaining loyal and law-abiding within the accepted parameters of corporate culture. The final case study will consider how corporate governance continued to affect the organisation of English overseas activities beyond the specific boundaries of corporate control. To do so it will examine the development of Caribbean colonies that were operated by figures who were culturally dependent on their corporate upbringing and networks in early modern London.

In chapter 7, David Veevers analyses the corporation through the lens of gender. He highlights how the relationship between gender and the primary protagonists in England's overseas expansion, corporations, has yet to be investigated. As trading companies were, first and foremost, constitutions for the regulation of trade and the government of inhabitants within their jurisdiction, Veevers argues that they were therefore crucial sites of gender formation, in which male and female identities and relationships were proscribed and ordered within a corporate structure. Senior company officials, for example, legitimised their authority by drawing on patriarchal ideas of absolutism and divine right, projecting themselves as the *paterfamilias* of the settlements and subjects under their government. However, as trading companies expanded in Asia and the Atlantic in the years 1550 to 1750, Veevers notes that their constitutional parameters gradually became more malleable and shifting. This process meant that covenanted servants and their female relations increasingly operated within a decentred corporate framework, one that provided them with the opportunity to reshape and reimagine their own sense of gender to an extent less possible in their domicile nation-states. This allowed women, for instance, to exploit a degree of independence to become partners in the business of their male relations and even private traders on their own account. In more extreme ways, they could even facilitate or instigate conspiracies in an effort to shift the balance of power within particular factions or settlements, to suit the

interests of themselves and their families. Furthermore, as the family became a significant actor in establishing expansive Company networks of trade, settlement and movement, men and women crossed cultural and national borders to integrate a number of foreign constituencies into the Company through sexual relations and even marriage. The ingratiation of non-Europeans was crucial for the success of England's trading companies, and the process transformed corporate settlements into transnational sites of exchange and cooperation, expanding populations and markets, whilst also acting as recruiting grounds for commercial brokers, soldiers and translators. Veevers concludes by illustrating that with the establishment of mixed-race families, non-Europeans were able to exert a degree of agency to shape the corporate landscape around them, challenging and often subverting the order of gender in Company settlements.

In Chapter 8, Emily Mann examines corporate initiatives and investment in the construction and maintenance of fortified settlements on three continents – America, Africa and Asia – through the long seventeenth century, this paper will demonstrate how in each case the corporation, like the built spaces it created, was a process of negotiation between its internal constituencies, within states, and between communities (and other corporations) around the globe. The connected, comparative approach over space and time will illuminate how the experience of one company influenced not only the attitudes and activities of commercial counterparts, but also the ideas and expectations of shareholders and the state. In particular, the paper will consider the corporate/colonial business of building in the context of the emerging fiscal- military state and its global frame. At the same time, the paper will enhance understanding of the material impact that trading corporations had on overseas territories and their inhabitants, and of the impact that building and maintaining fortifications overseas had on the development of corporate and state constitutions. In and around these entangled spaces, corporate cultures came into contact with others, and European practices and ideas were challenged and reshaped by non-European customs and conditions. This paper's focus on fort-building facilitates discussion of the corporation's operations on local and global levels, and across commercial, state and transnational spheres, and in so doing sharpens awareness of the interactions and tensions between them.

In chapter 9, Anna Winterbottom highlights the scientific interactions, formal and informal, between members of a wide variety of corporations, from trading companies to the Royal Society, and even European universities, to understand the crucial role of knowledge-gathering in this period. Winterbottom argues that as well as drawing parallels between these relationships, there were also differences. The particularities of each of these relationships – centrally, the particular global connections that they sought to navigate and

understand – would in fact shaped the distinctive national characters of science and colonialism that would emerge by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In this chapter, Winterbottom explores the terminology of the early modern period, in which it was more accurate to speak of 'useful knowledge' and of 'natural' and 'mechanical philosophy' than of science.

First, useful knowledge was central to both savant institutions and the trading companies in this period. Both organisations concerned with natural philosophy – like the Royal Society – and trading companies – strove to prove their usefulness throughout this period. As the introduction to this volume makes clear, European trading companies in this period had to please multiple constituents, including European and non-European rulers, their own shareholders, and their critics, again, at home and abroad. Similarly, organisations like the Royal Society had to convince royal and governmental funders, sceptical publics and their own correspondents and informants, that their inquiries were practically useful rather than nonsensical and possible heretical fantasies. Winterbottom's chapter concludes by discussing the various forms of natural and mechanical knowledge that were produced in and circulated around trading company settlements and how they were interpreted, codified, and compiled both within the settlements and by metropolitan institutions, scholars, and artisans, before often being recirculated and reinterpreted within the company network. In doing so, the chapter will demonstrate how the non-European context of the activities of the trading companies actively shaped the co-creation of science and colonialism in the early modern period.

In chapter 10, Simon Mills traces how scholars intersected with the corporations of early modern England, focusing predominantly on England's commercial endeavours in Africa, the Levant, and East Asia. Uncovering some of the links between English scholars and the merchants, diplomats, and consular staff stationed across the globe, Mills takes a fresh look at stimulus provided to various fields of scholarly enquiry by the expansion of the early modern trading corporations. Secondly, the chapter will consider the extent to which the corporations could themselves assimilate scholarly practices into their global activities. One focus here will be the chaplaincies, established to serve the mercantile communities from Algiers, to Aleppo, to Surat, which provided a key link between the trading companies and the universities. We shall see too some of the ways in which the companies' connections with local actors could be bound up with scholarly interests. Although the central governors of the Levant Company in London were concerned in only a limited capacity with scholarship, this would change as a consequence of the East India Company's developing colonial ambitions. The final part of the chapter will thus look again at the connection between scholarship and British India, stressing

the continuity with earlier practices in order to suggest a more historically-nuanced approach to the relationship between the emergence of 'oriental' studies and colonialism.

Part Two – European Perspectives

Part Two subjects the case studies that are largely drawn from the English companies to comparison with Dutch, Scandinavian, French, and Iberian contexts. Trading corporations emerged in several European nations in the period 1550 to 1750, and while they undoubtedly operated in different domestic environments, they also shared significantly similar overseas experiences with their English corporate counterparts. The chapters in this part will critically examine the English experiences outlined in Part One, and explore the way in which the distinctive global sociology of corporations was not confined to England, but was rather characteristic of all European trading companies in the early modern world.

In chapter 11, Lisa Hellman compares the Scandinavian overseas experience to the English case studies provided in the proceeding section. She argues that to consider the overseas corporation as global protagonists is part of a much-needed turn in which global historians are not just discussing the potential of global history but are using its methodological approaches and insights to provide new answers, and new frameworks. Hellman points out that different European corporations provide very different clues to a new, integrated, history of the corporation as such – that affects this volume's aim of exploring the corporation as a global actor, but is even more important for its endeavour to elucidate the formation of the corporation as a global process in and of itself. She goes on to explore how including Scandinavian overseas corporations, such as their East India Companies, Levant Companies, African Companies and West India Companies, also slightly changes the picture of European overseas ventures. These corporations were established in countries with much less successful colonial and imperial venture than that of the British ones. As such, they add to the variety, and 'messiness' of early modern globalisation. The Swedish East India Company, for example, focused solely on trade with China; it was a chartered company, but acted as a small interloper in the trade with an expanding and powerful Asian empire. Hellman argues that the crucial fact is not only that the European corporations differed, they also affected each other, which is why they should not be studied separately. Rather, they show how the global history approach of going beyond the nation state offers a new view on an old story. Indeed, one could argue that the British corporations

are difficult to understand without taking into account cooperation and competition with other actors, including local and regional actors and networks – as well as other European corporations.

In chapter 12, Leonard Hodges explores early modern French chartered companies, and their role in transporting state sovereignty abroad. He argues that historians have traditionally arranged Dutch, British, and French overseas corporations on a sliding scale between private and state control. The Dutch are typically seen as running first and foremost a business organisation overseas, while French overseas enterprises barely rank above the Portuguese as appendixes of the state. The often-unspoken assumption is that the British sit serendipitously somewhere in the 'Goldilocks zone' between these extremes. Insofar as the metropolitan context is concerned, it is impossible to overlook the long shadow of the state in the organisation of the French East India Company, for example. Hodges suggests that rather than limiting ourselves to metropolitan perspectives, it is crucial to set the French East India Company more firmly in its Indian context. One of the most enduring puzzles of the French Company is how, under its aegis, the French engaged in a dress rehearsal for empire-building in the Carnatic and Hyderabad, setting the stage for the eventually more successful British intervention in Bengal. In return for military support provided to Indian rulers, for a brief period the French gained the right to raise revenue across large swathes of territory and wielded the trappings of Mughal sovereignty, with many individuals making significant personal fortunes. In this respect, the idea of the corporation as a protagonist in global history is to be especially welcomed in offering the chance to reframe a largely outdated historiography on the French East India Company's role in imperial expansion.

Hodges argues that, with a few exceptions, this literature has remained rooted in the Third Republic 'great man' school of history, overshadowed by the contentious figure of Joseph-François Dupleix, Governor of French India from 1742 to 1754. Instead, the many thoughtful chapters in this volume suggest a number of starting points for recalibrating our understanding of the French East India Company, and the important role it played during this crucial period. His chapter concludes by revealing how, even though overseas French enterprises were often characterised as an appendix of the state, the French East India Company was able to integrate and respond to non-European interests in its own particular way. Changing metropolitan governments, as well as French Catholicism are certainly complicating factors, yet what is striking is how this response can itself be conceived as an act of state-building, the appointment of a Director integrated into the ministerial patronage system which characterised the *Ancien Régime*. Phillip Stern may have taught us to see how companies could be states, but the French case shows that states could be companies.

In chapter 13, Edgar Pereira compares the English overseas experience with that of the Iberian powers, Portugal and Spain. His chapter provides an etymological analysis on the concept of 'corporation' within its Iberian context, pointing out its rich and long history in Spanish and Portuguese society, law and political order, making insightful comparisons with the place of 'corporations' in English society. Pereira then deploys the volume's conceptualisation of corporations as adaptive constitutions to the Spanish and Portuguese overseas experiences to challenge entrenched understandings of their colonial dominance. Instead, he explores the responsive nature of, for example, the *Estado da India*, and highlights its malleable and fluid nature. By drawing on examples of Iberian trading companies from Asia to the West Coast of Africa, Pereira is able to refute historiographical accusations that Iberian companies lacked the durability of their north European counterparts or the centrality to Spanish and Portuguese overseas interactions. He most notably points out that in the eighteenth century, corporations came to dominate Iberia's engagement overseas, whether as the Royal Company of Havana or the Company of Barcelona. The chapter concludes by demonstrating that we can confidently talk of a Spanish or Portuguese corporate Atlantic in perhaps more ways than the English.

In the volume's final chapter, Chris Nierstrasz explores the global sociology of perhaps the most prolific corporations in the early modern world, those of the Dutch. His chapter argues that the study of Dutch companies more often than not have had a strong national bias that stands in the way of more abstract conceptualization of their essential form. National historians have a hard time jumping over their own shadow and acknowledging that companies are part of similar institutional developments elsewhere. Nierstrasz calls for a more general conception of Dutch corporations in order to understand that, for instance, the Dutch East India Company was not so different from the West Indies Company in their constitutional form. This chapter of the book specifically analyses the Dutch voc to tease out the ways in which the volume's claim for the 'distinctive Global Sociology of the Corporation' can also be applied to Dutch overseas trading companies. Nierstrasz's chapter delves into the position of Companies within the field of Global History and will then try to relate the distinctive Global Sociology of the Corporation to the Dutch voc. He argues that, although a more general conceptualization of corporations is necessary, it must also be acknowledged that similar global constitutional frameworks could often also create different local outcomes.

PART 1

Aspects of the English Corporation

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Political Economy

William A. Pettigrew

Early modern global interactions were mostly commercial in ambition. These interactions, however, were often inhibited and undermined by cultures (around the world) that remained ambivalent about commercial agendas and activities. Europeans and non-Europeans sized one another up in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with profound mutual suspicion expressed in remarkably similar language: both saw each other as brutal, greedy, perfidious infidels.[1] Both sides believed the other to be predisposed to commercial trickery. For most Europeans, the trading corporation proved the main institutional vehicle for these encounters. The corporation was meant to provide mandatory government to ensure that cross-culture commerce favoured the interests of Europeans and negated the interests of untrustworthy foreigners. But corporations themselves could not fully shed their associations with intrinsic commercial perfidy. The English East India Company, for example, learnt that it could not send a merchant to serve as its representative at the Mughal Court. Company factors had advised that 'the title of a merchant is of them despised'.[2] While the end for such diplomacy was explicitly commercial, the means would have to pretend otherwise.

This inherent contradiction between a trading corporation's nationalist, governmental responsibilities and the private, profit maximizing interests of

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1 Thomas Mun, *Discourse of Trade* (London, 1621), 8. For Non-European views of Europeans see Anthony Read, 'Early Southeast Asian Categorizations of Europeans' in Stuart Schwartz (ed.), *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters Between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 268–294, see esp. 287; see also Guido Van Meersbergen 'Dutch and English Approaches to Cross-Cultural Trade in Mughal India and the Problem of Trust' in Catia Antunes and Amelia Polonia (eds.), *Beyond Empires: Global, Self-Organizing, Cross-Imperial Networks, 1500–1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 69–87; and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Taking Stock of the Franks: South Asian Views of Europeans and Europe, 1500–1800', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 42, 1, (2005): 69–101.

2 *Letters Received by the East India Company from its servants in the East* [hereafter *Letters Received*] 6 vols. (London, 1896 – 1902), ed. F C Danvers and W Foster, Vol. 2: William Edwards to Sir Thomas Smith, 26 December 1614, 243–44. See also Rupali Mishra, 'Diplomacy at the Edge: Split Interests in the Roe Embassy to the Mughal Court', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 53, 1, (2014): 5–28.

the merchants who largely financed and managed such companies became a foundational concern for political economists in the later eighteenth century. For Adam Smith the paradox implied 'a strange absurdity' in corporate political economy. For Smith, this schizophrenia of 'sovereign' and 'mercantile' priorities was inherent to corporate political economy: 'As sovereigns, their interest [the East India Company's] is exactly the same with that of the country which they govern. As merchants, their interest is directly opposite to that interest'.[3] These contradictions imply – from a twenty-first century perspective – a strange role for political economy in the careers of the English trading corporations of the late sixteenth to Smith's day.[4] Of course, the early modern mind did not always draw hard distinctions between what the modern world can distinguish as separate economic and political realms. But nonetheless – the emerging and increasingly contentious and public debate about political economy – or the theory of the proper role of commercial matters within domestic and international politics – became more avowedly economic across this period. Recent and important depictions of trading corporations as governing and constitutional structures ought not to inhibit us from noting the influence that trading corporations had over this process of separating economic and political phenomena.[5] The end result of this separation allowed for the emergence of classical economic theory and – in the context of the global interactions this volume focusses on – the belief (among Europeans at least) that 'sweet' commerce would facilitate mutually beneficial commercial relationships around the world (to substitute for the profound mutual suspicion of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries).[6] Across the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the terms of English thought and practice about political economy broadened from 'civic humanist' to the elastic, versatile languages of

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3   Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (London, 1776), vol. 2, chapter 7, book 3 www.econlib.org/library/Smith/smWN17.html#B.IV, Ch.7, Of Colonies [accessed October 3 October 2017].

4   According to Julian Hoppit, the term political economy was first used in France in 1615 and was used infrequently prior to the 1760s. See Julian Hoppit, *Britain's Political Economies: Parliament and Economic Life, 1660–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 3.

5   On these attempts see Philip J Stern *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Origins of the British Empire In India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) and William A Pettigrew, 'Corporate Constitutionalism and the Dialogue between the Global and Local in Seventeenth Century English History', *Itinerario*, vol. 39, 3, (2015): 487 – 501.

6   On doux of sweet commerce see Albert O Hirschman, *The Passions and the Intersts: Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997: New Edition), 56–62.

commercial and liberal thought.[7] This chapter will argue that the distinctive global sociology of trading corporations played a central role in this volte face in global political economy.

Trading corporations provoked, nurtured, and focussed debates about political economy. As structures that gave separate legal personality to dynamic networks of individuals, the corporation helped to absorb and shape thinking and writing about political economy and give that writing a public role and audience. To be sure, not all paradigm shifts in political economy derived from corporate settings. The writings of Sir William Petty – a pioneer in this field – appear to owe very little to corporate issues.[8] Nonetheless leading members of trading corporations – like Thomas Mun and Josiah Child and Malachy Postlethwayt became celebrated and influential political economists while established writers like Charles Davenant and Daniel Defoe supported trading corporations. The companies financed large-scale state lobbying machines and pamphleteering operations to nurture these views and deploy them in defence of their privileges. As powerful and often-wealthy, privileged entities whose existence upheld controversial positions within prevailing debates about political economy, the trading corporations were central characters in these debates and their development.

This chapter examines the distinctive global sociology of the trading corporation through the lens of political economy. It notes how the corporate arguments in favour of monopoly, to take the most prominent example, remained profoundly static across the period 1550–1750. This chapter focusses, however, on certain moments of conceptual innovation that trading corporations spurred and shaped. It places the relationship between corporate activity and developing political economy into a global framework of cross-cultural interactions. These global corporate debates about political economy channelled the experiences of international contexts into domestic public debates and back again. In this way, corporations help us to demonstrate the global contexts in which mercantilist doctrine emerged and altered and show us how non-Europeans peoples' interactions with European corporations prompted and structured transnational debates about political economy.

Scholars have most often associated corporate political economy with that most colligatory of early modern historians' devices – mercantilism. Corporations

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7   For an earlier statement of this view see J G A Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1975), Ch XIII.

8   Ted McCormick, *William Petty and the Ambitions of Political Arithmetic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

articulated and upheld pillars of mercantilist doctrine as part of their special pleading in defence of their corporate privileges – especially monopoly. This intellectual and – for the most part print – history of mercantilist (and therefore nationalist) political economy, however, represents a profoundly restricted view of the trading company's influence on the history of political economy.[9] To reduce this influence to the propping up of mercantilist doctrine, is to limit the global history of corporations to the partial pleading of print in London.

While historians of corporations and mercantilism have often noted the centrality of corporations to their histories, historians of ideas have not taken corporations seriously – for the most part – as entities and interests who have shaped theory. Intellectual historians have, until recently, been reticent about placing the contributions of corporations (as well as corporations themselves) into the history of ideas. With the important exception of Philip J Stern, historians of political thought have (for the most part) ignored corporations.[10] Historians of economic thought have often mentioned trading corporations, but they have usually seen companies only as expressions of mercantilist dogma, or agents bent on upholding that dogma; in short as bodies suppressive of conceptual innovation in economic concepts, rather than nurturing it.[11] Because the economic pamphleteering that constitutes our evidence for mercantilist political economy was often written by merchants themselves, its intellectual credentials have been tarred – for historians of ideas – with the brushes of interest and of policy.[12] Part of the ambivalence towards corporate writing may

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9　　　Andrea Finkelstein, *Harmony and the Balance: An Intellectual History of Seventeenth-Century English Economic Thought* (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 2000), 62. On special pleading see Robert Ekelund and Robert Tollison, *Politicised Economies: Monarchy, Monopoly, and Mercantilism*, (Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1997); see also Terence Hutchinson, *Before Adam Smith: The Emergence of Political Economy, 1662–1776* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 50, 60. But as Andrea Finkelstein has stressed the same authors produced contrasting political economies for different corporations and special pleading for corporate interests need not be detrimental to theoretical insight see *Harmony and Balance*, 92.

10　　Philip J. Stern '"A Politie of Civill & Military Power": Political Thought and the Late Seventeenth-Century Foundations of the East India Company-State' *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 47, No. 2 (April, 2008): 253–288. For a long term history of corporate ideology see Antony Black, *Guilds and Civil Society in European Political Thought from the Twelth Century to the Present* (Ithaca: Methuen Young Books, 1984).

11　　This tradition can be traced from the foundational work of Hecksher see Eli F Heckscher, *Mercantilism* (trans. Mendel Shapiro), (London: George Allen, 1955), vol 1.

12　　Tim Keirn 'Parliament, Legislation, and the Regulation of English Textile Industries, 1689 – 1714' in L Davison, T Hitchcock, T Keirn, and R Shoemaker (eds.), *Stilling the Grumbling Hive: Responses to Social and Economic Problems in England, 1689–1750* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1992), 17.

come from the belief that corporate authors were – in the most accurate sense of the word – corporate rather than free thinking intellectuals with their own conceptual ambitions.

Instead, corporations are offered as emblems of traditional views. For Henry Turner the corporation channelled civic humanist ideas into a commercial context and provided a way of ensuring that private gain served the common good.[13] The desire to place corporations into the canon of the history of political thought has often led questions of government to overshadow questions of commerce in accounts of mercantilist doctrine. This has led historians to suggest that the contribution of corporations to the history of political economy ought to be limited to a narrative concerned mostly with the history of governance and the relationship between state and merchant.[14]

There is great value in resurrecting the political aspects of political economy but there is also a profound irony in doing this which helps to illustrate an important point about the corporation's influence on the theory of political economy. Adam Smith famously invented mercantilism (or the 'mercantile system' as he called it) to discredit it. The trading corporations were pantomime villains within Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. Smith famously used the English trading companies – especially the East India and Royal African Companies – as the monopolising nemeses of commercial initiative.[15] They embodied all that was wrong with excessive governance in trade. Historians have used Smith's critique to recover the governmental imperatives of early modern trading corporations. But Smith's influence has often led to an obfuscation – among historians of corporations (less so historians of political economy) of the constructive (rather than obstructive) effect of corporations on the theory that Smith would develop in *Wealth of Nations*. Those early political economists who began to reject mercantilist reliance on corporate monopolies on the understanding that individual economic instincts would substitute for government action (through corporations) to sustain and grow economies were as much reactions to corporate political economy as Smith's 'mercantile system' was a straw man to promote the macro-economic advantages of free enterprise. Such was the depth of influence of corporations over debates about political economy in the period 1550–1750 that their sway over these debates

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13   Henry S. Turner, 'Corporations: Humanism and Elizabethan Political Economy' in Stern and Wennerlind, *Mercantilism Reimagined*, 153–176, at 165.

14   Stern, *Company State*, 178.

15   Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (2 vols., 1776) <http://www. 45 econlib.org/library/Smith/smWN20.html#V.1.119> and <http://www.econlib.org/library/Smith/smWN20. 46 html#V.1.98> [accessed 18 April 2016].

can be felt in the way they structured critical and innovative responses as well as those that sought to uphold corporate privilege.[16]

The shadow of mercantilism has also led historians of political economy to assume the 'Eurocentricism' of some of their historical actors when seeking to explain the intensification of global trade in the seventeenth century. According to this view, mercantilism was a pan-European belief system.[17] Ideological debate about mercantilist policy – although it often developed across national borders within Europe – was as rigidly nationalist in its generation as it was in its ambition.[18] But the corporate authors of political economy – from Richard Hakluyt to Malacky Postlethwayt – were heavily preoccupied with finding ways to improve commercial policy that reflected experience of and expertise in global contexts. These attempts were sometimes distorted by more local cultural prejudices (for Hakluyt it was the need to accommodate the fruits of foreign travel within Aristotelian political categories), but the distortions influenced the formulation of new political economies.[19] In line with the governmental emphases of historians of corporations interested in the history of political thought, the international setting for corporate activity has focussed on issues of jurisdiction and the emergence of international law – rather than questions relating to the development of international markets.[20] For historians of empire, however, political economy has been interchangeable with

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16   For a volume that has been inspirational for our approach but that nonetheless projects nineteenth century notions of political economy onto the early modern period is J D Tracey (ed.), *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

17   Steven Pincus, 'Rethinking Mercantilism: Political Economy, the British Empire, and the Atlantic World in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries' *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 69, no. 1, January 2012: 4.

18   On the European framework see Martine van Ittersum, *Profit and Principle: Hugo Grotius, Natural Rights Theories, and the Rise of Dutch Power in the East Indies, 1595–1615* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); and also Sophus Reinert, *Translating Empire: Emulation and the Origins of Political Economy* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2011). For global perspectives see Kafadar, Cemal, 'Les Troubles Monetaires de la fin du XVIe Siecle et la Prise de Conscience Ottomane du Declin', *Annales* 2, 1991: 381–400 and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Of Imarat and Tijarat: Asian Merchants and State Power in the Western Indian Ocean, 1400 to 1750', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Oct., 1995): 750–780; "Persianization and 'Mercantilism' in Bay of Bengal History, 1400–1700" in Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected History: From the Tagus to the Ganges* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005). An important exception to this Eurocentricism is William J Barber's *British Economic Thought and India, 1600 – 1858*: *A Study in the History of Development Economics*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975).

19   For Hakluyt and Aristotelian political categories see Turner, *Corporations*, 166.

20   Turner, *Corporations*, 167.

empire.[21] A global field of view offered in this chapter allows for a more textured account of the corporation's relationship with political economy.

The lens of political economy therefore illuminates how corporations used their public printed appeals to augment their subordination to state and public concerns. But it also shows how corporations altered economic theory to account for the need to rationalise sharing commercial advantage with non-Europeans. This alteration formed a part of a process of hybridisation in which received mercantilist authority was challenged and altered by international experience and shows how foreign merchants and interests compelled this alteration in corporate political economy. These alterations to corporate political economy were also influenced by employees and opponents who taught the companies the importance of licensing private trade. The overseas experiments with political economy that corporations led in places like Bombay and Madras also demonstrate how the constitutional autonomy of corporate entities facilitated such innovation. Such experiments were often brought back into domestic debates in ways that help the historian clarify the interaction between the corporation's national and global spheres of operation.

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The most important resort to political economy for trading corporations was the need to fashion public justifications for their privileges. This most often meant their commercial monopolies.[22] Long-established opinions rejected monopolies as engrossing of economic opportunity.[23] The seventeenth and eighteenth century overseas trading corporation provoked heated debate about the proper role of the state in the management of the national and international economy.[24] The corporations were often criticised for raising prices and for restricting access to trade for the ordinary merchant, shopkeeper, and wholesaler. The companies therefore had to articulate public-good arguments

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21   Sophus A Reinert and Pernille Roge, *The Political Economy of Empire in the Early Modern World*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2013). For the inextricable links between political economy and empire see Richard Drayton, Foreword 'Of Empire and Political Economy', vii.

22   For emphasis on monopolies see Philip J Stern ' "Bundles of Hyphens": Corporations as Legal Communities in the Early Modern British Empire', in Lauren Benton and Richard Ross (eds.), *Legal Pluralism and Empires, 1500–1850* (New York: New York University Press, 2013), 21–48.

23   For a useful early survey of pro and anti-corporate arguments see Sir Edwin Sandys, 'Instructions Touching the Bill for Free Trade' *Journals of the House of Commons,* Vol. 1, 218, 1604.

24   For a particularly useful summary of the core tenets of mercantilist doctrine see Finkelstein, *Harmony and Balance*, 249–250.

in favour of monopolistic privilege. These were built upon long-held arguments about the need to rein in individual acquisitive urges that would, if given license, become socially corrosive. This classic debate in political economy between the state and the individual as the source of economic dynamism within the national economy would proceed in largely static theoretical terms (though with bursts of enthusiasm typically at times of commercial crisis) throughout the seventeenth century and much of the eighteenth involving well-known writers like Dudley Digges, Gerald Malynes, Edward Misselden, Thomas Mun, Lewes Roberts, Josiah Child, Charles Davenant, John Carey, Arthur Dobbs, and Joshua Gee, Malachy Postlethwayt.[25] From Malynes, through Child, Davenant, and up to Postlethwayt, the pro-monopoly position remained grounded in the belief that companies were best suited to preserve 'the amitie and entercourse betweene the Realme and other neighbour Princes and States' and to retain control over prices of imports.[26]

This core pro-company argument represents a thin veneer obscuring the complex transnational activities of the corporations. As we have seen, the corporations were not always monopolistic; they were not always nationalist. They were subordinate entities. Their promotional literature often celebrated the ways in which monopolistically organised trade would intimidate non-European peoples and impose prices on them. The strong governmental power over international commerce that the corporation provided was understood in 1604 (even by an advocate of free trade) to be essential to 'keep some port there amongst the infidels'.[27] But with experience of international markets and especially the appreciation that durable trading relationships could not be formed without ensuring that non-Europeans enjoyed some benefit from them, the

25   Dudley Digges, *THE DEFENCE OF TRADE. In a Letter To Sir THOMAS SMITH Knight, Gouernour of the EAST-INDIA Companie, &c. From one of that Societie* (London, 1615); Gerald Malynes, *A Treatise of the Canker of Englands Common wealth Deuided into three parts* (London, 1601) and *The Center of The Circle of Commerce. Or, A refutation of a treatise, intituled The circle of commerce, or The ballance of trade, lately published by E.M.* (London, 1623); Edward Misselden, *The Circle of Commerce*, (London, 1623); Thomas Mun, *Discourse of Trade*, (London, 1621); Lewes Roberts, *Treasure of Trafficke* (London, 1641); Josiah Child, *A Treatise Wherein is Demonstrated* [London, 1680/81?], Charles Davenant, *A Memorial concerning the East India Trade* (1696).

26   Gerald Malynes, *Consuetudo, vel lex mercatoria, or The ancient law-merchant* (London, 1622), 210; on prices see Charles Davenant, *Reflections upon the Constitution and Management of the African Trade, etc.*, in Charles Whitworth, ed., *The Political and Commercial Works of That Celebrated Writer Charles D'Ave- nant, LL.D. ...,* V (London, 1771), 96 and Malachy Postlethwayt, *The African Trade, the great pillar and support of the British Plantation Trade in America*, (London, 1745); 11–12.

27   Sandys, *Instructions Touching the Bill.*

desire to bridle and awe the heathen was tempered. Corporations developed new political economies to rationalise their subordination and uphold their interests to emphasise the need for negotiation with foreign stakeholders. As an East India Company factor explained to the company's directors in 1614, Indian rulers and merchants expected Europeans to be both respectable ambassadors and 'banyans' or merchants – who the local rulers regarded as 'little better than slaves' to sustain trading relationships.[28] The contradictions between these two positions helped to generate a corporate political economy derived from global, cross-cultural experience, that did not always paraphrase mercantilist clichés. The contours of this unofficial corporate political economy can be witnessed in print. But the writings of corporate actors like Thomas Mun were only the final, public, printed stage in a process of development for corporate political economy that included international experience, courtroom wrangles, and internal corporate debate.

The Process Sketched

This chapter analyses the effects of global experience on corporate political economy according to a series of overlapping, and non-sequential processes. These processes were: first, the ways in which investment communities in the metropolis required the stereotyping of overseas customers and suppliers of the companies according to mercantilist expectations; second, how experience of subordination overseas trading led company officials to challenge and undermine these stereotypes; third, how overseas corporate officials enjoyed the autonomy to absorb the challenges and opportunities of their local circumstances and translate them into commercial opportunities; fourth, the ways in which the altered political economies that emerged from these translations entered the political (and increasingly public) contests over ideas and practice and rebounded around and informed the intense debates about political economy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that reverberated around this global network again.

Trading corporations often justified their monopoly powers with reference to stereotyped and mannered depictions of their non-European trading hinterlands.[29] Non-Europeans became despotic and barbarous in proportion to the

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28   Ralph Preston to the East India Company, Amadaver, 1 January, 1614 in William Foster (ed.), *Letters Received by the East India Company from Its Servants in the East*, vol. 2, 1613–15 (London, 1897), 261.

29   Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Frank Submissions: The Company and the Mughals between Sir Thomas Roe and Sir William Norris', in H V Bovemn, Margarette Lincoln, and Nigel Rigby,

monopolistic privileges extended to each company. An instrumental connection was therefore established in corporate political economy between these mannered judgements of overseas peoples and the extent of corporate privilege. Samuel Purchas' *Pilgrimes,* to take an important example, continued the vast task begun by the two Richard Hakluyts of anthologising all of the writing they could get their hands on that focussed on non-European peoples. Their ruminations confirmed that such writing, if digested solely in a domestic context (though they were circulated on board East India Company ships), was only palatable in so far as it reminded Europeans of their own cultural superiority.[30]

Of course, such stereotypes would be subject to widespread challenge once corporations began to develop large presences overseas; establishing and governing over large communities of non-European peoples whose labour and commercial ingenuity became central to their trades. Very often, high-ranking corporate officials – like Sir Thomas Roe and the governor of the Royal African Company, Sir Dalby Thomas, continued to depict the non-Europeans they encountered in supercilious terms to uphold the mercantilist prejudices of their corporate superiors in London.[31] Others, like Paul Rycaut, the private secretary to the Ambassador to the Ottoman Court and a key figure within the Levant Company's factory at Istanbul, proposed to use his experience to influence as well as entertain his readers at home. Rycaut stressed that the stereotyped, mannered depiction of Ottomans by Europeans that assumed their barbarity led Europeans to underestimate Ottomans in ways that could effect European interests. As Rycaut explained 'It hath been the happy fortune of the Turk to be accounted barbarous and ignorant; for upon this perswasion Christian Princes have laid themselves open and unguarded to their greatest danger'[32] Those factors of the company involved in private trade (as well as interlopers) were more likely to stress the commercial common ground between English and non-European merchants. Similarly, those lobbyists who sought to deregulate

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eds., *The Worlds of the East India Company*, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002), 69–97, at 77; William Foster, ed., *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of Great Mogul, 1615–1619* (London, 1899), 122, 215, 228; Ernest M Satow, ed., *The Voyage of Captain John Saris, 1613* (London, 2009), 177. See also Thomas Mun, *Discourse of Trade*, (London, 1621), 16.

30   Samuel Puchas, *Purchas his Pilgrim. Microcosmus, or the historie of Man. Relating the Wonders of his Generation, Vanities in his Degeneration, Necessity of his Regeneration*. (London, 1619), I, 93.

31   Sir Dalby Thomas to the Royal African Company, Nov. 26, 1709, Treasury (T) series vol. 70/175, 202

32   From unpaginated dedication to Rycaut, *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire* (London, 1670); see also Sonia P Anderson *An English Consul in Turkey Paul Rycaut of Smyrna, 1667 – 1678* (Oxford, 1989).

trades proposed that non-European commercial contacts were civilised and that their commercial entrepots were much like the great commercial centres of Europe, such as Livorno. Companies were discredited by their opponents for overbearing treatment of the non-Europeans.[33] Those who made the journey to these non-European contexts produced an empiricism of empire that challenged the mercantilist dogma.

Responding to their new environment, the companies' overseas officials used their agency to devise new political economies to strengthen their commercial positions. They did so often in spite of formal instructions from the companies' leadership in London. These disabusals and constitutional experiments were then transported, through company infrastructures, back into the mother country where they entered the emergent debates about political economy. The corporations' were often at the centre of public, parliamentary debates and their international experiences informed how they justified their privileges and deflected charges of self-serving. The dialogic impetus of parliamentary discussion helped to create new binaries of debate to replace the old civic-humanist binaries. Pro-corporate political economy structured anti-corporate argument and therefore the classical economic theory of the later eighteenth century. The effects of international corporate activity on English political economy can often be most clearly observed by appreciating how specific arguments to sustain the corporations' privileges produced reflective counter arguments from rival interests. Corporate discourse and opposition shaped broader political economies through debates about free trade, interloping, sovereignty, the state, and jurisprudence. This international process of testing, reforming, and importing the overseas lessons in political economy that the trading corporations facilitated suggests at least six insights about the connections between corporations and the development of political economy across the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These fall in the following categories: population, tax, money, rights to trade, and legitimate commerce.

Categories of Change

The question of population's role in stimulating economic growth and in challenging political stability was central to debates about political economy.[34]

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33   HBC 268 *PAPERS relating to the East India Company; 1682–1701*. Paper. Formerly belonging to Sir Henry Johnson, Knt., M.P., one of the Directors. BL Add. MS 22185, f. 27. at 3.

34   See Ted McCormick, 'Population: Modes of Seventeenth-Century Demographic Thought' in Stern and Wennerlind, *Mercantilism Reimagined*, 25–45.

International trading corporations were vessels for the attraction, movement, management, and taxing of population. Observing how the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie had integrated Asian trade through a single entrepot at Batavia using immigrant Chinese labour and witnessing the catastrophic failure of early attempts to settle the North American mainland, English corporations began to challenge the early seventeenth century corporate orthodoxy that excess population destabilized a polity. The Virginia Company had promoted itself as a vent for excess population but would within a few years learn the challenges of population movement to a new environment.[35] The Virginian environment distorted English culture. An initially high mortality rate celebrated new values of graft, physical prowess, and enterprise, regardless of the rigid social rituals of the old country and prevailing interpretations of gender, and race.[36] Within a decade, the Virginia settlers had replaced the indolence and metallic fetishes of the first settlers with a vigorous creed of settlement that highlighted the production of tradable commodities. This led to repeated calls for merchants to take the rein of the colony and that colonists could only be attracted and sustained if they received the full fruits of their labour and a share in the governance of their society. Captain John Smith distilled these hybrid lessons for a domestic audience and became the champion of productive labour in a new world context.[37] Such views began to filter into domestic debates about the intrinsic relationships between population growth and national wealth that political economists like Sir William Petty engaged with.

As international trade increased in scale and the flow of international commodities into England increased, political economists saw new opportunities to ingratiate themselves with government by proposing new resources of taxation to finance warfare. Throughout the seventeenth century several company writers articulated the benefits of indirect taxes on consumption (rather than agricultural income or customs) known as excises. Corporate leaders like Josiah Child and the lobbyist and writer Charles Davenant became persistent supporters of this policy. Such taxes were understood to be easy and profitable to collect because they fell on the mass of the population (who could not use

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35   For the Virginia' Company's promotion of its activities as a means to employ excess population see William Symonds, *Virginia: A Sermon Preached at White-Chapel* (London, 1609), 19.

36   See Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery: American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1975); Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wives, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 1996).

37   Karen Kupperman, ed., *Captain John Smith. A Select Edition of his Writings* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 1998).

the political process to object to their incidence).[38] Such taxes transformed
the English state's finances and protected the trading and financial profits of
the corporations. The trading corporations had pioneered aspects of the excise
system in their overseas towns prior to the development of the excise system in
England. Corporations deployed such taxes on population rather than wealth
as part of their governmental strategies overseas. If you could attract popula-
tion to your trading post and tax it, your revenue would not be subject to the
precariousness of trade. As such, the settlements would achieve greater inde-
pendence from the metropolitan origins of the corporations' capital. For the
former Levant Company treasurer, Sir Dudley North, a mass of consuming and
tax paying people were the best means of generating wealth. Dudley's brother,
Roger, claimed that Dudley had derived this insight from the policies of pop-
ulation management that he had observed in Turkey and this had corrected a
perception he had encountered at home which he thought might become an
aspect of 'policie':

> He [Dudley] often sayd that he wondered to hear folks talk in the Country
> of sending men from their houses, for in Turky, a village desired Nothing
> More then to have people sent to them. And If a man boasts there, it is
> that ... he hath bin a Means to bring severall to live Amongst them ...
> there is more reason In the Country for when a village is taxed Extraordi-
> narily, the Inhabitants must raise it, and the more people they have, the
> Easyer it is. And as that is an accident which Encourages the peope to
> draw what Increas[e] to them they can, the like Might be done by policie,
> if people were disposed to doe themselves good.[39]

Such views became more mainstream as the excise provided a greater and
greater share of state funding in the eighteenth century. The raising of such
taxes from a growing population also proved essential for the East India Com-
pany merchants at Madras to finance what would be the trading corporation's
signature construction: the fort. New policies would bring people to Madras to
pay for the defence of the city. Local rulers would also appreciate the trade and
protection.[40] As the company explained in 1683 'we must needs desire you so
contrive your business (but with all gentleness) that the Inhabitants may pay
the full Charge of all repaires and ffortifications, who do live easier under our

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38   Charles Davenant, *An Essay Upon Wayes and Meanes of Supplying the War* (3rd ed., Lon-
      don, 1701), 121.
39   British Library Add MSS 32512.
40   *Vestiges of Madras*, 470, 20–21.

Government then under any Government in Asia, or indeed any Government in the known part of the World'.[41] The development of successful and self-financing governments overseas helped the East India Company (and others) convince the public and the state to support their activities.

Bullionism – the belief that national wealth is best expressed in terms of stores of precious metals – is often cited as a core tenet of mercantilist political economy.[42] The East India Company was partly defined by its chartered right to break one of the best established rules of mercantilist political economy – that specie ought not to be exported. Public orthodoxy – as expressed in particular during the early seventeenth century parliament – insisted that exporting precious metals lessened the wealth of the Kingdom and especially limited the liquidity of the state's finances in ways that impeded warmaking. The East India Company secured this privilege from the beginning, but it did not develop an argument in political economy outlining the macro-economic benefits of this position until the early 1620s. East India Company director, Thomas Mun's famous *Discoure of Trade* (1621) developed the argument that money ought not to be defined as substance but should be redefined as process. This idea helped Mun to show how exported specie simply assumed new forms around the multipolar trading world of Continental Europe, South and South-East Asia that the East India Company integrated. A series of transactions allowed the exported specie to alter form from silver to textiles to spices and back into European silver. At each stage the amount of silver increased. As such, international trade was not a simple matter of individual trading balances, but of multiple opportunities to convert and therefore increase capital. The exchange rather than the conservation of wealth became the surest means to expand wealth and the Kingdom's essential liquidity would be maintained and enlarged.[43]

Mun's famous pamphlet, however, was only the final printed outcome of a distinctively corporate process that distilled the experience of East India Company factor, Thomas Kerridge, in noting how the English could not continue to trade in Surat unless they exported silver. Kerridge's insight therefore reflected the commercial imperatives of the Gujarati merchants he worked with.

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41   *Vestiges of Madras*, 470.

42   Finkelstein, *Harmony and the Balance*, 249–250.

43   'Letter of Surat Factors to Sir Thomas Roe, 23 July 1616' in William Foster, ed., *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to the Court of the Great Mogul, 1615 – 1619*, (London, 1899), 165. See also William A Pettigrew 'The Failure of the Cloth Trade to Surat and the Internationalisation of English Mercantilist Thought, 1614–1621' in Pettigrew and Mahesh Gopalan, eds., *The East India Company, 1600–1857: Essays on Anglo-Indian Connection* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2016).

Kerridge wrote these opinions to the Company's representative at the Mughal Court, Sir Thomas Roe. Roe brought these writing backs to Leadenhall Street and they provided the core of Mun's argument when it was needed to deflect renewed public opposition to the Company's silver exports in the early 1620s. Subsequent writers on behalf of the East India Company (including Henry Robinson, Child and Davenent) would continue this argument and expand it throughout the seventeenth century.[44] By 1663, the East India Company was able to lobby to achieve the liberalization of bullion exports with the *Act for the Encouragement of Trade* (section 12).[45] A joint venture between overseas officials of the East India Company and the corporation's network of domestic pamphleteers had translated Asian customer preferences into the foundation stone of a new approach to wealth that would have important consequences for state finance and economic activity in general. In this way, the company integrated international experience, cross-cultural negotiation, and a well-established printed persona together into conceptual breakthroughs. The need to defend corporate privileges led to the challenging of traditional mercantilist arguments – rather than the simple deployment of what we might call pro-corporate mercantilist clichés.

The effects of individual license in developing the national economy was also a long-standing subject of debate around mercantilist political economy. In 1604, Sir Edyn Sandys made arguments about the national importance of protecting individuals' access to international trade on the grounds of 'natural right' as well as on the basis of ensuring an 'equal distribution' of wealth within the Kingdom.[46] International corporate activity helped – inadvertently – to advance the cause of those who wished to have individual trading rights protected in law. The constitutional celebration of the portability of trading rights around the world would underpin the development of free trade arguments in political economy. The first advances here emerged from the cause of private trade within the East India Company in cases like that against the East India Company factor (and private trader) William Blake in the early 1670s. Blake took his chance in the court of Chancery to describe how, his experience of trade overseas taught him that the East India Company could not succeed commercially without allowing each overseas official to trade freely on their own account. This was a huge assault on the Company's monopoly, but officials like Blake persuaded to Company to liberalise their restrictions on private

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44   Henry Robinson, *England's Safety, in Trades Increase* (London, 1641).

45   *15 Car. 2, cap. 7.*

46   Sir Edwin Sandys, *Instructions Touching the Bill for Free Trade.*

trade on the grounds that the Company's trade would benefit if its factors could also be allowed to seek commercial opportunities on the own account.[47]

The same worked for interlopers. The Royal African Company's failure to consolidate its territorial and commercial hold over its west African trading hinterland proved to be a huge blow for the enforcement power of company monopolies and a great encouragement to those who wished to participate in a free trade in enslaved peoples. The refusal of local African polities to allow their land (as opposed to their population) to be appropriated by Europeans played into the hands of those merchants in England who wished to embark on independent slave-trading voyages. These interlopers began to object to the civil law enforcement powers of the company's 'vice-admiralty' courts for trying interlopers and argued, in a constitutionally pioneering way, that common law rights to trade could travel beyond England.[48] These landmark cases that led to the protection of individual commercial opportunity overseas were not absolute in their implications, however. The East India Company became a curious hybrid that combined monopoly at home with a grand superstructure for free trade in Asia. The transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans similarly became a hybrid of corporate infrastructure (in the form of the Company's network of West African forts) and free trade. These curious mixtures reflected the distinctive contribution of corporations to debates about political economy and showed how increasing public opposition to corporations mixed – in parliament – with the state's sustained insistence on using corporations to ensure governmental oversight of international trades.

Alongside the protections of these constitutional rights to trade, emerged changes to theoretical emphasis that supported anti-monopoly argument. The dialogic quality of corporate discourse can best be witnessed in the printed exchanges between pro and anti-corporate interests between the 1690s and 1720s. These decades saw prolonged public debate about the future of corporate monopoly. The most intense and voluminous of these debates was that which focussed upon the Royal African Company. For various reasons, the African Company proved to be an easier target for free-trade arguments

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47   Emily Erickson, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: The English East India Company, 1600–1757* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 5/6, 59; and *English Reports*, [1673], 64–67. See also William A. Pettigrew 'The Changing Place of Fraud in Seventeenth Century Public Debates about Fraud', *Business History*, vol. 60, 3, (2018): 305–320

48   William A Pettigrew and George Van Cleve, 'Parting Companies: The Glorious Revolution, Company Power, and Imperial Mercantilism', *Historical Journal*, vol. 57, 3, (2014): 617–638; see also William A Pettigrew, *Freedom's Debt: The Royal African Company and the Politics of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

than the East India Company. The East India Company exported bullion and imported luxuries, while the African Company exported raw materials and imported (what were understood to be at the time) essentials for the plantations – enslaved people. Those anti-corporate lobbies often had their arguments rejected in parliamentary settings because of the long-established influence of the notion that corporations provided the requisite governmentality for trade and that leaving strategically important international trades – such as the trade in enslaved Africans – to the whim of the individual trader, put the national interest at risk. Those in charge of economic regulation held fast to the view that corporations provided government for trade that guaranteed its continuation.[49]

Over the course of these debates, lobbyists developed the view – which would later become popularised by Bernard de Mandeville – that individual interest (or acquisitiveness) represented a far more certain guarantee of continued trade than the political will of the state. As one anonymous pamphleteer summarised:

> There can be no greater Security of the Continuance of any Branch of our Foreign Trade, than the absolute and everlasting necessity thereof, as is the Case of the Trade to Africa, by reason of its being founded on the Commutation of Cloths, and other Merchandize necessary to Human Life, for Gold, Negroes, Elephants Teeth, Dye-woods, and other useful Commodities produced in Africa. So that till Men cease to wear Clothes and rather chuse to go naked; till the Planters cease to cultivate their Lands, and rather chuse to starve; till Gold becomes out of Esteem, and Mankind cease to seek farther after it; till our Sheep cease to produce Wool, and our Poor chuse to perish rather than work; in short, till there is an end of all Commerce in the World, there is a greater Certainty of the Continuance and Security of our African Trade, than of any other Branch of foreign Trade whatever.[50]

These views received greater conceptual precision in works like Henry Martyn's *Considerations on the East-India Trade* which advocated a free trade to Asia to allow for low cost goods from India to appear in the English market and promoted the view that labour should be assessed according to productivity,

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49   Daniel Defoe repeatedly put this view forward in the early years of the eighteenth century. See Defoe on 'Security', in *Review*, Feb. 22, 1709, 565–568.

50   *The Argument Touching Security Necessary to Be Given for Carrying on the African Trade, Demon- strated to Be Groundless and Ridiculous* (n.p., [1711?]); see also chapter 3 in Pettigrew, *Freedom's Debt*.

not to employment, as well as the division of labour.[51] They had also come from individuals who had made rewarding careers out of corporate service. One such was Dudley North. North's, *Discourse upon Trade* (1691) took Thomas Mun's embryonic argument about automatically functioning international markets (developed in the service of the East India Company's bullion exports) and turned them against corporate management. As Richard Grassby has argued, North's view of international trade was that of the less regulated Mediterranean, as managed by the more open corporate structure of the regulated company, the Levant Company, which allowed individual merchants to trade on their own accounts as long as they paid membership dues as part of a guild-like structure.[52] The Ottoman Empire's strong and interventionist state had taught North that 'law is a sorry fence against common convenience' and that the acquisitive individual was a better manager of the economy than the state.[53] These arguments represented early break throughs for economic thought that didn't alter the ends of debate in political economy – that is proposing arguments that would uphold the public good, but began to formulate non-corporate means to reach that end. In this sense, they were simply inversions of pro-company arguments with a positive rather than negative effect attributed to individual action. In each case, they derived from international experience or prompting.

After the parliamentary onslaught against corporate privilege in the last decade of the seventeenth and first decade of the eighteenth century had abated, the corporation's monopolistic hold over international trade had lessened. Most of the corporations survived, but with a drastically different brief. The pro-free trade argument had become more mainstream and policy makers as well as political economists began to see the connection between trade deregulation and trade expansion as self-evident.[54] But because corporations were difficult to dissolve owing to the parliamentary insistence that their

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51   Henry Martyn, *Considerations on the East-India Trade* quoted in John McCulloch, *The Principles of Political Economy*, (1856 and 1952), 556, 580, 591.

52   Others, including the arch-promoter, Josiah Child, of the rival joint stock form rejected this view of the openness of regulated companies see William A Pettigrew and Tristan Stein, 'The Public Rivalry Between Regulated and Joint Stock Companies and the Development of Seventeenth-century Corporate Constitutions', *Historical Research*, vol. 90, Issue, 248, (2017): 341–262.

53   Richard Grassby, *The Life and Works of Sir Dudley North, 1641 – 1691* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 255.

54   William Wood, *A Survey of Trade* (London, 1718); Joshua Gee, *Trade and Navigation of Great-Britain Considered* (London, 1729).

shareholders be compensated (and because the Bubble Act gave corporate charter greater value), trading corporations continued to be privileged entities. With their commercial prowess undermined, however, they had to resort to alternative means of promoting their activities. They were expected, like their municipal and livery forbears, to be philanthropic. But as international entities they learnt to celebrate their transnational experiences and networks as a crucial means to acquire domestic political capital. Their public profile was also assisted by the growing efficiency and success of French state-sponsored companies in the 1740s. Because of the prevailing intense competition between different European nation's corporations overseas and their (sometimes shared) attempts to prevent interloping in their respective trades, companies often placed the health of their relationships with non-Europeans ahead of their national, regional affiliations. Companies therefore provided infrastructures that encouraged intercontinental cultural dialogue. Cultural sensitivity towards non-Europeans hitherto dismissed as barbarous became a source of comparative advantage.

Political economists began to depict non-Europeans peoples as participants in global markets in radically different ways from their sixteenth and seventeenth century predecessors. Gone was the mutual suspicion of commercial trickery. This was instead replaced with a still-condescending, but more sympathetic view of non-Europeans as primitive victims of international markets. Corporations were again seen as solutions to the unstable ravages of the market. But by the 1740s, they were to be used to protect non-Europeans from the market rather than protecting the English economy from the non-Europeans. 'Incorporation' became a word used to characterise a mutually beneficial commercial alliance between Europeans and non-Europeans. Subject to a further round of parliamentary enquiries in the 1740s, the Hudson Bay and Royal African Companies both depicted themselves as the friend of the non-European. In the case of the Hudson Bay Company, their apologist Thomas White insisted that the 'Indians were always well used and kindly entertained ...' by the Company and it had given them provisions and medicines to draw them from the French, and White warned that 'if any ill Treatment or Acts of Injustice were done towards the Indians the trade of the Company would be ruined'.[55] Similarly, the Royal African Company promoted its chartered structure with reference to the hospitality it showed to Africans, the opportunities its African network of forts provided for establishing a 'legitimate commerce' with

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[55]   See David Chan Smith 'The Hudson's Bay Company, Social Legitimacy, and the Political Economy of Eighteenth-Century Empire', in *William and Mary Quarterly*,vol. 75, 1, (2018): 71–108

Africa that did not involve slave trade, and included African signatories in documents to promote itself in London.[56] Neither the Hudson Bay nor the Royal African Company proposed to continue as an entity designed solely to benefit its shareholders. Instead, both bodies postured publicly as entities with broader social purposes and – most important – bodies that could develop durable trading relationships around the world based on mutual advantage and respect. These notions helped both companies to endure (though the African Company was re-founded as a regulated Company, the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa). But the idea that the state ought to regulate trade to ensure that international markets did not operate only according to their own logic was sustained by these corporate positions and – in the case of the African trade – nurtured an antislavery political economy that proved formative for the abolitionist movement at the end of the eighteenth century.[57]

Conclusion

What distinctive light can an examination of the relationship between corporations and political economy shed on the particular global sociologies of corporations? The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was a formative period for British political economy. Although official corporate political economy was rather static in this period, corporations (and their cross-cultural activities) nonetheless developed arguments and influenced political economy in important ways across debates about money, trading rights, economic theory, labour, taxation, and the morality of commerce. The dialogic impetus of corporate debate about political economy worked alongside the adversarial traditions of the common law and the unenforceability of chartered monopolies overseas to challenge justifications for monopoly. In so doing, interloping merchants articulated a vision for English greatness based upon atomised, free, commercial activity, which the state exploited by diffusing the incidence of

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56   Malachy Postlethwayt, *Britain's Commercial Interest Explained* (London, 1757)*,* vol. 1, 431; see also *THE ROYAL AFRICA: OR MEMOIR OF THE Young Prince of Annamaboe* (London, 1750) for the African signatories to a Royal African Company petition see 'Letter from the Chiefs of the Blacks at Cape Coast to Captain Pye', 1749 *Parliamentary Archives*, HL/PO/JO/10/7/7/1380.

57   Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill, 2005); Malachy Postlethwayt, *The African Trade, the great pillar and support of the British Plantation in America*, (London 1745); and also *The National and Private advantages of the African Trade considered: Being an enquiry, how far it concerns the trading interest of Great Britain* (London, 1746).

taxation away from political elites and towards these atomised actors. While these theories acquired evidence to support them, they did not emerge as all powerful. Corporations endured to develop and embody ideas of responsible business that could protect rather than intimidate non-Europeans peoples. In this way, corporate political economy proved formative for both the market and state led polarities of economic debate that would continue into the nineteenth century and beyond.

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Migration

Michael D. Bennett

Overseas trading companies were the driving force behind English commercial and territorial expansion during the seventeenth century. In early modern England corporations played a prominent role in municipal administration, the regulation of domestic trade associations such as the City of London's livery companies, and the governance of religious organisations.[1] As part of a longstanding tradition which was premised upon Roman law, corporations united individuals with a common interest into a single legal entity to promote the shared aims of the collective. Beginning in the late sixteenth century, English joint-stock corporations were granted royal charters to monopolise trade with various regions of the world. For example, members of the Levant Company forged political alliances with the Ottoman Empire and erected trading posts in the eastern Mediterranean for the provision of raw silk, pepper and indigo, whereas the Muscovy Company enjoyed a monopoly over English trade with Russia from 1555 to 1698. While there have been a number of political and economic histories written about early modern trading companies, the role that corporations played in shaping patterns of migration across the Atlantic and Indian Ocean worlds has been understated in the field of global history. Studying the varying types of migration presided over by chartered companies offer novel insights into the operation of colonial empires in the early modern world.

The distinctiveness of this approach can be demonstrated by engaging with the 'pillars of corporate sociology for global interaction' identified in the introduction to this volume. The importance of overseas migration to the successful functioning of long distance trade during the early modern period will be considered in the first section of this essay. It will be argued that trading diasporas and chartered companies surmounted the technological limitations to conducting overseas commerce in similar ways, primarily by dispatching

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1 William Pettigrew, 'Corporate Constitutionalism and the Dialogue between the Global and Local in Seventeenth-Century English History', *Itinerario*, Vol. 39, Issue 3, (December 2015); David Armitage, 'Wider Still and Wider: Corporate Constitutionalism Unbounded', *Itinerario*, Vol. 39, Issue 3 (December 2015): 502; Philip Withington, *Society in Early Modern England: The Vernacular Origins of Some Powerful Ideas* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 219.

their members or employees to settle in distant communities and broker cross-cultural exchange. However, it was shared membership of corporate bodies and access to the communication channels of the company, rather than religious or ethnic ties, which helped merchants working under the remit of overseas trading companies to foster the trust necessary to conduct commerce over long distances. It is important to emphasise that the networks of trade fostered by chartered companies were not closed and exclusive, despite the mercantilist vision shared by many of the directors in London. Corporations regularly interacted with the private business networks forged by members of trading diasporas, and sometimes offered non-European merchants unique privileges to migrate to settlements administered by the company and conduct trade. This highlights that corporations were processes of negotiation with external constituencies; in this case, foreign merchants and their diasporic counterparts.

As well as being concerned with the profits generated by commercial activity, the autonomy of corporations from the oversight of the English state enabled overseas trading companies to maintain governmental interests overseas. The ambitions of the East India Company to rule over colonial territories, administrate people, and collect taxes, has led Philip Stern to define this organisation as a 'company-state'.[2] In the second part of this essay, it will be argued that a crucial way in which early modern trading corporations, including the East India Company, realised their governmental ambitions was by transporting free and unfree migrants to populate their colonial holdings. The global networks of exchange forged by overseas trading companies during the early modern period facilitated the movement of people over long distances, and directed migration flows to regions of Europe, America, Africa, and Asia which were of commercial interest to English merchants. By using their chartered monopolies to integrate these various colonial regions, and by successfully negotiating the competing interests of both the English state and non-European empires, corporate bodies were particularly effective in mobilising free planters, co-religionists, artisans, servants, slaves, and coolies to 'people' nascent English colonies and trading outposts. This demonstrates that the constitutional structure of corporate bodies, which enabled the sharing of capital and expertise to finance risky ventures, was a valuable tool for the establishment of an English empire in the early seventeenth century. Moreover, the dynamic

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2   Philip Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). Some historians have extended Stern's analysis to other overseas trading companies. For an example, see Edward Cavanagh, 'A Company with Sovereignty and Subjects of Its Own? The Case of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670–1763', *Canadian Journal of Law and Society* Vol. 26, No. 1 (2011).

approaches taken by corporate bodies towards empire-building encouraged experimentation and innovation. An inclination to learn from other European and non-European empires meant that corporations were particularly effective at inventing new methods to expand trade and stimulate migration. This proclivity for innovation can be explained by the overlapping membership of chartered companies, the regular turnover of shareholders sitting on the court of directors, and the appointment of men experienced in the operation of overseas empires to leading positions in the colonial government. By facilitating the movement of their employees overseas, corporate bodies played a crucial role in intensifying cross-cultural interactions between England and the wider world in the seventeenth century.

Corporations, Migration, and the Operation of Long Distance Trade in the Early Modern World

Migration and trade are two globalising forces that were closely linked in the pre-modern period. Limitations to transportation and communications technology meant that it was difficult for early societies to exchange commodities and ideas over long distances. There were risks associated with travelling into unfamiliar physical environments to conduct trade, and language barriers hindered commercial interactions. Nevertheless, the desire for lucrative goods motivated groups of merchants to devise novel methods for the management of long distance trade. Historians have identified some common and effective ways that early modern societies overcame the geographical, technological and cultural challenges to trading over long distances. The concept of 'diaspora' has enabled historians and sociologists to explain how merchants, who were linked with their business associates by a shared sense of ethnic or religious identity, settled in distant communities and brokered cross-cultural commerce.[3] The dispersed members of trading diasporas acted as cultural intermediaries and formed complex mercantile networks that facilitated the

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3   The idea of a voluntary 'trading diaspora' was first explored by the anthropologist Abner Cohen in 1971, who defined commercial networks of merchants in West Africa as a 'nation of socially interdependent, but spatially dispersed communities'; Abner Cohen, 'Cultural Strategies in the Organisation of Trading Diasporas', in Claude Meillassoux (ed.), *The Development of Indigenous Trade and Markets in West Africa* (Oxford: Routledge, 1971). Philip Curtin demonstrated the richness of this concept by extending Cohen's analysis to include diverse examples from throughout world history; Philip Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

flow of commodities, capital, business information and intellectual ideas be-
tween component nodes. Across the world, pre-modern empires used these
informal networks to organise long distance trade, and were dependent on
members of the diaspora to complete commercial transactions with distant
peoples on their behalf.[4]

Another technique that early modern societies used to overcome the tech-
nological limitations which hindered long distance trade, was to delegate sov-
ereignty to a variety of privately funded corporations. By pooling their capi-
tal to form joint-stock companies, groups of merchants and gentry investors
worked together to minimise the risks to personal wealth which came with
conducting overseas ventures. It would appear that trading companies used
vastly different methods to facilitate commerce when compared with dias-
poric communities. Unlike stateless trading diasporas, which contravened the
claims of empires to monopolise trade by developing their own transnational
networks, overseas trading companies actively sought to cultivate a close rela-
tionship with the state by securing royal charters, and defended their exclusive
legal privileges to govern commerce with specific regions of the world. The East
India Company, for example, devoted significant resources to securing charters
from English monarchs and *farmans* from the Mughal emperor, constitutional
documents which validated their permanent presence on the Indian coast and
secured their future membership of the diverse commercial communities at
Surat and Madras. As organisations with political and economic interests in
both domestic and international spheres, state-backed companies remained
successful by negotiating overlapping sovereignties and appeasing the various
governments they came into contact with.

Nevertheless, the link between migration and trade was just as important
for the successful operation of early modern corporations as it was for transna-
tional diasporas. The primary concern of the enterprising merchants who sup-
plied the capital necessary to establish joint-stock corporations was to make a
significant return on their investments. To realise their ambitions, and to better

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4   For examples, see Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora,
    Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (London: Yale University Press,
    2009); Paul Lovejoy, 'The Role of the Wangara in the Economic Transformation of the Cen-
    tral Sudan in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 19,
    No. 2, 1978; Roquinaldo Ferreira, *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World: Angola and
    Brazil during the Era of the Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Catia
    Antunes & Ribero Da Silva, Filipa, 'Cross-Cultural Entrepreneurship in the Atlantic: Africans,
    Dutch, and Sephardic Jews in Western Africa, 1580–1674', *Itinerario*, Vol. XXXV, No. 1, 2011;
    Francesca Trivellato & Leor Halevi & Catia Antunes (eds.), *Religion and Trade: Cross-Cultural
    Exchanges in World History, 1000–1900*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

manage their commercial affairs overseas, the administrative committees of chartered corporations paid experienced Englishmen to travel long distances and represent the company in foreign polities. By facilitating the movement of their employees overseas, and embedding them in non-European trading communities, corporations intensified cross-cultural exchange. Factors, ambassadors, and chaplains were dispatched to remote corners of the globe for the purpose of organising trade and sustaining an English commercial presence in the wider world. Some scholars have explored how the migration of factors, consuls, and chaplains overseas supported the commercial functions of English trading companies. For example, in *The Web of Empire*, Alison Games has described these individuals as 'English cosmopolitans', who made important contributions to the formation of the nascent English empire during the seventeenth century.[5] This is the only comprehensive study of the different groups of people who travelled and migrated beyond the shores of England during the seventeenth century. However, there have been other more focused works which have also provided important insights into the lives of Englishmen who worked under the remit of specific companies.[6]

All English overseas trading companies sustained resident populations of merchants, known as factors, who lived and worked in various regions of the world. Factors employed by the Levant Company resided in the cosmopolitan trading communities of the eastern Mediterranean, while the Royal African Company dispatched their representatives to work in established commercial hubs on the West African Coast and also in prosperous port towns of the English Caribbean. The number of company employees who settled overseas was usually small. The largest Levant Company factory in Istanbul in 1649 contained thirty Englishmen, whereas the East India Company's trading post in Japan housed only seven English factors when it was first established in 1613.[7] The demographic impact of disease for those who lived in unfamiliar epidemiological environments during the seventeenth century was devastating, and this meant that English factors suffered high rates of attrition when working

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5 Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion 1560–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

6 For examples, see Miles Ogborn, *Global Lives: Britain and the World, 1550–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Sonia P. Anderson, *An English Consul in Turkey: Paul Rycaut at Smyrna, 1667–1678* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); David Henige, ' "Companies are always Ungrateful": James Phipps of Cape Coast, A Victim of the African Trade' *African Economic History,* No. 9 (1980); Geraldine M. Phipps, *Sir John Merrick: Engilsh Merchant-Diplomat in Seventeenth-Century Russia* (Newtonville: Oriental Research Partners, 1983).

7 Alison Games, *The Web of Empire*, 102.

abroad. For instance, there were regular complaints that the 'greate mortality' among Englishmen at Fort Cormantine meant that the East India Company was dangerously low on personnel to conduct trade on the Gold Coast.[8] Five factors, twelve carpenters and a bricklayer, were sent on the *Barbados Merchant* and the *Blackmore* in April 1660 to supplement the small contingent of English traders at Fort Cormantine.[9] The following year an urgent request was made insisting that the Company send a doctor from London 'for the preservation of men's lives', after four Englishmen had died in the last month alone.[10] There was a constant need for new personnel to migrate abroad if the population of factors at different trading outposts was to be sustained.

Factors were usually the younger sons or fee-paying apprentices of company members.[11] During their period of training, which generally lasted seven years, the young men working for the company abroad gained the business experience, linguistic skills, and diplomatic acumen that was necessary to prosper in the multifaceted world of early modern trade and exchange. Once junior factors had completed their apprenticeship, and had successfully demonstrated their ability to secure commissions through personal business connections, they would be invited to become fully-fledged members of an English trading firm or 'factory'. As factors, these men were paid a generous wage to organise trade, resolve commercial disputes, and provide political representation for the company. Evidence from the letters which were regularly dispatched between the court of directors in London and their factors working abroad, as well as the correspondence which circulated between factors working for the same company who lived at different locations overseas, offer historians an unparalleled insight into the daily lives of English merchants who migrated abroad. The correspondence of factors, which were a crucial means by which merchants living overseas sustained connections with business associates and gathered information about which commodities were profitable in European markets, demonstrates that, like trading diasporas, the sharing of business information and the maintenance of personal ties among members were important for chartered companies to trade long distances. Furthermore, the willingness of corporations to embrace forms of political and cultural accommodation allowed them to be very successful as commercial intermediaries.

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8   Fort Cormantine to London, 4 July 1661, British Library, India Office Records (hereafter BL, IOR), E/3/27, f. 42.

9   London to Fort Cormantine, 12 April 1660, BL, IOR, E/3/85, ff. 308–311.

10   Fort Cormantine to London, August 1661, BL, IOR, E/3/27, f. 49.

11   Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550–1653* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), 69.

Reciprocal gift-giving, written displays of deference to powerful kingdoms, intermarriage, and the adoption of local customs were the main methods through which the employees of trading companies and the members of trading diasporas thrived in cosmopolitan commercial communities. The directors of the East India Company were fully aware of the importance of maintaining amicable relationships with local rulers if they wanted to sustain their commercial presence in foreign polities, and therefore regularly instructed their factors to use policies of accommodation and supplication to facilitate cross-cultural commerce. For example, reports that there was a misunderstanding between the English and African merchants at Fort Cormantine caused the company to stress that 'no factor … should give any offence to the king or his people'.[12]

Although membership of a company brought access to a network of commercial contacts across a variety of lucrative markets, the majority of factors who worked abroad for the company maintained their personal business contacts. Therefore, it is important to emphasise that overseas trading companies were not closed commercial networks. Many of the merchants and agents who worked for trading companies regularly subverted the instructions provided by the directors in London, by rejecting company authority, conducting commerce on their own private accounts, and directly supporting interloping activity. For instance, in a letter sent to factors at Fort Cormantine in November 1659 the directors of the East India Company expressed that 'it hath beene the custome of the English factors' to 'drive a trade and commerce' with interloping slave traders.[13] Migrating overseas and working on distant shores meant that factors were often tempted by the prospect of embezzlement and contraband trade. Opportunistic factors working for the East India Company regularly participated in intra-Asian commerce, an informal network known colloquially as the 'country trade', which usually involved personal business transactions between English merchants and Asian brokers. Francesca Trivellato has used the example of the Sephardic firm Ergas and Silvera to emphasise that trading diasporas were not a series of closed and homogenous networks, as the coral and diamond trade which the business was involved in was dependent on the establishment of informal trading relationships with 'strangers' whom they had no cultural or religious common ground.[14] In a similar manner, while corporations severely punished interlopers who challenged their monopolies in English courts, these companies often profited from their factors participating

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12   Wyamba to London, 26 February 1659, E/3/25, BL, IOR, f. 283.
13   London to Fort Cormantine, 8 November 1659, BL, IOR, E/3/85, ff. 253–257.
14   Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers*, 39.

in private commerce, and even developed interdependent relationships with non-European merchants.

Overseas trading companies and their factors regularly cooperated with members of foreign diasporas in the pursuit of greater commercial profits. This provides evidence for how some early modern corporations upheld the agency of non-European peoples. For example, as part of their efforts to make Madras 'a famous emporium of trade and a mart of nations' at the close of the seventeenth century, the East India Company granted distinctive privileges to Armenian merchants to encourage them to settle in the vicinity of Fort St. George.[15] These Armenian traders were valuable to the company because they drove a global commerce in textiles and silver, integrating Manila and the Pacific into their expansive diasporic networks.[16] In April 1690 the President and Council of Fort St. George confirmed that they would uphold the contract made between the East India Company and the Armenians who had travelled to London to petition the directors. They declared that the Armenian merchants at Madras would be 'invited to settle and trade here and live and be as free therein as any English'. To 'induce as many as possible of their nation to come and settle here with their families and estates', the Company ruled that members of the Armenian diaspora residing at Madras would be subject to the same customs duties as Englishmen, permitted to serve as factors, granted religious toleration, and able to serve as soldiers in the garrison.[17] The company hoped that if the Armenians were 'justly dealt with', they would encourage a considerable growth in trade and industry, bringing 'into Madras to inhabit in a few years double the number of artificers which you have there already'.[18] These policies demonstrate how overseas trading companies and their employees developed profitable relationships with trading diasporas, and facilitated the extension of diasporic networks into new regions and markets.

Over time, the collaborative relationship between corporations and diasporas in the Indian Ocean began to degenerate. By the mid-eighteenth century, Britain had begun to consolidate its power over Indian trade, as the East India

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15   Vahé Baladouni and Margaret Makepeace, 'Armenian Merchants of the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries: English East India Company Sources', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Series*, Vol. 88, No. 5 (1998), doc. 142.

16   Bhaswati Bhattacharya, 'Making money at the blessed place of Manila: Armenians in the Madras–Manila trade in the eighteenth century', *Journal of Global History*, Vol. 3, 2008.

17   Baladouni and Makepeace, 'Armenian Merchants of the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries', doc. 126; Bhattacharya, 'Making money at the blessed place of Manila', 6.

18   Baladouni and Makepeace, 'Armenian Merchants of the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries', doc. 143.

Company gradually transitioned from a trading firm with influence over local politics, to a more formal institution which held direct control over large territories in Bengal. The seizure of the merchant vessel *Santa Catharina* by the British navy and the ensuing trial in London demonstrated the waning power of the Armenian trading diaspora in India during the mid-eighteenth century. Affluent Armenian merchants were forcefully dispersed from New Julfa and Madras by foreign empires in 1746, leading to the collapse of their long distance trading networks. In the legal case over damages to property on the *Santa Catharina*, members of the Armenian diaspora were unable to challenge the military might, economic power and judicial expertise of the state-backed networks administered by their commercial rivals, the East India Company.[19] Informal networks could not compete with the trade and military power that nation states and empires now wielded in foreign markets. Over time, the weak European imperial structures which had encouraged the proliferation of commercial companies and trading diasporas became much stronger. Consequently, by the late eighteenth century, the need for corporations and diasporas to perform intermediary commercial functions in host communities was rapidly declining.

Corporations and Religious Migration

Although living and working overseas could deepen cross-cultural understanding and encourage miscegenation, the directors of trading companies held real concerns about the moral conduct of factors, and the repercussions that misbehaviour could have on the wellbeing of their spiritual lives. In an attempt to ensure that their employees overseas remained pious while working overseas in multi-faith commercial hubs, and were not tempted to renounce their Protestant religion, trading companies regularly dispatched chaplains to serve English communities. Ministers were usually paid between £50 to £100 per annum to migrate to overseas factories and preside over baptisms, deliver sermons, and administer funeral rites.[20] For example, following the death of the English chaplain at Bombay, the East India Company dispatched his replacement, Richard Cobbe, on the *Catherine* in 1714. The directors of the company explained in an accompanying letter that they resolved to maintain at

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19   Sebouh Aslanian, 'Trade Diaspora versus Colonial State: Armenian Merchants, the English East India Company, and the High Court of the Admiralty in London 1748–1752', *Diaspora*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2004: 83–85.

20   Games, *The Web of Empire*, 226.

least one minister in each of their overseas territories, and because reports suggested that Cobbe was a virtuous man, it was thought that he would be 'very useful to promote piety and virtue in the Island'. On top of their religious duties in the English trading community, the East India Company also expected that all ministers sent to reside in India should contribute towards conversion efforts. In order to 'instruct the Gentues or others that shall be servants or slaves of the company or of their agents in the Protestant religion', chaplains were required to have a firm knowledge of Portuguese within a year of their arrival in India, and were also encouraged to learn 'the native language of the country where they shall reside'.[21]

The career of the distinguished chaplain Edward Pocock can be used as an example for how the global networks of trading companies facilitated the migration of well-educated Protestant clergyman to company trading posts, contributed to the growth of intellectual enquiry about the non-European world, and also led to the dissemination of the Christian gospel. Pocock's MA qualification and his keen interest in studying foreign languages helps to explain why the Levant Company chose to employ him as their chaplain at Aleppo in 1629. The company's governor, Hugh Hamersley, explained that he had nominated Pocock for the position due to 'ability in learning, soundness in the study of divinity, conformity to the constitutions of the Church, and integrity of life and conversation'.[22] While overseas Pocock was supported by a generous wage from the Levant Company, which allowed him to continue his intellectual endeavours, learning Arabic and translating major works of Islamic scholarship into English. The patronage of Archbishop Laud and his detailed knowledge of the languages and customs of the Ottoman Empire meant that upon his return to England, Pocock was appointed to the position of lecturer in Arabic at Oxford University.[23] Subsequent chaplains who worked for the Levant Company, such as John Covel who was appointed to the chaplaincy of the English embassy in Istanbul in 1670, shared Pocock's concern with the accumulation of knowledge.[24] The letters and diaries of these chaplains form an important body of source material for historians interested in contact between England

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21   London to Bombay, 27 March 1714, BL IOR/E/3/98, ff. 173–174.

22   Quoted in Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*, 294.

23   Games, *The Web of Empire*, 231–232. For more information on the chaplains employed by overseas trading companies, see Simon Mills, 'The English Chaplains at Aleppo: Exploration and Scholarship between England and the Ottoman Empire, 1620–1760', *Bulletin of the Council for British Research in the Levant*, Vol. 6, No. 1, (2011); J. B. Pearson, *Biographical Sketches of the Chaplains to the Levant Company, 1611–1706* (London: Deighton Bell, 1883).

24   J. Theodore Bent, 'The English in the Levant', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 5., No. 20, (Oct. 1890): 658–659.

and the Islamic world during the early modern period. They provide evidence for how corporations, and their agents overseas, functioned as intermediaries with Muslim states.

Missionary activity and the search for religious autonomy have always been driving forces behind long distance migration. During the seventeenth century the constitutional structure of joint-stock corporations proved flexible enough to facilitate both the migration of individual chaplains abroad and the large scale movement of whole congregations to the North American wilderness. For instance, to procure the funds necessary to finance the transportation of emigrants, co-religionists interested in English projects to colonise the Americas formed joint-stock corporations.[25] The Massachusetts Bay Company and its predecessors were associations established by members of nonconformist Protestant sects in the early seventeenth century. There is a large body of historical research which analyses how the Massachusetts Bay Company was particularly distinctive in the history of English joint-stock companies because many of its leading subscribers, who were known as freemen, made the decision in 1630 to migrate to New England along with other families who shared their religious confession.[26] These prominent freemen transferred the company's seat of government from England to their new colony, and in subsequent years would use their royal charter to develop Massachusetts as a godly republic.[27] The constitutional structure of joint-stock companies, which enabled members to share capital and resources, meant that these organisations were ideal for like-minded religious sects fleeing persecution to finance their migration overseas. Once viable settlements had been established in North America, the freemen of the Council of New England made the unprecedented decision to renounce their corporate charter to govern the colony in 1635.

It is estimated that between 17,000 and 21,000 puritan families arrived in New England as part of the Great Migration (1630–1641) initiated by members

25   William Robert Scott, *The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish and Irish Joint-Stock Companies to 1720. Volume II Companies for Foreign Trade, Colonisation, Fishing and Mining* (Cambridge, MA: Cornell University Library, 1912), 306.

26   Frances Rose-Troup, *The Massachusetts Bay Company and Its Predecessors* (Grafton: Clearfield, 1930); T. H. Breen, *Puritans and Adventurers: Change and Persistence in Early America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).

27   Michael Winship, 'Godly Republicanism and the Origins of the Massachusetts Polity', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 63, No. 3 (July 2006): 443–444; Paul Lucas, 'Colony or Commonwealth: Massachusetts Bay, 1661–1666', *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 21., No. 1 (January 1967); J. T. Peacey, 'Seasonable Treatises: A Godly Project of the 1630s', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 113, No. 452 (June 1998).

of the Massachusetts Bay Company.[28] Alison Games has used surviving port registers to show that 939 men, women and children left London to settle in the New England region in 1635. The mobility of this population group is demonstrated by the relatively high rate of migration out of Massachusetts Bay in the same year, when 530 people left the colony in search of opportunities elsewhere.[29] Investors in other English overseas ventures were keen to divert migration flows of godly families away from New England and to their own colonial enterprises.[30] For example, at the experimental colony of Providence Island, situated on the Miskito Coast of Central America, there were concerted efforts to attract pious colonists and skilled men destined for New England to this remote puritan settlement in the tropics. To encourage families to relocate from Massachusetts Bay, members of the Providence Island Company in London implemented new policies which offered immigrants prominent positions on the colonial council, generous land grants, and religious autonomy. Such efforts seem to have been relatively successful, with reports in 1638 suggesting 'diverse that were going to New England did now declare their willingness to goe to Providence', including the carpenter John Arrat and his family.[31] In March 1641, shortly before the English were extirpated from the colony, the Providence Island Company made an agreement with Emmanuel Truebody for the transportation of 300 members of a large puritan congregation. These New England families would be given land at the proposed colony of Cape Gracias a Dios on the mainland of Central America.[32] Although this major resettlement scheme was ultimately unsuccessful due to a Spanish invasion, such enterprising ventures demonstrate that some joint-stock companies were concerned with supplying their nascent overseas settlements with the labour necessary to accelerate the process of colonial development.

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28   Stephen Innes, *Creating the Commonwealth: The Economic Culture of Puritan New England* (London: W.W. Norton & Co, 1995), 23.

29   Alison Games, *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1999), 170–171.

30   Games, *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World*, 133–138.

31   General Court for Providence 5 April 1638, Journal of the Governor and Company of Adventurers for the Plantation of the Island of Providence, The National Archives at Kew (hereafter TNA), CO 124/2, f. 166.

32   Karen Ordhal Kupperman, *Providence Island, 1630–1641: The Other Puritan Colony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 323–325, 336. For more on the Providence Island Company, see A. P. Newton, *The Colonising Activities of the English Puritans: The Last Phase of the Elizabethan Struggle with Spain* (New Jersey: Yale University Press, 1914).

Corporations and Labour Migration

As well as dispatching factors to organise long distance trade and establish speculative colonial projects, English corporations played a significant role in the international labour migration during the early modern period. Even though by the mid-seventeenth century the role of chartered companies in the colonisation of the Americas had become less significant, with only the Somers Islands Company surviving into the 1680s, corporations did play a crucial role in initiating colonial development earlier in the century by financing risky ventures and organising the migration of hundreds of colonists. For instance, to realise their governmental ambitions, chartered companies devised novel legal mechanisms to facilitate the movement of labourers over long distances to clear and cultivate colonial holdings. The high cost of the transatlantic voyage and the prospect of performing plantation work made free settlers reluctant to immigrate to the Americas during the early modern period.[33] Consequently, English merchants and colonial landowners, many of whom worked under the remit of corporations, resorted to the use of coercive techniques to facilitate migration.

In the British Atlantic world, contracts of indenture supplied colonial holdings in North America and the Caribbean with a cheap and malleable workforce. After the failure of initial efforts to find precious metals and exploit urbanised Indian societies in North America, the indenture system was developed in the early seventeenth century by the Virginia Company as an innovative tool to mobilise English, Welsh, Scottish and Irish labourers to travel to the nascent colonies in the Chesapeake Bay and work on tobacco plantations. Shareholders were to be granted an additional fifty acres of land for every servant or labourer they transported to Virginia, while emigrants who paid for their own passage also received the same fifty acre 'headright'.[34] English merchants and promoters, many of whom were employed as agents by chartered companies, used the indenture contract to fund the cost of the transatlantic passage for unskilled young males in exchange for three to five years work for a colonial master. Bernard Bailyn has established that the colonisation of British America was a process that involved the extension of established forms of rural mobility among unskilled workers within early modern English society.[35]

33   David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 193.

34   Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1975), 94.

35   Bernard Bailyn, *The Peopling of British North America* (New York: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 1987). See also Alison Games, 'Migration', in David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick, eds.,

Promoters in the British Isles diverted internal migration flows away from
London and towards colonial plantations. William O'Reilly has estimated that
around 340,000 white migrants travelled to English holdings in North America
and the Caribbean before 1680, and that around three-quarters of these mi-
grants were indentured labourers.[36] Exposure to rigorous work regimes and
hostile disease environments generated high mortality rates within the servant
population, with as many as forty percent dying soon after their arrival during
the early seventeenth century.[37] Although many of these servants were trans-
ported by chartered companies, such as the Virginia Company, the Somers Is-
lands Company and the Providence Island Company, it is important to stress
that a large number of indenture contracts were financed by merchants who
worked independently from corporate oversight.

Corporations valued indentured labourers both for their contribution to
economic productivity as plantation workers and their ability to enhance pop-
ulation growth and transplant European cultural norms as free settlers after
their contracts had expired.[38] The *Second Charter of the Virginia Company*
(1609) demonstrates the dual purpose of the indenture system. Although the
Virginia Company was primarily a private commercial venture that desired in-
dentured servants for their cheap labour, there were also secondary imperial
motives 'to make habitacion and plantacion of sondrie of oure people in that
parte of America comonlie called Virginia'.[39] Promotional material published
by chartered companies also provides evidence for the importance of labour
migration to early colonial enterprises. For example, the Virginia Company ex-
plained that 'for the better settling of the Colony and Plantation in Virginia'
they desired 'labouring men and women'. Even though a large proportion of
these labourers travelled under contracts of indenture, those with the means to

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  The British Atlantic World 2nd ed. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Henry A. Gemery,
  'Markets for migrants: English indentured servitude and emigration in the seventeenth
  and eighteenth centuries', in Emmer, P. C., ed., *Colonialism and Migration; Indentured La-
  bour Before and After Slavery* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1986), 33.

36 William, O'Reilly 'Movements in the Atlantic World', in Nicholas Canny and Phillip Mor-
  gan eds., *The Oxford Handbook of the Atlantic World: 1450–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University
  Press, 2011), 315–318.

37 O'Reilly 'Movements in the Atlantic World', 316.

38 In fact, as Christopher Tomlins emphasises, although the indenture system provided the
  labour power needed to kick-start colonial ventures in North America, by the time that
  these colonies moved towards self-sustained growth in the late seventeenth century, free
  labour in household units had begun to predominate. See Christopher Tomlins, *Free-
  dom Bound: Law, Labor, and Civic Identity in Colonising English America, 1580–1865* (Cam-
  bridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 64–65.

39 *The Second Charter of the Virginia Company* (1609).

fund their own travel across the Atlantic were encouraged to purchase a share in the company at £12 10 shillings and prepare for their new life in Virginia, where they were promised 'houses to dwell in, with Gardens and Orchards, and also foode and clothing at the comon charge of the Joynt Stocke'. Individuals who possessed the knowledge of the seventeen different skilled trades listed in the pamphlet, including 'Smiths, Carpenters, Coopers … [and] Mettell-men of all sorts', were considered to be especially important for the future prosperity of the young colony.[40] The Virginia Company was not particularly successful in filling its vessels with the great variety of specialised craftsmen identified in these early promotional pamphlets. Edmund Morgan contends that having a large population of skilled artisans, who were unwilling to perform agricultural labour, may have even exacerbated the demographic disaster unfolding at the struggling colony.[41] In addition to their colonisation efforts on the North American mainland, the Virginia Company also made important contributions to the settlement of Bermuda. Michael Jarvis has detailed how early printed accounts of Bermuda, which emphasised that there were 'swarmes of people desir[ing] to be transported there', including gentlemen, artisans and ministers, helped the company to dispatch six hundred settlers in nine ships to the island between 1612 and 1615.[42] The Somers Islands Company, a joint stock venture formed as an offshoot of the Virginia Company in 1615, shared its predecessor's interest in fostering colonial development on Bermuda through the transportation of free and unfree migrants. In the five years following Richard Norwood's 1616 land survey, around 1100 free settlers poured into Bermuda with their families, the majority of whom worked as tenants and were contractually obliged to pay to their landlords half of the tobacco they grew as rent.[43]

The demand for plantation labourers in the Caribbean colonies was not satisfied by the indenture system. English servants preferred to serve their indenture in North America, where there was more available land for free settlers and where there was less negative publicity in England emphasising the excessive mortality rates resulting from brutal labour regimes and tropical ailments.[44] By the late 1640s, the reduced cost of African slaves encouraged English planters

40   The Virginia Company of London, *For the Plantation in Virginia. Or Nova Britannia* (1609). Accessed on Early English Books Online (EEBO).

41   Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal Of Colonial Virginia* (London: W. W. Norton & Co., 1975), 85–86.

42   Michael Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade: Bermuda, Bermudians, and the Maritime Atlantic World, 1680–1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 17.

43   Jarvis, *In the Eye of All Trade*, 22–24.

44   David Galenson, 'The Rise and Fall of Indentured Servitude in the Americas: An Economic Analysis', *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 44, No. 1, 1984: 11.

on Barbados to increase their participation in the transatlantic slave trade and to reallocate the agricultural and skilled industrial work associated with sugar production from white indentured servants to slaves.[45] The Royal African Company and the South Sea Company were trading companies formed specifically to facilitate the forced migration of African slaves to plantation economies in the Americas. The Royal African Company held a chartered monopoly over West African trade from 1672, and provisioned the plantation economies of the English Caribbean with the slaves needed for agricultural labour and the dangerous work associated with the industrial refinement of sugar cane. William Pettigrew has shown that, by the early 1720s, the Royal African Company had transported nearly 150,000 enslaved Africans across the Atlantic, and had thoroughly altered the dynamics of European slaving by increasing the English share in the transatlantic slave trade from 33% in 1673 to 74% in 1683.[46] Furthermore, under the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht, which ended the War of Spanish Succession in 1713, the South Sea Company was granted the *asiento* monopoly contract to supply Spanish America with 4,800 African slaves every year.[47] There was a strong demand for African slaves in South America due to the labour intensive silver mining industry and legal rulings dating back to the sixteenth century which restricted the ability of Spanish colonists to enslave and exploit Amerindians. The South Sea Company was relatively successful in its slave trading ventures, particularly because access to the highly protected Spanish American market provided lucrative opportunities for contraband trade in commodities other than slaves. It is estimated that between 1715 and 1739 the company disembarked around 30,000 African slaves in Spanish America, and even continued to regularly supply colonial Spaniards with forced labour after the infamous commercial bubble in 1720.[48]

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45   Galenson, 'The Rise and Fall of Indentured Servitude in the Americas', 11.
46   William Pettigrew, *Freedom's Debt: The Royal African Company and the Politics of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1672–1752* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 11. For other studies which explore the role of the Royal African Company in the British slave trade, see Kenneth G. Davies, *The Royal African Company* (London: Longmans, 1957); David W. Galenson, *Traders, Planters and Slaves: Market Behavior in Early English America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Abigail Swingen, *Competing Visions of Empire: Labor, Slavery, and the Origins of the British Atlantic Empire*, (New Jersey: Yale University Press, 2015); Gregory E. O'Malley, *Final Passages: The Intercolonial Slave Trade of British America, 1619–1807* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).
47   Victoria Sorsby, *English Trade with Spanish America under the Asiento 1713–1740* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, UCL 1975).
48   Helen Paul, 'The South Sea Company's Slave Trading Activities', paper presented at the Economic History Society Conference, 2004.

Along with moving enslaved Africans between continents, the Royal African Company utilised a workforce of white indentured servants and black slaves at the English trading factories which lined the Gold Coast. The role of English corporations in mobilising slaves on plantations and using forced labour in urban occupations has been understated in the historiography of early modern colonialism. Simon Newman contends that interactions between English labour traditions and West African slavery produced a hybrid form of 'castle slavery' at these trading posts during the eighteenth century.[49] He has explained how it became common practice during the late seventeenth century for the Royal African Company to transport slaves from Upper Guinea to the forts owned by the company on the Gold Coast. Many of these 'castle slaves' were trained as skilled artisans in crafts such as carpentry, bricklaying, masonry or smithing, and were ordered by the company to help repair the fort and maintain the infrastructure of English trading operations in West Africa. Particularly important for the continued success of English slave trading commerce on the Gold Coast was the role that company slaves played in the local maritime sector. The Royal African Company valued slaves that possessed nautical skills, who they forced to navigate the dangerous Atlantic surf in canoes to assist in the transportation of valuable cargoes and enable communication between English shipping and Cape Coast Castle.[50] The prevalence of epidemic diseases on the Gold Coast to which English soldiers had little acquired immunity also led the company to sometimes use male castle slaves as a militia force to protect English interests against European competitors and African encroachment.

In a similar manner, the employees of the East India Company also deployed forced labour at the company's network of fortified trading outposts which spanned the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. The labour power of slaves, coolies, and soldiers helped to construct and sustain the 'company-state' described by Philip Stern.[51] Richard Allen has shown how the East India Company commissioned a series of large scale and risky slave trading voyages to resolve the labour shortages at St. Helena and Bencoolen.[52] Captain Thomas

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49   Simon Newman, *A New World of Labor: The Development of Plantation Slavery in the British Atlantic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

50   Newman, *A New World of Labor*, 146–150.

51   Stern, *The Company-State*.

52   Richard Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500–1850*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2015). For more on the slave trading activities of the East India Company in the seventeenth century, see Michael D. Bennett, *The East India Company, Transnational Interactions, and the Formation of Forced Labour Regimes* (Unpublished Masters Thesis, University of Kent, 2016); Kevin McDonald, *Pirates, Merchants, Settlers, and Slaves: Colonial America and the Indo-Atlantic World* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015),

Sitwell was instructed to supply 60 slaves to St. Helena, while in the winter of 1713 the *Mercury Sloop* delivered 43 Guinea slaves of 'the same kind [that] are often carried to the West Indies" to planters on the island.[53] In March 1715 five more merchant vessels were licensed to transport "sound healthful and merchantable slaves natives of Madagascar, two thirds males one third females, none of them under sixteen or above thirty years of age" to St. Helena.[54] To provision Bencoolen with even more slaves, the *Sarum* was sent to Nias, a large island just off the coast of western Sumatra, to procure 112 labourers for 90 to 100 dollars each.[55] Slaves from Nias were reportedly a "very dextrous people" that "readily take to any handicraft', and soon after their arrival several were already employed as carpenters.[56] Between 1713 and 1714, the *Arabella* and the *Clapham* visited Madagascar on their voyages to the East Indies and delivered a total of 346 slaves to Bencoolen.[57] Over subsequent years St. Helena and Bencoolen were regularly supplied with slaves, either through large scale slave trading voyages financed by the East India Company or via illicit commerce with private merchants. Soldiers with a range of different backgrounds, including those of European descent and mixed Indo-Portuguese ancestry, were also dispatched to serve at company colonies, where they protected prosperous trading communities in the Indian Ocean from rival encroachments.[58] At Bombay, the East India Company developed conciliatory policies, including generous food allowances, to try and attract coolies and skilled weavers from the Indian Subcontinent to immigrate to their island colony.[59] Such pioneering projects to accelerate economic development and the process of 'peopling'

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especially 99–122; Virginia Bever Platt, 'The East India Company and the Madagascar Slave Trade', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 26, No. 4, (October 1969): 548–577; James Armstrong, 'Madagascar and the Slave Trade in the Seventeenth Century', *Omaly sy Anio*, (1983–84): 211–233; Frenise A. Logan, 'The British East India Company and African Slavery in Benkulen, Sumatra, 1687–1792', *The Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 41, No. 4, (October 1956): 339–348.

53   London to St. Helena sent by a sloop of Mr Sitwell's, 16 October 1713, BL, IOR, E/3/98, f. 57; London to St. Helena, 4 February 1714/15, BL, IOR, E/3/98, f. 269; London to St. Helena, 14 March 1715/16, BL, IOR, E/3/98, f. 427.

54   London to St. Helena, 14 March 1715/16, BL, IOR, E/3/98, ff. 428–429.

55   Bencoolen to London, 1 February 1704/05, BL, IOR, G/35/7, f. 10; London to Bencoolen, BL, IOR, E/3/95, 3 July 1706, f. 293.

56   Bencoolen to London, 1 February 1704/05, BL, IOR, G/35/6, f. 1.

57   Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean*, p. 34.

58   Philip Stern, 'Soldier and Citizen in the Seventeenth-Century English East India Company', *Journal of Early Modern History*, Vol. 15, No. 1, (2011).

59   Bennett, *The East India Company, Transnational Interactions, and the Formation of Forced Labour Regimes*, Chapter 2.

English colonies seem to have been a common feature of all overseas trading companies which operated in the seventeenth century.

Corporations, Migration, and Innovation in the Colonial Sphere

The records of chartered companies reveal that these organisations were particularly interested in trialling innovative colonial projects, even if these ventures were usually unsuccessful. The migration of skilled people and transfers of transnational expertise were important in fostering these experimental endeavours. Ideas about commercial and agricultural 'improvement' became a central feature of English discourse over the course of the seventeenth century. Paul Slack has studied the importance of these intellectual discussions within the metrepole, however, the language of 'improvement' was also frequently used by adventurers and merchants with reference to English colonial designs in Ireland and America.[60] In their instructions to their employees overseas the directors of trading companies regularly used such terminology to stress how agricultural experimentation and technological innovation could hasten colonial development at overseas plantations. Throughout the 1620s the Virginia Company was searching for profitable export commodities, and was therefore concerned with the 'setting up of silke works, and planting of vines in Virginia'. In an effort to stimulate this potentially lucrative enterprise, the Virginia Company transported numerous French experts knowledgeable in the planting of Mulberry trees from the province of Languedoc, and also sent over to the colony 'a treatise of the art of making silke' written by the Frenchman John Bonoeil.[61] Moreover, as part of the search for economic self-sufficiency at their short-lived puritan colony, the gentry investors who managed the Providence Island Company also initiated a variety of experimental projects. In 1633 the Providence Island Company dispatched Richard Lane, who was an expert in the planting of madder (a dye used in the English textile industry), to supervise the establishment of a new industry on the island. Lane was given extensive instructions detailing how he was to 'teach his skill in planting and ordering of madder' to the settlers and to 'dispence his plants and seeds to any of the

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60   Paul Slack, *The Invention of Improvement: Information and Material Progress in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 66–71.

61   John Bonoeil, 'His Majesties gracious letter to the Earle of South-Hampton, treasurer, and to the Councell and Company of Virginia heere: commanding the present setting up of silke works, and planting of vines in Virginia …' (London, 1622), ff. 2–3.

inhabitants thereof'.[62] The directors of the East India Company also fostered a number of innovative enterprises in their attempts to render the strategic settlements of St. Helena and Bencoolen more profitable. High wages were offered to encourage men with experience in the management of slaves and the cultivation of tropical commodities to emigrate from the Caribbean, and supervise the company's efforts to establish plantation slavery in the South Atlantic and the Indian Ocean during the 1680s.[63]

The pioneering role of corporate bodies in the development of colonial enterprise during the seventeenth century can be explained by cross-institutional ties in the City of London and the overlapping membership of chartered companies. Novel ideas about the management of trade, the cultivation of valuable commodities, and the mobilisation of forced labour were shared by merchants and planters who invested in multiple corporations and operated in different geographical regions. As constituents of various trading companies and overseas ventures interacted in social spaces, such as church congregations, expertise was spread among members of the commercial community and the landed gentry, informing the direction of colonial policy pursued by corporate institutions.[64] Furthermore, the constitutional and governmental structure of corporations, which encouraged the regular changeover of members, enabled policies relating to labour and migration to constantly evolve and be re-shaped to better suit the shifting economic and geopolitical circumstances of the early modern world. By tracing the career tracks of colonial governors in the seventeenth century English Atlantic world it is possible to find evidence that shows how the directors of trading companies placed a high value on prior experience when hiring men to govern their overseas enterprises. For example, the uncompromising colonial leader Phillip Bell served as the governor of Bermuda with the Somers Islands Company, before being hired as the governor of Providence Island in 1631. The Providence Island Company explained that they trusted Bell's decision-making because of his 'owne skill and experience in this business', which meant that he would 'in all thinge doe that which you conceive fittest for advancement of this worke'.[65] It was during Bell's tenure

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62   Journal of the Governor and Company of Adventurers for the Plantation of the Island of Providence, General Court, 15 February 1632/33, TNA CO 124/2, f. 43; Kupperman, *Providence Island, 1630–1641*, 84–86, 91.

63   Bennett, *The East India Company, Transnational Interactions, and the Formation of Forced Labour Regimes*, Chapter 3.

64   Edmond Smith, *The Networks of the East India Company in Early Modern London, c. 1599–1625*, PhD thesis, (Cambridge, 2015).

65   Letter to Captain Phillip Bell, 7 February 1630, TNA, CO 124/1, f. 21.

that Englishmen on Providence Island began to move away from the use of
indentured servants and to instead exploit the labour of African slaves at a
large scale. This has led Alison Games to question whether Philip Bell helped
to transplant the expertise and institutions necessary to precipitate a similar
transition in his subsequent position as governor of Barbados between 1641
and 1650.[66] Nathaniel Butler was also hired as governor by both the Providence
Island Company and the Somers Islands Company, while the prodigious Ca-
ribbean planter Thomas Modyford served as the Barbados factor for the Royal
African Company in the early 1660s, before immigrating to Jamaica where he
would later become governor.[67] Being appointed to prominent positions in the
colonial government by multiple companies helped individuals to advance
their career, while also supporting the transfer of useful knowledge and insti-
tutions between colonies.

Conclusion

Studying the role that corporations played in facilitating the movement of peo-
ple across the world offers important insights into the global history of migra-
tion and the history of early modern colonialism. It provides evidence that,
during the seventeenth century, trading diasporas and corporate bodies were
both transnational organisations that used similar methods to surmount the
technological barriers which hindered the establishment of global trade net-
works. Although most scholars have placed trading diasporas and chartered
companies in opposition, by virtue of the fact that diasporic communities
were decentralised and early modern corporations were an extension of state
power, this essay has aimed to show that both trading diasporas and chartered
companies devised comparable methods to organise long distance trade. In an
era when limitations to communications technology meant that correspon-
dence could take months to arrive, it was important for trading diasporas and
overseas trading companies to dispatch experienced and trustworthy mem-
bers of their community to distant shores to manage their commercial affairs.
In order to facilitate cross-cultural exchange in an unfamiliar environment, the
members of trading diasporas and the factors working for chartered compa-
nies adopted the customs of foreign societies and assumed hybrid identities.
Most historians who have studied early modern trading diasporas, including

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66   Games, *The Web of Empire*, 151–152.
67   For Nathaniel Butler, see Games, *Migration and the Origins of the English Atlantic World*,
      36–37. For Thomas Modyford, see Galenson, *Traders, Planters and Slaves*, 28.

Philip Curtin and Francesca Trivellato, contend that a shared sense of ethnicity, family, and religion were the most important ways in which connections between members of the diaspora were sustained. Although English overseas trading companies were concerned with ensuring that their factors working abroad continued to practice the Protestant faith, even going to the expense of dispatching ministers to administer religious rites, this essay has suggested that in corporate organisations a shared membership of the company and access to its communication channels were the most important ways that the trust necessary to facilitate long distance trade was fostered. In some cases, such as the example of the Armenian merchants at Madras, overseas trading companies and diasporas collaborated in the pursuit of shared profits.

The global networks of migration forged by overseas trading companies also demonstrate that English corporations made a foundational contribution to the process of colonial development in the Americas and the East Indies. For instance, the constitutional structure of corporate bodies enabled co-religionists to share capital and expertise in their search for religious autonomy overseas. Indentured servants were shipped overseas by corporations such as the Virginia Company and the Somers Islands Company, where they cleared the land and cultivated tropical commodities. Some chartered companies, such as the Royal African Company and the South Sea Company, were formed to administer the African slave trade. Even the East India Company participated in slave trading commerce to populate their nascent colonies in the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean with a malleable labour force. This 'company-state' was concerned as much with administering territory and governing people as it was with commerce. Furthermore, this essay has also argued that the colonial policies formulated by corporations, especially those which related to migration and the cultivation of new commodities, were experimental and pioneering. It has been suggested that the innovative nature of corporate bodies can be explained by the overlapping membership of chartered companies, the regular turnover of shareholders sitting on the court of directors, and the appointment of men experienced in the operation of overseas empires to leading positions in the colonial government.

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Networks

Aske Laursen Brock

On November 9 1666, during the second Anglo-Dutch war, a ship chartered by the English East India Company arrived in Surat, India. On board were valuable commodities, bullion and letters from home. The directors in London wrote annual letters to their employees setting forth the coming year's commercial strategy and often instilling the need for better book keeping to the people on the ground in India.[1] Letters flowing back and forth between England and the overseas were integral for the corporations' constant processes of negotiation with their employees, foreign merchants and states. As well as the official letters, employees also often received personal letters from loved ones, business partners and individuals hoping to be paid or find employment. This Friday in 1666, the president of the East India Company's affairs in Surat, Sir George Oxenden, received numerous letters from his contacts in England. A letter from his sister Elizabeth Dalyson came to him "by the hands of Mr Abraham Papillon, Brother to our Friend Mr Thomas Papillon."[2] In the letter, she mentioned that all commodities – musk and ambergris – that Oxenden sent back had arrived safely, and asked him to greet all her friends and family in Surat. Their network spanned the globe and they made their fortune in all corners of the world, though particularly Asia proved to be a good place for the Oxenden family.[3] The trading corporations that made these encounters possible were amalgamations of numerous networks and through their unique constitutions and jurisdictional latitude they created durable market spaces across the globe shaping lives and careers of English and non-Europeans alike.

Besides a letter from Dalyson, Abraham Papillon delivered a letter from his aforementioned brother Thomas Papillon. Papillon, Dalyson and Oxenden were members of a network consisting of important EIC personnel trading in

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1 See for instance British Library (from here on BL) IOR E/3/89, f. 15–16, f. 248. In the Levant, under the jurisdiction of the regulated Levant Company, the letters more often revolved around the spending of the Ambassador in Constantinople, who the company had to support. See for instance, National Archives (from here on TNA) SP105/151, f. 121.

2 BL Add Ms 40700, [undated, pre. March 1666], Elizabeth Dalyson to George Oxinden.

3 The familial success was expressed by Elizabeth Oxenden, a relative to George Oxinden and Elizabeth Dalyson, in 1677, see BL IOR MS EUR/E210/1, f. 7.

various goods between Surat and London.[4] Their trade was private, but the company provided a needed framework within which they could build and expand their network. This particular letter, however, was explicitly not about their commercial interests but rather an introduction of Abraham. Through his family connections, he was first apprenticed to a master in York, but was mistreated and left his place without becoming a freeman. Instead, he returned to London and moved in with his newlywed brother Thomas, who soon found space to be scarce and sought to send Abraham to Barbados.[5] Initially, the unfortunate Abraham was successful in the Caribbean, but the Anglo-Dutch war put an end to his success when Michel de Ruyter swept away all he had built up on the Caribbean island of Nevis. For a new start, Abraham Papillon was "willing to make one voyage to the East Indies" in order to "give an experiment of his skill and knowledge in order some further advancement."[6] After numerous trials and tribulations, he found himself in India, recommended by two central agents in a private trade network, and hoped to be employed in Asia. He pursued his success on three different continents using and building global contacts as he went along networking along the way. Networks working under the larger durable carapace of corporations spanned the globe in the early modern period and created lasting impacts domestically and globally.

Defining Corporate Global Networks

Why are corporate networks particularly useful for understanding the global perspectives of the past? They illustrate the messiness and complexities of early modern life better than binary depictions of global interactions. Investigating corporate global social networks makes it possible to see beyond the simple existence of community and gauge the reasons for the behaviour and decisions of individuals.[7] The early modern world consisted of a variety of overlapping messy entangled networks formed within companies and corporations. The corporate world was expanding rapidly and during the seventeenth and

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4 This incarnation of the network consisted of George Oxenden, who was the EIC president in Surat, his sister Elizabeth Dalyson, the EIC directors Christopher Boone, John Paige, Thomas Papillon and his partner Josiah Child.

5 Kent History and Library Centre (KHLC) U1015/C1 1650 January 12th London, Thomas Papillon to David Papillon.

6 BL Add Ms 40700, f. 67

7 Barry Wellman and Charles Wetherell, "Social Network Analysis of Historical Communities: Some Questions from the Present for the Past," *The History of the Family* 1, no. 1 (1996): 114–15.

eighteenth century, the companies grew at a greater rate than the state, and, as a result, corporations were at the forefront of interactions between Britain and the world. Networks show the nuances of society via the corporations they debated and promoted corporate governance globally.[8] The corporations, who, through their inclusion of people from all tiers of society, with different religions and different cultural understanding of economy, possessed the necessary constitutional to latitude to negotiate the processes of early globalisation.

Corporate networks illustrate the importance of both large united bodies and individuals' decisions within the budding empires that were emerging from the "overlapping and intersecting worlds of commercial and colonial enterprises and the transoceanic global perspectives that men derived through their travels from one ocean basin to another."[9] They make it possible to understand the relationships between individuals, institutions and geographies, they can be used to link the micro and macro levels, and make sense out of individual and institutional behaviour.[10] They dictate and are dictated by the behaviour of the corporations and the influence the interactions with people overseas. The study of corporate global networks make it possible to not only link micro and macro levels, they also make it possible to acknowledge the agency and entrepreneurship of previously marginalised people – in European historiography – like women and non-European agents.[11] Networks and

8   Phil Withington, "Public Discourse, Corporate Citizenship, and State Formation in Early Modern England," *The American Historical Review* 112, no. 4 (2007): 1027; Keith Wrightson, "Reformation of Manners in Early Modern England," in *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England*, ed. Paul Griffiths, Steve Hindle, and Adam Fox (Basingstoke: Routledge, 1996), 11.

9   Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 7.

10   Emily Erikson, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: The English East India Company, 1600–1757* (Princeton: Princeton University Pres, 2014), 22.

11   The role and agency of women in commercial networks is discussed well in for instance Emma Rothschild, *The Inner Life of Empires: An Eighteenth-Century History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011); Laura Gowing, "Girls on Forms: Apprenticing Young Women in Seventeenth-Century London," *Journal of British Studies* 55, no. 3 (2016); Susanah Shaw Romney, *New Netherland Connections: Intimate Networks and Atlantic Ties in Seventeenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill University of North Carolina Press, 2014). The literature on cooperation between Europeans and non-Europeans are ever increasing. For overseas networks see for instance Ashin Das Gupta, *India and the Indian Ocean World: Trade and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Søren Mentz, *The English Gentleman Merchant at Work: Madras and the City of London 1660–1740* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2005); Miles Ogborn, *Global Lives: Britain and the World, 1550–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Sanjay Subrahmanyam and C. A. Bayly, "Portfolio Capitalists and the Political Economy in Early Modern India," in *Merchants, Markets and the State in Early Modern India*, ed. Sanjay Subrahmanyam

corporations circumvent binary explanations of European domination and nuances our understanding of the world. Similar to a chain not being stronger than its weakest link: the biggest and the smallest node in a network all have roles to play.

In 2005, David Hancock lamented that networks permeated all corners of historical research as well as other disciplines increasingly watering down the usefulness of the term. Historians working with networks, according to Hancock, "tend to celebrate networks as flexible, "organic," and egalitarian," while overlooking the potential contemporary downsides of networks.[12] However, network as an analytical concept refuses to die. Historians continue to use social networks as focal points for their research. By focusing on these networks, it is possible to look beyond the customary linear narrative of history and appreciate geographical as well as spatial nuances.[13] The companies were at the centre of these networks and were instrumental in creating an early modern English society "bound together by ties of obligation which linked individuals at the inter-personal level and also connected companies, investors, and the government."[14] The durability of corporate networks – both urban and commercial corporation – meant that corporation as a format was integral in English state formation. The individuals who in one way or another participated in corporate life were active agents in what Phil Withington has referred to as the "national incorporation" shaping the English state in the seventeenth century.[15] The incorporation was not only national; through the corporate expansion overseas, it became a global phenomenon.

Francesca Trivellato has presented a very concise definition of the core values in commercial social networks in her book *Familiarity of Strangers.* Drawing on social network methodology, she argued that we should view cross cultural business relations as the "creative combination of group discipline,

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(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990); Haneda Masashi, ed. *Asian Port Cities 1600–1800: Local and Foreign Culturual Interactions* (Singapore: National University of Singapore, 2009); Bhaswati Bhattacharya, Gita Dharampal-Frick, and Jos Gommans, "Spatial and Temporal Continuities of Merchant Networks in South Asia and the Indian Ocean (1500–2000)," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 50, no. 2/3 (2007).

12   David Hancock, "The Trouble with Networks: Managing the Scots' Early- Modern Madeira Trade," *Business History Review* 79 (2005): 469.

13   Natasha Glaisyer, "Networking: Trade and Exchange in the Eighteenth- Century British Empire," *The Historical Journal* 47, no. 2 (2004): 475.

14   "Calculating Credibility: Print Culture, Trust and Economic Figures in Early Eighteenth-Century England," *Economic History Review* 60, no. 4 (2007): 708.

15   Phil Withington, *Society in Early Modern England: The Vernacular Origins of Some Powerful Ideas* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010), 217–18.

contractual obligations and customary norms, political protection, and discursive conventions."[16] Using this definition, Trivellato argued for the importance of ties cutting across families and religion. To formalise ties and reduce transaction costs, the corporate format was ideal to perpetrate cross-cultural trade. Corporations were important agents for creating durable ties based on credit, obligations and norms across the globe. It is necessary to add time to the definition as this is a crucial element to appreciate the importance of global corporate networks. For it to be a network rather than a casual encounter, a commercial network need to be "a group of people who are in contact consistently over a sustained time period through commercial interests and actions, having as a common goal the desire to profit economically from commercial activities."[17] The corporation, with its larger body of support and increasing bureaucracy, was designed to develop consistent contact over a sustained period of time.[18] By combining the different definitions above, with their respective caveats, this chapter defines corporate networks as durable, often cross-cultural, global connections formed under a larger multi-institutional umbrella.

Though the emphasis on the importance of networks for understanding history is not new, networks have become increasingly popular to explain the early modern world and the development of European empires. The aim has been to provide context, nuance and texture to European expansion through a focus on the "overlapping and intersecting works of commercial and colonial enterprises and the transoceanic perspective".[19] Unlike networks, corporations are rarely the protagonists of global history. More often than not, the corporations have been cast as antagonists in global history creating impermeable networks excluding the large parts of commercial society.[20] Instead the role as protagonist is more likely taken up by families or loosely connected associates. The agency of individuals, interlopers and free agents has been viewed as paramount in driving globalisation forward.[21] The family networks and networks

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16   Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (London: Yale University Press, 2009), 16.

17   Maria Fusaro, "Cooperating Mercantile Networks in the Early Modern Mediterranean," *Economic History Review* 65, no. 2 (2012): 702.

18   For the connection between commerce, trans-regional and temporal space see Bhattacharya, Dharampal-Frick, and Gommans, "Spatial and Temporal."

19   Games, *Web of Empire*, 7.

20   See in particular Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution: Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550–1653* (London: Verso, 2003), 51–91.

21   David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735–1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); ""A World of Business to Do": William Freeman and the Foundations of England's Commercial Empire, 1645–1707," *William and Mary Quarterly* 57, no. 1 (2000); Rothschild, *Inner Life*.

of associates has inspired a global microhistory focusing on the ties between individuals across the globe, which, through their networks made it possible to connect micro- and macrohistories "by the history of the individuals' own connections."[22] The efforts of early free traders and individual merchants have been perceived as the primary driving force behind the political economy.[23] However, these networks – family networks and business partnerships – did not leave the same global traces as the corporation. For better or worse. It was incredibly difficult to create a personal network that survived on a global scale much longer than one generation during the early modern period. Recently, the question of private and corporate networks has been nuanced by utilizing social network methodology to demonstrate a significantly more nuanced image of the corporate world. In the case of the East India Company, their networks "stretched beyond the merchant network that belonged to it, into the wider commercial community and groups at Court around the Crown."[24] Corporate networks were flexible and durable making them ideal tools for building empires.

Corporate networks relied on the relationship between the company in the metropole, the employees abroad and local partners as well as different cross-cultural brokers. Alison Games pointed out that companies and increasing cosmopolitanism were central for English expansion, demonstrating how companies and their overseas endeavours formed an ever-tighter global web. In *Web of Empire*, she provides fascinating details about how the Virginia Company's development in America was influenced not only by the English experience

For a framework considering free agents and informal, self-organising and networked empire see Catia Antunes, "Free Agents and Formal Institutions in the Portuguese Empire: Towards a Framework of Analysis," *Portuguese Studies* 28, no. 2 (2012).

22   Rothschild, *Inner Life*, 7. For further examples of the global microhistories see for instance, see for instance Francesca Trivellato, "Is There a Future for Italian Microhistory in the Age of Global History?," *California Italian Studies* 2, no. 1 (2011);, *The Familiarity of Strangers*; Tonio Andrade, "A Chinese Farmer, Two African Boys, and a Warlord: Toward a Global Microhistory," *Journal of World History* 21, no. 4 (2010); Natalie Zemon Davis, *Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-Century Muslim between Worlds* (London: Faber, 2008).

23   Nuala Zahedieh, *The Capital and the Colonies: London and the Atlantic Economy, 1660–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), chp. 3. Recently, individual agency and corporate ideas have been combined in an attempt to explain the development of the English colonial state in India as well as the development of the African Slave Trade, see William A. Pettigrew, *Freedom's Debt: The Royal African Company and the Politics of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1672–1752* (Chapel Hill, NC: UNC Press, 2013); David Veevers, " 'Inhabitants of the Universe': Global Families, Kinship Networks, and the Formation of the Early Modern Colonial State in Asia," *Journal of Global History* 10, no. 1 (2015).

24   Edmond J. Smith, "Networks of the East India Company, C. 1600–1625" (Magdalene College, University of Cambridge, 2016), 103.

in Ireland, but also by individuals with experience from the Mediterranean and from the Levant Company.[25] Similarly, Susanah Romney has recently emphasised that early Dutch colonial success in the Americas relied on intimate networks. These networks – consisting of rich (or at least middling) and poor, men and women, European, slaves and natives – constituted empire rather than formal structures or metropolitan authorities.[26] Nonetheless, they were working within, worth, alongside and against the companies. The companies, themselves structures of relations, provided a dynamic space for interaction making the members express their agency "by creatively interpreting their circumstances, which in turn affects the course of action individuals choose."[27] By understanding the agency of individuals it becomes possible to investigate how different members of the companies influenced decision making. The private networks, encouraged by the semi-decentralised structures, which in particular English trading companies effectively were, allowed local knowledge to filter into their knowledge base, which, perhaps inadvertently, improved the companies' performances.[28]

The corporations in turn functioned as an umbrella for many other networks and new connections were formed and shaped.[29] Through shared interests and overlapping personnel the corporations became stronger. Like modern day trading corporations, interlocks (executive personnel serving on multiple boards) between different companies were not infrequent.[30] Studies of decision-making in modern companies have shown that the corporate interlock and learning in networks were essential in, among other things, acquisitions and strategic decisions because interlocking directors bring their

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25   Games, *Web of Empire*, 54–56.

26   Romney, *New Netherland Connections*, 18–22.

27   Emily Erikson, "Formalist and Relationalist Theory in Social Network Analysis," *Sociological Theory* 31, no. 3 (2013): 222.

28   "Formalist and Relationalist," 77; Edmond J. Smith, "The Global Interests of London's Commercial Community, 1599–1625: Investment in the East India Company," *Economic History Review* (2018).

29   See for instance Aske Laursen Brock and William A. Pettigrew, "Leadership and the Social Agendas of the Seventeenth Century English Trading Corporation," in *From Public Interest to Private Profit: The Changing Political and Social Legitimacy of International Business* ed. William A. Pettigrew and David Chan Smith (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

30   The total number of directors serving on the board of multiple English overseas trading companies across the seventeenth century was 241 (20%). This indicates relatively high levels of experience sharing and network building across companies. The calculation is based on the "First Multinationals Database." See Aske Laursen Brock, "The Company Director: Commerce, State, and Society" (University of Kent, 2017), 34–37.

experiences with them to the new company.[31] The initial strategies of the East India Company were influenced by the expanding investor community in the early seventeenth century and the Royal African Company similarly grew out existing groups of directors.[32] As fleeting connections and simple partnerships between merchants solidified, their behaviour became routinized and the previous loose connections could be transformed into chartered corporations.

Trust, Credit and Transaction Costs

Trust is one of the most central concepts in networks; without trust and credit there was no basis to build a network on.[33] As Craig Muldrew influentially argued "the early modern economy was a system of cultural, as well as material, exchanges in which the central mediating factor was credit or trust."[34] Credit and trust were closely linked to the individuals and could be seen as an expression of "the opinion of their capacity, industry and honesty."[35] As the commerce came to span more and more of the known world, the trust similarly had to expand across the globe. Moreover, the networks of trust had to encompass more than British merchants; they also had to be extended to local merchants. According to eighteenth century writers, it seemed that trust was intimately

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31 Christine M. Beckman and Pamela R. Haunschild, "Network Learning: The Effects of Partners' Heterogeneity of Experience on Corporate Acquisitions," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 47, no. 1 (2002): 93. The influence of the directors differed depending on their background within their first company, and whether they had first or second-hand experience, Anja Tuschke, William Gerard Sanders, and Exequiel Hernandez, "Whose Experience Matters in the Boardroom? The Effects of Experiental and Vicarious Learning on Emerging Market Entry," *Strategic Management Journal* 35, no. 3 (2014): 399.

32 Smith, "Global Interests."; Pettigrew, *Freedom's Debt*.

33 See for instance Natasha Glaisyer, *The Culture of Commerce in England, 1660–1720* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006); Xabier Lamikiz, *Trade and Trust in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World: Spanish Merchants and Their Overseas Networks*, ed. Royal Historical Society (London: Royal Historical Society, 2010); Avner Greif, "Reputation and Coalitions in Medieval Trade: Evidence on the Maghribi Traders," *The Journal of Economic History* 49, no. 4 (1989); Thomas Leng, ""A Potent Plantation Well Armed and Policeed": Huguenots, the Hartlib Circle, and British Colonization in the 1640s," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 66, no. 1 (2009); Esther Sahle, "Quakers, Coercion, and Pre-Modern Growth: Why Friends' Formal Institutions for Contract Enforcement Did Not Matter for Early Modern Trade Expansion," *The Economic History Review* 71, no. 2 (2018).

34 Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: New York: Macmillan, 1998), 4.

35 Malachy Postlethwayt, *The Universal Dictionary of Trade and Commerce*, 4th ed., vol. 1 (1763), 548.

connected the nationality, ethnicity and religion of people. To some commentators, foreigners and people of different religious persuasions could not be trusted.[36] In the early age of globalisation, however, there was little choice but to extend the networks across the globe if one wanted to participate in the emerging global market. The solution to the lack of trust and limited credit in cross-cultural trade was primarily to expand commerce through either kinship networks, incorporated entities or both.[37]

The companies were commonwealths constructed by the social networks of their members, but equally had to rely on credit and trust; the charters and bonds were not enough. A central issue for the companies' expansion overseas – particularly for the directors in London who wanted to optimise their overseas governance and their business – was the asymmetric flows of information from overseas to London.[38] This issue did not only arise within companies, but unlike kinship networks, the companies relied on a different kind of trust. As Ann Carlos and Stephen Nicholas has pointed out, the relationship between directors in London and their managers on the ground abroad was a key reason for the ultimate collapse of the chartered companies.[39] The companies were aware this and attempted different methods to ensure the faithfulness of their managers such as employing people of the same nationality.[40] The flows of information was essential to secure companies' profit and people with experience from the different corners of the globe were therefore of great importance. They had the necessary experience of conditions and personal connections to influence the decisions of the companies.

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36   *Universal Dictionary* 761.

37   Lamikiz, *Spanish Merchants*, 10. There are certain overlaps between the two: families invested together and trade together in the companies. For instance the influential mercantile author Lewes Roberts, a leading member of both the Levant and East India Company, ensured that both his sons, William and Gabriel, found their way into corporate trade.

38   For the asymmetric information flow and managing the manager, see Ann M. Carlos and Stephen Nicholas, "Managing the Manager: An Application of the Principal Agent Model to the Hudson's Bay Company," *Oxford Economic Papers* 45, no. 2 (1993): 245–49. For the companies' attempt to improve overseas bureaucracy see Miles Ogborn, *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), Chapter 3.

39   Carlos and Nicholas, "Managing the Manager," 255.

40   Such as employing agents from Orkney as the Hudson's Bay Company did from the beginning of the 1680s, "Managing the Manager," 254. Alternatively relying on respected brokers could be a solution, see Bhaswati Bhattacharya, "Making Money at the Blessed Place of Manila: Armenians in the Madras–Manila Trade in the Eighteenth Century," *Journal of Global History* 3, no. 1 (2008): 5.

There is little discussion that the innovation of trading companies from the mid-sixteenth century onwards depersonalised trade. However, as Maria Fusaro has argued "family was still the default mechanism of business partnerships and, even at the level of salaried agents of English trading."[41] Family networks spanning the globe were a "multiplier effects of empire, in which individuals at home were connected, by information and expectations to events in the East and West Indies."[42] The trust between family members meant that the networks could spread at a quicker pace and disseminate knowledge, ideas and expectations globally. At times, family networks and patrimonial ties are quite obviously connected. In her book the *Familial State*, Julia Adams demonstrated the close links between charted companies – In this case the *Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (voc) – family networks and state formation. While the English and French East India Companies struggled against outside interest groups, the Dutch company "landed squarely in the laps of the ruling city burgomasters' family factions."[43] Though the English did not have the same degree of family dominance in their trades, family networks were one of the many integral networks constituting the trading corporations.[44]

A number of English company servants who served abroad continued to have personal interests after their return to Europe, which meant they continued to rely on both their successors and their local contacts. For instance, William Langhorn and Streynsham Master were both Company Presidents in Madras in 1670s, but were dismissed once their contract ran out. In 1698, the former interloper Thomas Pitt became president of the company's operations in Madras, which meant Langhorn and Master came to rely on him to continue their business. That proved tricky at times. In October 1701, Pitt informed Master that one of the merchants Master had done business with, a diamond merchant named Vydapa, had died and the investment was lost. Pitt blamed Master's closest local broker, Surapa, for the loss of Master's commodities and the issue could only be resolved if Pitt could find the papers Master left in Madras.[45] However, Master was not satisfied with the developments. In a letter, he

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41   Fusaro, "Cooperating," 703.

42   Rothschild, *Inner Life*, 2.

43   Julia Adams, *The Familial State: Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe* (London: Cornell University Press, 2007), 82. For the influence of family networks in the early years of the voc, see also Oscar Gelderblom, ed. *The Political Economy of the Dutch Republic* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009).

44   David Veevers, " 'The Company as Their Lords and the Deputy as a Great Rajah': Imperial Expansion and the English East India Company on the West Coast of Sumatra, 1685–1730," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 41, no. 5 (2013); "Global Families."

45   BL Add Ms 22844, f. 38–40.

expressed his puzzlement over Pitt's handling of the situation because "Surapa in his letter by the Dutches gives me hopes of recovering some of them [diverse goods]."[46] By maintaining his connections with his local partner, Master gained an advantage and did not have to rely solely on information from Pitt. The network he had started during his time as a company employee served him well.[47] Langhorne, on the other hand, was more forgiving of Pitt's endeavours as he was familiar with the "distempers those parts are lyable to."[48] The flows of information from multiple sources combined with mutual trust made the corporations flexible and individuals rich.

Corporations and Broker Networks

As exemplified by Master, Pitt and Langhorne, to conduct trade successfully far from British shores, be it in Africa, Asia or America, company personnel and private merchants relied heavily on local cooperation.[49] In Qing China, the European companies were limited to ply their trade in a small area of Canton (modern day Guangzhou). As a result, they had to develop strong ties to the different *Hong* merchants, who were the only merchants allowed to trade with the Europeans. The Canton system and the network between merchants, translators and the companies developed due to the sustained period of trade and the companies' ability to submit to foreign rulers.[50] The Indian merchant Kasi Viranna is one famous example of Anglo-Indian cooperation and of the

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46   BL Add Ms 22852, f. 30.

47   Surapa was served less well as he was among the Indian merchants bankrupted through his connection to the English company, see S. Arasaratnam, "Indian Merchants and Their Trading Methods (Circa 1700)," *The Indian Economic & Social History Review* 3, no. 1 (1966): 88–89.

48   BL Add Ms 22852, f. 149. At this point, Langhorne and Pitt belonged to the "old" company, while Master belonged to the "new" company, which might have influence their relationship. However, even though they represented different companies they still relied on each other as part of a larger network.

49   For the necessity of local trading partners in Africa see Robin Law, *The English in West Africa, 1681–1683*, ed. Robin Law, The English in West Africa: The Local Correspondence of the Royal African Company of England, 1681–1699 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

50   For the European and Asian interaction in Canton see Haneda Masashi, "Canton, Nagasaki and the Port Cities of the Indian Ocean: A Comparison," in *Asian Port Cities 1600–1800: Local and Foreign Cultural Interactions*, ed. Haneda Masashi (Singapore: National University of Singapore PRess, 2009); Liu Yong, "The Commercial Culture of the VOC in Canton in the Eighteenth Century," in *Asian Port Cities 1600–1800: Locan and Foreign Interactions*, ed. Haneda Masashi (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2009); Lisa Hellman, "Navigating the Foreign Quarters: Everyday Life of the Swedish East India

global expansion of networks.[51] Throughout his career, he worked with at least four presidents of the East India Company in Madras, who all relied on him but also suffered from the connection: the company was not pleased with the relationship between its employees in India and Viranna.[52] He was to some extent unique – few contemporary merchants seem to have had a similar reach and prominence – but networks were shaped by seemingly insignificant actors as well and the companies relied on them too.

The English companies, during most of the period 1550–1750, were in a relatively weak position compared to the empires with whom they were trading. Massacres of personnel by either former local trading partners or follow Europeans were an inherent danger of early commercial expansion.[53] Dangers like this were a strong argument for incorporating networks instead of working in smaller partnerships. In the tumultuous 1640s, a loosely connected group of English investors attempted to settle Madagascar with little success. This was partly due to the lack of corporate back up and partly due to some rather clumsy interactions with the locals. In 1646, two years after the adventure had begun, John Smart, who was elected governor of the prospective Madagascar colony, had to petition the East India Company to be transported back to England.[54] Commercial networks and associations could carry a trade a short

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Company Employees in Canton and Macao 1730–1830" (PhD, Universtiy of Stockholm, 2015), particularly chapter 3.

51   Viranna has been the subject of a number of studies recently, see Yogesh Sharm, "A Life of Many Parts: Kasi Viranna; a Seventeenth Century South Indian Merchant Magnate," *The Medieval History Journal*, no. 1 (1998); Ogborn, *Global Lives*; Aske Laursen Brock, "Asian Influences on the Commercial Strategies of the English East India Company," in *The East India Company, 1600–1857: Essays on Anglo-Indian Connection*, ed. William A. Pettigrew and Mahesh Gopalan (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016); Michael Wagner, "The East India Company and the Shift in Anglo-Indian Commercial Relations in the 1680s," in *The East India Company 1600–1857: Essays on Anglo-Indian Connection*, ed. William A. Pettigrew and Mahesh Gopalan (Basingstoke: Routledge, 2016).

52   See for instance the 1681 letter from the Court of directors in London demanding that the overseas employees stop working with him (however, he was already dead by then), BL IOR Ms EUR/E210/2: f. 239–241. For other powerful contemporary agents in Asia, Subrahmanyam and Bayly, "Portfolio Capitalists."; Ashin Das Gupta, "Indian Merchants and the Decline of Surat C. 1700–1750," in *India and the Indian Ocean World: Trade and Politics* ed. Ashin Das Gupta (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

53   See for instance Danny Wong Tze-Ken, "The Destruction of the English East India Company Factory on Condore Island, 1702–1705," *Modern Asian Studies* 46, no. 5 (2012); Alison Games, "Violence on the Fringes: The Virginia (1622) and Amboyna (1623) Massacres," *History* 99, no. 336 (2014); Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *The Jamestown Project* (London: Harvard University Press, 2007), 304–07.

54   BL Add Ms 14037, f. 42. For English attempts of early colonisation in Africa see, Edmond J. Smith, " 'Canaanising Madagascar': Africa in English Imperial Imagination, 1635–1650,"

distance, or for a shorter period, but for settling overseas diplomacy, the jurisdictional evasiveness and integrative nature corporation provided a much needed framework for formalising ties.[55]

English companies sought to tie networks of brokers and local merchants to their corporate entities during the seventeenth and eighteenth century. In London, the directors of the different companies were more hesitant of the reliance and relationship on brokers. In 1675, the EIC directors wrote to their employee John Child in Rajapore to complain about how "[the factors] have childishly trusted the information of their Brokers, the noyse & stink of dancing women haveing as wee understand put serious business out of their heads."[56] One way to improve the relationship between brokers and company was by incorporating the loosely connected local trading partners. For both the Levant Company and the East India Company, the Armenian diaspora were an important trading partner.[57] For the East India Company, working with the Armenians gave them a chance to rid themselves of "Those knavish linguists and brokers that have been nursed up in the time of the late agents."[58] Throughout the early modern period, broker networks were of the greatest importance for global trade.

In 1688, while the East India Company and Levant Company were struggling internally over the silk trade, the East India Company attempted to gain an advantage by making a formal agreement with the leaders of the Armenians in Isfahan, Persia.[59] The deal was proposed after lengthy debates between the deputy governor, Sir Josiah Child, and Coja Panous Calendar, "an Armenian merchant of eminence."[60] It was a favourable deal designed to lead the Armenians' India and Persia trade through England and circumventing Aleppo, a central trading hub for the Levant Company, in exchange for low customs, freedom to live in company settlements, freedom of religion and freedom to

Itinerario 39, no. Special Issue 02 (2015). The people behind the colony had connections to the East India Company, but lacked the understanding of colonisation in Africa.

55   See the introduction to this volume.

56   BL IOR G/3/7, f. 67.

57   Sebouh David Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), Chapter 3 and 4.

58   BL IOR E/3/92, f. 82.

59   An excellent sourcebook for the relationship between the English East India Company and the Armenians have been published by the late Vahé Baladouni and Margaret Makepeace, "Armenian Merchants of the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries: English East India Company Sources," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 88, no. 5 (1998).

60   BL IOR B/39, p. 133.

pass and repass on the company's ships. The Armenians were trusted brokers and could play a crucial role "for the better encouragement of that nation to settle and cohabit in the several garrisons, cities and towns in the East Indies under our jurisdiction."[61] The English company hoped to formalise the networks they had built up over the years through a formal agreement. Beside the hope circumventing the Levant Company, the hope was also to gain better understanding of the intricate dealings at the Mughal Court were the East India Company was struggling greatly at the times. Instead of continuing to do business as usual, the directors in London encouraged to heed the advice of aforementioned Coja Panous Calendar who was going to settle in Fort St George on the Coromandel Coast.[62] After trading closely with the Armenian merchants, the East India Company wished to tie them closer to the corporate body. The continuous connections between company and broker as well as connections between individuals created a durable network.

Incorporating Local Partners

Though the Armenian merchants initially preferred to be free to trade with whomever they pleased rather than being limited to one company, the agreement between the East India Company and the Armenian merchants shaped the governance in Madras.[63] Simultaneously with this attempt to create a sustained network, the East India Company was engaged in another attempt to incorporate the globe. In 1688, the East India Company sought to incorporate Madras using Portsmouth as a model. In connection with this, the company in London wrote to Fort St George and reminded their employees that the local citizens "shall forever remain in the same freedome, as if they were English men borne, and enjoy a perpetuall liberty as to their religion and Property as to their Inheritances […] but they must never expect to be freer than all free men are in England."[64] The corporate format should give the same rights in India as in England and ensure some form of representation of everyone involved. The aldermen of the city included the different casts, Jewish inhabitants, Armenians, Portuguese and English.[65] This meant incorporating the diverse

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61   BL IOR B/39, p. 135.
62   BL IOR E/3/91, f. 281.
63   BL IOR E/3/53, f. 90–92.
64   BL IOR E/3/91, f. 137.
65   See Philip J. Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundation of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 93–98.

powerful ethno-religious networks into a new entity creating an innovative corporate hybrid. At a time when religious dissent was illegal or severely questioned in England, the hybridity was a significant innovation.[66]

This hybrid was more successful than the joint stock attempted in the aftermath of Kasi Viranna's demise in Madras. In the hope of not having to rely on a single merchant again and to create a more advantageous position for the East India Company, local merchants were convinced or coerced to operate in a form of joint stock around 1700. The merchants had the monopoly on supplying the English company with goods while the English were guaranteed a set price. The result for the local merchants was disaster and imprisonment when they ended in debt to the company.[67] William Langhorne, himself a former president in Madras, heard of the collapse of the smaller joint stock company in Madras through Thomas Pitt and was convinced that the lack of success was due to the quality of the Madras merchants. Kasi Viranna and Beri Timmana, two of the most influential merchants of their generation, came from a lowly background (according to Langhorne); they worked hard to earn their living. The descendants failed because they were brought up in plenty and were born "with higher stomachs," and with less intelligence for the corporate trade.[68] Solidifying commercial networks into a corporation was not always an advantage for all partners. In the fortified cities in India, the merchants were more at mercy of the English whereas the Armenian merchants were dispersed over a large area and had multiple trading partners across the world and did not have to rely on the goodwill of the English. The attempts in India to incorporate looser networks into a solid corporate structure consisting of multiple networks was the acknowledgement of the usefulness, flexibility and durability of the corporation in England. However, across the globe the corporations had to adjust and take onboard lessons from locals and European.

Conclusion

The period between 1550 and 1750 was one of rapid globalisation; the British Isles benefitted more than most from this. From being an insignificant kingdom on the western frontier of Europe, England and later Great Britain grew to

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66   For this flexibility see William A. Pettigrew, "Corporate Constitutionalism and the Dialogue between the Global and Local in Seventeenth-Century English History," *Itinerario* 39, no. 03 (2015): 500–01. See also Haig Smith's contribution in this volume.

67   Arasaratnam, "Indian Merchants," 88–90.

68   BL Add Ms 22852, f. 149.

be arguably the most powerful empire in the world aided greatly by the many different corporations and global networks. Of course, networks then as now, exist beyond corporations and official institutions. However, the corporations created an opportunity to form lasting connections in distant countries. Kinship networks, business associations as well as commercial networks bound up on religion alone were vulnerable abroad. The Oxenden/Master family lost its footing in India in the latter seventeenth century, Viranna's business empire crumpled after his death and the attempts to colonise Madagascar by a smaller associations were unsuccessful. However, when these networks were solidified alongside other networks within corporations, they became more durable. Between 1550 and 1750, the corporations' networks continued to expand across the Levant, Africa and Asia. The corporations' autonomous global nature integrated British and local trading partners in durable networks and, inadvertently, formed hybridised global corporations.

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Literature

Liam D. Haydon

Literary scholars have long been aware of the global forces which shaped English cultural production in the early modern period. The Renaissance, itself already a transnational phenomenon, has increasingly been seen as a global movement with the integration of travel narratives, almanacs and utopian fiction as key texts, as well as thematic overviews which reconsider the place of global trends such as trade, exoticism, material exchanges and new conceptions of spatial relations.[1] As the appetite for, and circulation of artistic, decorative, domestic and culinary materials grew among European audiences during the seventeenth century, so too did their textual representations and reflections. Moreover, these representations became increasingly complex and embedded within the literary text – no longer objects of wonder, 'exotic' materials, languages and ideas became ways in which European writers and readers could reflect on the changes to their world and sense of self occasioned by global networks of travel and exchange driven by corporate actors.

For this reason, the 'discipline' of early modern literary studies has increasingly seen itself as porous or even amorphous, as formalist concerns have been superseded by, or integrated into, largely historicist projects emphasising the 'text' in 'context'. In doing so, the boundaries of literary criticism have expanded to include cultural, political and economic history, anthropology and sociology, art history, the histories of science, and biological-ecological issues. Just as these fields have moved towards 'global' conceptions of their discipline, so too have literature scholars begun the process of exploring their refractions in cultural production, excavating the intercultural or transcultural themes and ideas embedded within the text.

This has not been, however, a one-way process of 'uncovering' global themes which are more or less 'hidden' within texts. Rather, historicist scholarship has stressed the ways in which these texts are in fact crucial for the production, dissemination and examination of the new ideological positions and identities

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1 See, among many others, Jyotsna G. Singh, ed. *A Companion to the Global Renaissance: English Literature and Culture in the Era of Expansion* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009); Barbara Sebek and Stephen Deng, eds., *Global Traffic: Discourses and Practices of Trade in English Literature and Culture from 1550 to 1700* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

which emerged over the early modern period. Texts do not merely reflect their context, but are in fact constituent parts of that context:

> A play like *1 Henry IV* may not provide the most reliable account of fifteenth-century dynastic politics, but it can tell us a lot about the way sixteenth-century English men and women thought about sovereignty, religion, gender and what it meant to be 'English' in the first place.[2]

The same historicist process is at play in texts which engage with the economic or social consequences of corporate activity. Documents that might be thought of as being 'literary' have much to offer us when we consider the function and social understanding of the corporate form, and the way it functioned within society. Though literary scholars have rarely engaged directly with the corporate form, doing so gives a fresh insight on the integrative functions of the corporation, and literature's ability to reflect on the corporate form and its activities. The corporation was deeply embedded in the literary world of early modern London, on stage, on the page, and in the streets. These texts offer a version of global corporate activity that is at once symbolic and deeply reflective, revealing concern over the constitutional framework in which corporations operated, as well as their particular activities and ambitions. The constant processes of negotiation which constituted corporate activity were laid bare by literature, allowing their readers to question the precise nature of the corporate form at home and abroad.

If the meta-narrative of globalisation is frequently one of economic imperatives, most obviously trade and industrialisation, literature has responded by considering the role of economic thinking and transactions within the text; that is, literature becomes, in effect, a site of negotiation in which competing visions of global, corporate activity (in more or less complete forms) can be imagined, compared and promoted. There are a number of broader 'economic' studies of early modern writers, which are often affected by corporate and mercantile activity, even if 'the corporation' is not the primary unit of analysis. The classic study here is Hoxby's *Mammon's Music*, which analyses works by Milton and his contemporaries in terms of their use of economic metaphors and their engagement with the urgent questions of trade, such as mercantilism, free trade, and the value of labour. Hoxby limits his frame of reference to 'literary texts in which authors quite directly address economic issues or

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2 Carole Levin and John Watkins, *Shakespeare's Foreign Worlds: National and Transnational Identities in the Elizabethan Age* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2009), 7.

avail themselves of economic reasoning', but in doing so he demonstrates just how deeply embedded these 'economic issues' are within the poetry of Milton, Waller, Dryden, and many others.[3] Questions of 'loss' and 'productivity' are similarly examined in Valerie Forman's *Tragicomic Redemptions*, which demonstrates how 'loss' became a productive category of investment, as 'a reconceptualization of present loss as expenditure, that is, as a transformable source of legitimate, future profit'.[4] Forman begins with the pamphlet wars between Mun, Misselden and others over the export of bullion and the balance of trade in the 1620s, and shows how this model of investment fits into the development of tragicomedy, a literary form which takes its dramatic power from, and indeed seeks to legitimise and valorise, such profitable transformations.

Though these writers acknowledge the interface between the languages of literature and economics, their analysis tends to be unidirectional, focusing on the interpolation of economic images such as credit, circulation, debt, and value into literary texts. Stephen Deng, for example, has shown how coins, either as physical objects or as language, circulate within early modern literature, acquiring a value beyond the 'exchange' and becoming instead symbolic of state power and global interactions.[5] Studies of economic effects within Shakespeare's drama often follow a similar trajectory, considering how global objects and practices of exchange are transformed into fictions, ideas or symbols on stage.[6] Jonathan Gil Harris's *Sick Economies* perhaps comes closest to fully exploring the mechanism by which imagery was generated and negotiated between economic and literary writing. For Gil Harris, this is an integrated process, in which 'pathologization' (the understanding of economic processes through metaphors of virulent diseases) was deployed in economic and literary works simultaneously:

> What *The Comedy of Errors* offers, then, is a compromise formation, one
> that mediates between a residual moral discourse of appetitive economy

3   Blair Hoxby, *Mammon's Music: Literature and Economics in the Age of Milton* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 8.

4   Valerie Forman, *Tragicomic Redemptions: Global Economics and the Early Modern English Stage* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 6.

5   Stephen Deng, *Coinage and State Formation in Early Modern English Literature* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

6   Walter Cohen, 'The Undiscovered Country: Shakespeare and Mercantile Geography', in *Marxist Shakespeares*, ed. Jean E. Howard and Scott Cutler Shershow (London: Routledge, 2001).

and an emergent systemic discourse of global trade. This compromise might be termed a syphilitic economy.[7]

The discursive systems Gil Harris finds in *A Comedy of Errors* (appetitive economy and systemic trade) are generated outside of the play, but in the language of the play, and the compromise formation in the literary text anticipates and shapes debates in the political economic sphere (whether as compromises or, more usually, as restatements of one of those positions in response to the other).

More, though, can be done to focus on the impacts the *form* of the corporation, and corporate activity on a direct level, had on early modern culture. Until very recently, studies of literature and the corporation could be divided into two types. Firstly, there are studies of travel literature (most prominently Hakluyt, Purchas, Roe and Coryat). Many of these studies mention the corporate background of their authors, or the assistance and interaction with the corporation, but are not focused on the corporation as such. More recently, work has been done on the engagement between corporate writing and travel narratives: Robert Markley's recent study of Hamilton's *A New Account of the East Indies* (1727), for example, reads the work in the light of corporate writings relating to the Mughal war.[8]

Added to these are studies following the methodology of the history of science, which track the transfer of ideas from the 'periphery' to 'centre' via the written word – bestiaries, herbals, books of medicine, oriental or 'exotic' writing, news and history.[9] Crucial in this tradition is Anna Winterbottom's *Hybrid Knowledge in the Early East India Company World*. Locating her study in the settlements and territories of the East India Company, Winterbottom aims at 'a nuanced discussion of the extra-European sites in which knowledge was created' and 'a wider recognition of the range of actors involved in the production

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7   Jonathan Gil Harris, *Sick Economies: Drama, Mercantilism, and Disease in Shakespeare's England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 49.

8   Robert Markley, 'Alexander Hamilton, the Mughal War, and the Critique of the East India Company', *Genre* 48, no. 2 (2015).

9   Jane Spencer, 'The Animals of China in the Eighteenth-Century British Imagination', *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences* 8, no. 2 (2015); Catherine Armstrong, 'Reaction to the 1622 Virginia Massacre: An Early History of Transatlantic Print', in *Books between Europe and the Americas: Connections and Communities, 1620–1860*, ed. Leslie Howsam and James Raven (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); James Delbourgo, 'Science', in *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800*, ed. David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

of knowledge'.[10] Such knowledge was refracted into literary texts, allowing an indirect commentary on the integrative function of corporations as conduits for knowledge generation and exchange.

Secondly, there are studies of individual authors in the light of their corporate activities. Many of the writers who considered 'global' issues were engaged with corporations: Hakluyt and Purchas collected material from the trading companies; Josuah Sylvester, translator of Du Bartas' epic on the creation and history of the world was a Merchant Adventurer. Other writers, such as Defoe,[11] engaged with corporations as jobbing propagandists; still others, such as Davenant,[12] Dryden,[13] Milton[14] and Behn[15] were investors or otherwise tangentially involved. There are also lesser known texts placed into corporate

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10   Anna Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge in the Early East India Company World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2016), 5.

11   Christopher Borsing, *Daniel Defoe and the Representation of Personal Identity* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 28, 91–9; Stephen H. Gregg, *Defoe's Writings and Manliness: Contrary Men* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 153–5; Ning Ma, *The Age of Silver: The Rise of the Novel East and West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 139–66.

12   On his links with the East India Company see Philip J. Stern, 'Corporate Virtue: The Languages of Empire in Early Modern British Asia', *Renaissance Studies* 26, no. 4 (2012); Andrea Finkelstein, *Harmony and the Balance: An Intellectual History of Seventeenth-Century English Economic Thought* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 219–46; David Waddell, 'Charles Davenant and the East India Company', *Economica* 23, no. 91 (1956). For his work as a writer for the Royal African Company, see William A. Pettigrew, *Freedom's Debt: The Royal African Company and the Politics of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1672–1752* (Williamsburg, VA: U of North Carolina P, 2013), 95–8; Matthew David Mitchell, ' "Legitimate Commerce" in the Eighteenth Century: The Royal African Company of England under the Duke of Chandos, 1720–1726', *Enterprise & Society* 14, no. 3 (2013); Daniel Carey, 'John Locke, Money and Credit', in *The Empire of Credit: The Financial Revolution in Britain, Ireland and America, 1688–1815*, ed. Daniel Carey and Christopher Finlay (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2011).

13   In particular for the political context of *Aurangzeb* (1675), written while the EIC was attempting to negotiate with the historical person of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, the failure of which would eventually lead to war. See Balachandra Rajan, *Under Western Eyes: India from Milton to Macaulay* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), 67–77.

14   Liam D. Haydon, 'Paradise Lost and the Politics of the Corporation', *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 57, no. 1 (2017); David Hawkes, 'Milton and Usury', *English Literary Renaissance* 41, no. 3 (2011); Hoxby, *Mammon's Music: Literature and Economics in the Age of Milton*; Rajan, *Under Western Eyes: India from Milton to Macaulay*, 50–66.

15   Most notably for the Royal African Company and *Oroonoko*, as in Moira Ferguson, 'Oroonoko: Birth of a Paradigm', *New Literary History* 23, no. 2 (1992); Susan B. Iwanisziw, 'Behn's Novel Investment in "Oroonoko": Kingship, Slavery and Tobacco in English Colonialism', *South Atlantic Review* 63, no. 2 (1998). But see also studies which consider the role of 'collectivity', such as Melissa Mowry, ' "Past Remembrance or History": Aphra Behn's the Widdow Ranter, or, How the Collective Lost Its Honor', *ELH* 79, no. 3 (2012).

contexts: Jenifer Buckley reads Haywood's *Cleomelia* (1727) as a response to questions of 'value', sexuality and morality engendered, at least in part, by trade in Asia and the South Sea bubble.[16] Suvir Kaul notes the effects of plantation colonies and Indian trade, as well as the political economy of the Cromwellian government and its relationship with the Dutch, on the works of Marvell and Waller.[17] These studies reveal the way in which corporate political economy, and corporate constitutionalism, was examined in literary works, often through abstractions into a corporate-inflected literary register of terms such as 'risk', 'debt', 'trust', 'credit', 'value', and 'bond', among others.

In this category we might also place studies of 'corporate writing' more generally, such as Markley's *Far East and the English Imagination*, Ogborn's *Indian Ink* and Richmond Barbour's *Before Orientalism*. This work is largely historicist in nature, discussing the responses to corporate activity which are im- or ex-plicit within the literary texts. Richmond Barbour, for example, notes that 'kindred alliances of corporate and royal interests generated both trading companies and playing companies, and London's merchants committed joint-stock to both enterprises', and outlines the ways in which the representations of geography and power on the stage influenced English activities overseas, not least in the person of Sir Thomas Roe.[18] Shifts in material culture was an important legacy of corporate activity, and concerns over the changes in eating or dressing habits in England found their way in to literature as well.[19]

Corporations were deeply embedded in the literary world of early modern London, on page and in the streets. Corporate display sat at the heart of London's civic pageantry, with the Lord Mayor's Show offering a particular opportunity for the city, and its commercial communities, to reflect on their activities and ambitions, and represent them to the general public. Indeed, it is likely that no other cultural activity (save perhaps sermons) had as great a 'reach' into the daily lives as the pageants through London, viewed by thousands or even tens of thousands. These entertainments were often printed, too, allowing both a wider audience and a permanent textual record of the day's events and key images.

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16   Jenifer Buckley, ' "Bankrupt in All but My Good Wishes": Speculative Economics in Cleomelia; or the Generous Mistress', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 14, no. 4 (2014).

17   Suvir Kaul, *Poems of Nation, Anthems of Empire: English Verse in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000), 49–60.

18   Richmond Barbour, *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East, 1576–1626* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 41.

19   David Kuchta, *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England, 1550–1850* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002).

Major writers such as Jonson and Middleton were commissioned to pro-
duce these entertainments. Tracey Hill has shown how these pageants reflect-
ed the ways in which '[o]ligarchs from the Great Twelve livery companies were
deeply imbricated with the Merchant Adventurers, the Virginia Company, the
East India Company and the like', especially as Lord Mayors began to be drawn
from the ranks of these overseas investors from the 1620s onwards.[20] These
shows encouraged a reflection on the source of the City of London's wealth,
presenting the global world with which the city's merchants engaged not as a
passive space of European expansion, but as complex, sophisticated cultures
and trading partners.

In 1617 Middleton produced *The Triumph of Honour and Industry* for the
confirmation of George Bolles, a Grocer, as Lord Mayor, receiving a fee of £282
from the Grocer's Company. The first 'invention' (scene) of the performance is
'a company of Indians [...] every one severally employed' in growing spices.[21]
Bolles was a member of the East India Company as well as the Grocers, and
the prominent position given to EIC activities reflects both a desire to hon-
our Bolles' personal connection and an assertion of the Company's status as
an integral part of the 'honour of the City' (39). These productive Indians are
followed 'triumphantly [by] a rich personage presenting India, the seat of mer-
chandise' (53–4). Middleton's India, 'whose seat is the most eminent', and who
holds in her hand 'a wedge of gold' (89–90), is flanked by figures representing
Merchandise and Industry. Though India is brought to London in triumph, it is
to honour her: the eminent positioning of India is far from the Roman triumph
of a subjugated enemy, and in fact more akin to a respected state visitor, whose
'wealth and love' (80) has to be, and is being, earned by London. Industry's
speech, which reminds the audience that the trade with India is 'not only to
itself adding increase / But several nations where commérce abounds' (82–
3), reminds them that this is a mutually beneficial trade with India as willing,
peaceful, partner.

After the rich presentation of India, Middleton's show progresses to a series
of speeches honouring the Grocers and the new Mayor in French and Spanish,
and a presentation of dignitaries from a variety of nations: 'an Englishman, a
Frenchman, an Irishman, a Spaniard, a Turk, a Jew, a Dane, a Polander, a Bar-
barian, a Russian or Muscovian'. (153–5) Though Middleton has his narrator

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20   Tracey Hill, *Pageantry and Power: A Cultural History of the Early Modern Lord Mayor's
      Show, 1585–1639* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), 289.
21   Thomas Middleton, 'The Triumphs of Honour and Industry (1617)', in *The Collected Works*,
      ed. Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino (Oxford: Clarendon, 2010), 43–8. Further references
      are given by line number in the text.

inform the viewer that he would like to include all nations, but that the 'customary bounds' of the pageant deny him this opportunity, it is significant that these nations represent the international, often corporate, trades with which the grocers might engage: the Irish Society (in which the Grocers were an investor), the Muscovy, Levant and Eastland Companies (in which Jews were often middlemen), as well as trade to France, Spain and the Barbary coast, which was unregulated at the time of the pageant, though occasionally incorporated in the early modern period. Middleton's pageant is thus designed to reflect a growing commercial community at the heart of London's social order, and to establish a harmony between economic pursuits and civic virtues.

The Triumph of Honour and Industry thus places global trade in productive dialogue with the complex corporate networks which enabled it in London. Conrad, in his survey of global history as a discipline, notes that '[t]he most interesting questions often arise at the juncture where global processes intersect with their local manifestations'.[22] For this period, the history of a global corporate literature is not one of the periphery 'writing back' to the centre (as it will become towards the end of the eighteenth century), but the intersection of global corporate activity with locally-oriented literary production and consumption.

Corporate practices abroad generated new literary forms and ideas in London, as authors and consumers of literature sought new ways to reflect on a world opened up to them by corporate practices. If in the first half of the seventeenth century this largely took place on the stage or the streets, in the 1680s and beyond it took place on the page, and in particular the debates between pro- and anti-corporate writers in letters, broadsides, ballads and newsbooks. One key debate was the necessity of establishing fortifications in other countries – corporate writers argued these structures provided crucial defences, and an extension of sovereignty, needed to secure the long-distance trades. Anti-corporate writers suggested they were simply 'castles in the air' and no defence at all, but rather an unnecessary charge undertaken to provide support for monopolistic practices, not trade.

These anti-corporate writers did not invent the term 'castles in the air', though they did extend its meaning from simply 'nonsense' or 'fancy'. Sir Philip Sidney had begun such an understanding of the phrase in his *Apology for Poesie*, making it part of his broader argument that poetry and imagination had a real power to shape ideology and action:

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22   Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 12.

And that the Poet hath that *Idea,* is manifest, by deliuering them forth in such excellencie as hee hath imagined them. Which delivering forth also, is not wholie imaginatiue, as we are wont to say by them that build Castles in the ayre: but so farre substantially it worketh.[23]

Though Sidney acknowledges that 'castles in the air' might normally be taken to be 'wholly imaginative', he nonetheless maintains that a poet – any writer of craft and ability – might work them into something 'substantial'. This is akin to Thoreau's use of the phrase, but where in *Walden* the suggestion is that work should be done to move to an imagined state (that is, to move 'reality' closer to the 'fantasy'), Sidney argues that a powerful imagination will by itself produce real effects (that is, the fantasy will itself change reality).

That distinction, though fine, brings to mind responses to Utopian literature, and contemporary commentators also made the link between 'castles in the air' and imagined commonwealths. In a sermon preached before Elizabeth I, Richard Curteys warned of the dangers of theological or political speculation:

Wée buylde Castles and toures in the ayre to get vs a name. So many heads, so many wittes, so many common wealthes. Plato his *Idaea,* Aristotles felicitie, and Pythagoras numbers, trouble most mens brayns. Wishers and woulders were neuer good housholders, deuisers and phansiers were neuer good Common wealthes menne.[24]

Curteys explicitly links the castles and towers in the air to the abstractions of both utopian literature and mathematics. The language of forts and towers, though, also suggests something of colony or rule over these commonwealths, and perhaps even a sort of unruliness in these imagined communities.

Other writers linked the castles in the air to actual sites abroad, but unreachable. Michael Drayton, a court favourite of Elizabeth, wrote a narrative poem based on the life of Robert, Duke of Normandy (son of William the Conqueror). Despite his foreign conquests, Robert is obliged to return home to head off a rebellion, leading the poet to reflect on the vainglorious pursuits of territories and titles which cannot be enjoyed in person:

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23   Philip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesie* (London: William Ponsonby, 1595), Sig. B4v.
24   Richard Curteys, *A Sermon Preached before the Queenes Majesty, by the Reverend Father in God the Bishop of Chichester, at Greenwich, the 14 Day of March 1573* (London: Henry Binneman, for Francis Coldocke, 1573), Sig. C4r-v.

> Thus he's inrich'd with that he cannot see,
> With few vaine titles swelling in his name,
> And all his substance but meere shadowes be,
> VVhilst he strange castles in the aire doth frame,
> Lo such a mighty Monarchesse is *Fame:*[25]

In Drayton's poem, the 'castles in the air' have moved from the realm of imagination to reality, in that they substantially exist somewhere, but he wittily undercuts the basis of that existence: can they be said to exist, or are they mere 'shadows', if Robert cannot enjoy them and they do not add to, or even protect, his position at home?

The same question was asked of the forts and possessions of the trading companies. Nothing marked the international trading companies as different corporate forms more than the construction and maintenance of forts overseas, and those forts became a key financial and conceptual battleground in the emergent public sphere in England. Companies argued that the building and maintenance of forts was a crucial factor in the relationships established with overseas powers, whether to establish territorial claims, demonstrate corporate power, or to protect traders from attack:

> nothing but a *Company* and a *Joynt Stock* could have laid the Foundation of so considerable a Trade […] it being impracticable to raise any considerable Trade in a remote Country, amongst Savage *Indians,* without Forts and Factories erected and setled amongst them.[26]

Critics of the companies, however, argued not only that forts were unnecessary for trade (since self-interested local rulers would protect independent traders better than any fort could), but that the forts themselves were not ontologically worthy of the term:

> Those Forts pretended to be built by the *Hudson-Bay Company,* are no better than *Pig-Sties,* in *England,* nor of greater Strength; being a few *Pine-Trees,* squared and laid one upon another, and ramm'd only with *Moss,* to keep out the Wind.[27]

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25   Michael Drayton, *The Tragicall Legend of Robert, Duke of Normandy* (London: Ja. Roberts for N. L, 1596), canto 90.

26   Anon, *The Case of the Hudsons-Bay-Company* (London: s.n., 1690?), 1.

27   *An Impartial Account of the Present State of the Hudson-Bay Company* (London?: s.n.?, 1690?), 1.

Indeed, the attack on the company turns on the naming of the structure, changing the name from 'fort' to pig-sty, as well as changing the geographical location from Hudson's Bay back to England; this double-pronged attack destabilises the company's particular claims for territorial governance and efficient global trading systems, rooting them instead in the parochial concerns of domestic pig farming. This is reinforced by the further detail of the fort/sty, which, by being 'rammed with moss' is poorly built and temporary (against the company's claim to permanence), and can only keep out the 'wind', not an attacking army. These structures could not provoke awe or loyalty in the native peoples, and consequently would protect neither the company's servants nor its trade.

An anonymous pamphlet in 1693 brought together all of these arguments, demonstrating the way in which they had become well-established rhetorical positions:

> Forts and Castles are none at all, in Case the *Great Mogul* or other Princes in *India* will at any time Offend us. And for others (the *French* and *Dutch,* &c. if they be our Enemies) they cannot hurt us in any Port of the *Indies,* because there the Government, *&c.* will Protect us: And if they meet us at Sea, our Forts and Castles (if we have them) cannot defend us. So that Forts in *India* are, at best, no better to us in point of Security or Defence against Enemies, than Castles in the Air; but may do us much Hurt, for that they are likely to create a Jealousy of us in the *Great Mogul,* and other Princes of *India,* &c. and tempt us (as it did the New Company) to Contests, which will be fatal to us.[28]

For this anonymous writer, the forts may as well be fictions – in terms of their capabilities as forts – but they nonetheless have a deleterious effect as ideas, because they project a false image of sovereignty which tempts the corporation to change its behaviour to Stern's model of the company-state, declaring war and acquiring territory.

The 'Castles in the Air' thus passed from literature, to political economy, and back to literature (or fiction), demonstrating the enduring power of the *image* in the making of corporations and their global activities. These literary materials, when analysed in their corporate context, thus enable us to observe

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28   *Reasons Humbly Offered against Establishing, by Act of Parliament, the East-India-Trade, in a Company, with a Joint-Stock* (London: s.n., 1693), sig. A2r.

the global operations of the early modern corporation. They reveal the ways in which the legal features of the corporation – the constitutionally structured overseas negotiations that enabled the construction of forts and governing of territory – were challenged and negotiated in the incipient public sphere. The imagining, constructing, and rewriting of these corporate spaces overseas was a crucial mechanism in the development of integrational corporate practice: seeking to reconcile its constitutional frameworks at home and abroad, through these mechanism of public speech and popular opinion, forced the corporation to engage directly with its jurisdictional evasiveness, as well as the precise nature of its power and influence, whether in London, Madras or Ouidah.

Thinking about the 'global', and in particular the representations of 'self' and 'Englishness', in these literary ways underwent a fundamental shift towards the end of the eighteenth century as the 'second' British Empire was established as a reaction to the loss of the North American colonies. This period has been fertile ground for post-colonial scholars, following Homi Bhabha, aiming to 'understand the 'indigenous' nature of England's *colonial* history' as represented in, for example, romantic poetry or Austen's novels.[29] Texts in the period frequently have characters engaged in business in the Empire, either as part of the narrative or as elements in the backstory to the novel, often as an explanation of wealth or absence (or both, as in *Mansfield Park*). Raymond Williams has argued that the Empire was an extension of the distinction between the country and the city in England, so that novels often show

> a way out from the struggle within English society to these distant lands; a way out that is not only an escape to a new land but as in some of the real history an acquisition of fortune to return and re-enter the struggle at a higher point.[30]

Naturally, such studies are more prominent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as part of the general current of colonial literature (and the study of

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29 David Minden Higgins, *Romantic Englishness: Local, National and Global Selves, 1780–1850* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014), 3; Susan Fraiman, 'Jane Austen and Edward Said: Gender, Culture, and Imperialism', *Critical Inquiry* 21, no. 4 (1995); Saree Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993), 81–97.

30 Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 281.

the aesthetic effects of colonialism – on both colonisers and colonised – by post-colonial scholars)[31]; authors like Mill[32] in the century after Plessy but before the mutiny, and others such as Trevelyan and Kipling in the period immediately after the winding-up of the company have attracted attention for the interplay between their works and the British activities in India, and how they were represented and consumed in Britain.[33]

Moreover, the 'afterlives' of early modern texts (especially canonical literature) have been indelibly tinged with empire, or even the struggles against empire: As Jyotsna Singh points out, texts such as *The Tempest* have been part of colonial attitudes and independence movements from Africa to Latin America, and so scholars can never 'retrieve the play from its non-Western contexts and return it to its singular canonical, 'Western' status'.[34]

Conclusion

For 'Empire' after 1757, perhaps we ought to read 'corporation' in the preceding century and a half. Many of the concerns about 'Englishness' which are pertinent to imperial writing are just as pressing for those writers in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, even if they are often expressed in different ways. Clearly, this is more diffuse than 'Empire', that all-consuming unit of foreign policy, national identity, material goods, morality and the industrial revolution. But just as the men of *Wuthering Heights* or *Great Expectations* made their fortunes abroad before returning, so too did characters in early modern plays; Behn's *Oroonoko* engaged thoughtfully with the activities of the Royal African Company before the great eighteenth century novelists' oblique

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31   On the imposition of a certain kind of 'colonial aesthetic' on the colonised bourgeois classes see Deana Heath, *Purifying Empire: Obscenity and the Politics of Moral Regulation in Britain, India and Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 189–99.

32   Abram L. Harris, 'John Stuart Mill: Servant of the East India Company'., *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* 30, no. 2 (1964); Lynn Zastoupil, *John Stuart Mill and India* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1994); Martin Moir, Douglas M. Peers, and Lynn Zastoupil, eds., *J.S. Mill's Encounter with India* (Toronto; London: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

33   See Eddy Kent, *Corporate Character: Representing Imperial Power in British India, 1786–1901* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 112–70.

34   Jyotsna G. Singh, *Colonial Narrative/Cultural Dialogues: 'Discoveries' of India in the Language of Colonialism* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 6. The classic reading of *The Tempest* as colonial narrative is Paul Brown, ' "This Thing of Darkness I Acknowledge Mine": *The Tempest* and the Discourse of Colonialism', in *Political Shakespeare*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994).

references to the slave trade; and questions of the moral economy were current in writers in the seventeenth century before Pope or the romantic poets.

This does not mean we ought to simply read back the criticisms and insights of imperial literature into the earlier centuries, or see the corporation as a proto-empire, subject to the same concerns and literary representations. Rather, it is an invitation to think more deeply about the process Said identified in which the great 'ahistorical' triumphs of English liberal thinking, its 'great humanistic ideas, institutions and movements' did little to 'stand in the way of the accelerating imperial process'.[35] The process was not really accelerating in this period – indeed, the engine had barely been started – but there are nonetheless questions of constitutional development, morality and humanism associated with extra-European corporate activity which are refracted in contemporary literary productions. That is, by considering the corporation we can add a historical dimension to Said's discursive and largely trans-historical system 'Orientalism'; to do so allows us to consider a 'pre-history' of Orientalism which is not teleologically oriented towards imperial writing. Instead, we can understand discourses of power or nationhood not as dominant modes of understanding the world, but rather as one of a number of overlapping and competing discourses, which reflect 'the diverse effects of their historical moment and complex, shifting evaluations of 'East' and 'West''.[36] In this way we can sidestep essentialised categorisations such as East/West, European/Other, centre (metropole)/periphery and so on, which were yet to be fixed in the seventeenth century, and were explored in corporate activities and the writings they encouraged or provoked.

The period covered by this volume has, perhaps, a different conception of national identity. Early modern England had no real empire to speak of, and the practical attempts to establish colonies were often failures in one way or another, so it is not especially accurate to speak of the early modern period as 'proto-imperial'; however, as Daniel Vitkus points out, it 'is important to acknowledge that the 'idea' of empire arose in England long before there was a real, material empire on the ground'.[37] His readings of early modern texts demonstrate both the frustrated colonial ambitions of England, but also the way in which England's 'Others' (especially in the Orient) were more distinctive and individual than the inconsistent caricatures of the eighteenth and

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35   Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 82.

36   Rahul Sapra, *The Limits of Orientalism: Seventeenth-Century Representations of India* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2011), 27.

37   Daniel J. Vitkus, *Turning Turk: English Theater and the Multicultural Mediterranean, 1570–1630* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003), 6.

nineteenth centuries which flatten out difference and form the basis of Said's analysis (and are too often read back into the early modern period, particularly by placing 'colonial' enterprises as 'proto-imperial').[38]

Conversely, Benjamin Schmidt has argued for a renewed understanding of 'exoticism', a 'surge of sources that described, depicted, or otherwise engaged with the non-European world' which issued from the Netherlands and became dominant from the 1660s onwards in Europe.[39] These sources included atlases, printed catalogues of foreign flora and fauna, non-European histories and travel narratives, as well as material goods such as fabrics and porcelain, all of which presented a version of the exotic filtered through European eyes and hands (unlike earlier tastes for goods, such as carpets, brought directly from exotic locations).[40] Schmidt argues that this boom in Dutch goods created a pan-European idea of the 'exotic', or at least a European way of consuming the exotic, which was previously lacking in the more parochial and patriotic attempts to engage with either American or Asian cultures. Consequently, the 'invention of exoticism' was simultaneously 'the invention of Europe';[41] the marks of difference in these 'sources' do not rely (as in later Imperial studies) on a pre-existing conception of Europe, but rather create that idea of Europe by subtly eliding the differences between European states, and presenting an understanding of the world based on apparently 'universal', rather than 'local', knowledge. Schmidt thus perhaps offers a model to mediate between weakened Europeans in Asia and ideas of 'empire' before empires.

Recent studies have begun to 'open up' the early modern literary world with detailed studies of the literary effects of engagement with China. Mingjun Lu's study of Donne and Milton demonstrates the resonances of European interactions with China – including global bullion flows, exploratory missions to China and Chinese antiquities and language primers – on the works of those

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38   For example, Pramod K. Nayar, *The Transnational in English Literature: Shakespeare to the Modern* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), 3–5; Willy Maley, *Nation, State, and Empire in English Renaissance Literature: Shakespeare to Milton* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

39   Benjamin Schmidt, *Inventing Exoticism: Geography, Globalism, and Europe's Early Modern World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 6. See also Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York: Knopf, 1987); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Europe's India: Words, People, Empires, 1500–1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017).

40   Peter Stabel, 'A Taste for the Orient? Cosmopolitan Demand for 'Exotic' Durable Consumables in Late Medieval Bruges', in *London and Beyond: Essays in Honour of Derek Keene*, ed. Matthew Davies and James A. Galloway (London: Institute of Historical Research, 2012).

41   Schmidt, *Inventing Exoticism*, 9.

poets.[42] However, the distinctions between nations, empires or ethno-religious groupings were rarely sharp in early modern writing, and groups were frequently elided, as Walter Lim notes, since in travel writing and histories from the period 'imagination often has the habit of removing distinctions between nations, peoples and cultures, so that origins can get confused, geographical homelands become unfocused, and metaphorical conflations are not uncommon'.[43]

Traditional studies of European engagement in China have focused on the activities of the Jesuits, particularly their involvement in translation, in both directions, and their collaborative work with local scholars and scribes.[44] Trading companies, too, frequently relied on go-betweens (interpreters, factors, local credit brokers and so forth) to navigate markets in Asia and elsewhere.[45] A parallel process of transliteration and cross-cultural understanding was occurring in European writings and scholarship, as both works and peoples from these corporate spaces travelled to Europe.[46] Recently, Robert Batchelor has shown a similar pattern of translation and circulation of Chinese texts in London and Oxford, and suggested that this intellectual work should be considered alongside the impact of the boom in European-Asian trade when considering the development of early modern Europe. These twin processes of translation and material circulation (akin to Schmidt's 'exoticism') forced England 'to build new kinds of selves and new kinds of institutions appropriate to the world of exchange they found in maritime Asia'.[47]

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42   Mingjun Lu, *The Chinese Impact Upon English Renaissance Literature: A Globalization and Liberal Cosmopolitan Approach to Donne and Milton* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).

43   Walter S. H. Lim, 'Introduction', in *The English Renaissance, Orientalism, and the Idea of Asia*, ed. Debra Johanyak and Walter S. H. Lim (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 6.

44   R. Po-chia Hsia, 'The Catholic Mission and Translations in China, 1583–1700', in *Cultural Translation in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Peter Burke and R. Po-chia Hsia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Robert Markley, *The Far East and the English Imagination, 1600–1730* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 70–103.

45   C. A. Bayly and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Portfolio Capitalists and the Political Economy of Early Modern India', *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 25, no. 4 (1988).

46   Michael Herbert Fisher, *Counterflows to Colonialism: Indian Travellers and Settlers in Britain, 1600–1857* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2004), 20–49.

47   Robert K. Batchelor, *London: The Selden Map and the Making of a Global City, 1549–1689* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 14. On the Asian world as a series of trading zones, see Leonard Blussé, 'No Boats to China. The Dutch East India Company and the Changing Pattern of the China Sea Trade, 1635–1690', *Modern Asian Studies* 30, no. 1 (1996); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Connected Histories: Notes Towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia', ibid.31, no. 3 (1997); Amitav Acharya, *The Making of Southeast Asia: International Relations of a Region*, Reprint edition. ed. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), 51–104. For an integration of ecological and economic history in this vein,

Literature thus reveal the circulations inherent in transnational corporate activities, including the impact of non-Europeans on the institutional and cultural development of Europe (even if this is often only registered in oblique ways). A truly 'global' version of corporate literary history would also take in texts generated in Mandarin, Urdu, Farsi, and those within the Niger-Congo and Amerindian families; sadly, this is outside of the scope of this essay (and its author), but understanding the ramifications of English, or European, corporations on the cultural output of the indigenous people they engaged with, and the ways in which those outputs were, in turn, subsumed into the integrative networks of corporate activity, will be a fruitful avenue of further research within the global history of the corporation.

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see Sunil S. Amrith, *Crossing the Bay of Bengal: The Furies of Nature and the Fortunes of Migrants* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

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Religion

Haig Smith

When both the New East India Company (EIC) and the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge received their charters in 1698, the first steps were made to regulate and organise the religious lives of all people, English, European and non-European within its expanding corporate jurisdictions, ending an era of company autonomy over the religious organisation overseas. These provisions strictly outlined the company's relationship with the established church, its responsibility to provide ministers, and its obligation to organize evangelism, thereby entrenching the direction that religion was to take under the new company in India and in English territories across the globe.[1] The actions taken in this charter highlighted the growing awareness among political and religious leaders in England of religion's role in corporate overseas expansion yet the companies themselves had been fully aware of religions importance for much of the seventeenth century. Through varying models of religious control, English overseas companies established governmental, political and social identities that helped their employees navigate the pressures of life in distant lands. Over the long sixteenth century control of religion alongside governance, networks, print culture and migration was crucial in establishing a distinctively corporate sociology for global interaction. If we are to understand English overseas expansion and the foundations of empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we need to ask what was the role of religion in corporate sociology and what was the relationship between religion and the formation of corporate control abroad.

   Throughout the early modern era, corporations provided the main institutional framework to organise and police the commercial, political and religious lives of their members. Unlike the specificity of the 1698 charter, English company charters for much of the seventeenth century gave general religious and social obligations (both domestically and abroad) to advance English Protestantism abroad. Extending Protestantism into religiously cosmopolitan and diverse environments led to attempts to police the religious lives and

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1 *A Collection of Charters and Statutes Relating to the East India Company* (London, 1817), xv–xvi.

behaviour of the companies' English personnel. By policing the behaviour of their English employee's abroad the company's leaders hoped to secure their various religious, political and commercial aims. Religion helped to define these processes of spiritual, commercial, diplomatic and political negotiations with internal and external parties. The commercial and religious aims of the company became entwined as the companies' flexible governments developed various forms of religious control shaped by local circumstances and global experiences.

This chapter investigates how England's overseas companies controlled religion abroad to regulate the behaviour of people within their jurisdiction and ensure the continued success English corporate expansion. Religion was a means for companies to regulate the behaviour and religious practice of their employees and populations oversees. The various ways in which companies controlled religion to manage the sending of ministers, writing of laws, evangelism and the administrating of churches helped to form the character and identity of corporate religious life both in England and abroad. By assessing the development of corporations through the lens of religious governance, we can better understand the practical effects of corporation's juridical agility and how religion helped to reinforce overseas trading corporations jurisdictionally evasiveness allowing them to flexibly negotiate a position as autonomous extensions of English government abroad. Secondly understanding how English overseas corporations developed distinct ways of controlling the religious behaviour of the English settlers and the European and non-European peoples who came under their jurisdiction, including Native Americans, Muslims, Hindus, Catholics, Armenians and Jews highlights the global interactions that form corporate sociology. Furthermore, an exploration of religion illustrates how the membership of English overseas corporations was porous, responding to influence of European and non-European peoples and faiths. Through understanding the multiple ways English companies engaged with religion to control interactions, we can better appreciate how corporations regulated behaviour through religion. Such an approach highlights how corporations were at the same time distinct, as well as integrative, connecting globally English corporate polities across the world.

Corporate structures both provided the legal space and protection to establish diverse but connected forms of autonomous English governmental authority across the globe. An assessment of religion in England's overseas companies allows further analysis into how overseas companies developed into corporate political bodies that established and advanced their own sovereignty. Religion and its control became a mechanism through which corporate structures were directed and governed English polities overseas we can not

only see how companies were in "their very organization a government over its own employees and corporators" but also how its members, formed the identity of these polities.[2] Therefore, expanding our understanding into how early modern English people regulated the political and religious behaviour of its employees, corporators and how these communities were governed.[3] Furthermore, through an assessment of how religion regulated interaction between communities under company control we are better able to recognise the role of numerous faiths in the development of English authority abroad. An understanding of the role of religion in companies also helps to define the political, religious and social dialogue between religious communities and leaders that English companies encountered. It highlights what Karen Kupperman has described as attempts by English and Indigenous peoples "sought to incorporate … into their own system" one another.[4] However, investigations still need to go further to identify the "corporate role" in the incorporation and exclusion of people from English company governance in the seventeenth century. By doing so we can clearly identify the "delicate balance of strict hierarchy and consultative government" in companies, but also how various religious groups informed and shaped corporate polities such as consultative government.[5] Explaining the corporate regulation of cross-cultural dialogues that incorporated both English, European and non-European people into adapted forms of English governance in Atlantic, Mediterranean and Indian oceans and how this process was shaped by religion and religious interactions.[6]

Moreover, an understanding how corporations controlled religion allows us to better examine the role of individuals in these corporate frameworks who were established and filter ideas back into England affecting domestic religious and political debate. Illustrating how England's companies became centres for political and social experimentation that provided members with a structural connection to England, which alongside commercial goods, allowed information and ideas to be exchanged across the globe. Although the literature on exchange in the east has been company focused it has emphasised academic

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2   Philip J. Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 6.

3   Edward Cavanagh, "A Company with Soveignty and Subjects of Its Own? The Case of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670–1763," *Canadian Journal of Law and Society*, Vol. 61, No.1 (2011), 25–50.

4   Karen, Kupperman, *Indians & English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 1.

5   Stern, *Company-state*, 11.

6   Jenny Hale Pulsipher, *Subjects unto the Same King: Indian, English, and the Contest for Authority in Colonial New England* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).

and scientific knowledge rather than political debate in England. Furthermore, Atlantic Historians such as Carla Gardina Pestana, Robert Bliss and Jenny Hale Pulsipher have highlighted the influence political experimentation in America on political debate in England. However, both strands of scholarship have been noticeably un-corporate in their focus.[7] By understanding the models of religious control that companies adopted across the globe a clearer connection can be drawn into the role of governmental expansion and experimentation abroad in influencing religious and political debates in England. This can be achieved by analysing the role of individual agents and members of companies, such as chaplains who became influential figures exchanging ideas of religious control between India, America, the Ottoman Empire and England.[8]

Early modern England, from local to national level, was made up of many corporations: town and city, livery and trading companies, the national church, parliament and even the crown, were all formed within the language of corporations in which religion had a long and influential history. Evolving out of the monastic corporations of the medieval period, religion had long been an element of corporate life in the great overseas companies. Unlike their monastic forefathers for whom religion was the driving force of their corporate existence, the overseas companies of the Stuart age, considered religious matters an important but ancillary responsibility to their commercial aims. The church in the medieval period consisted "at least in part of a network of corporate entities", of diocese monasteries and cathedral chapters.[9] All of which were self-defined and governed as corporations, through their members' consent

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7   For companies in the east and knowledge exchange see Haig Smith, "Risky Business: The Seventeenth Century English Company Chaplain and Policing Interaction and Knowledge Exchange", *Journal of Church and State* (2017);Simon Mills, "The Chaplains to the English Levant Company: Exploration and Biblical Scholarship in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century England", in Judith Becker and Bettina Braun eds, *Die Begegnung mit Fremden und das Geschichtsbewusstein*, (Gottingen, 2012), 243–266; "The English Chaplains at Aleppo: Exploration and Scholarship between England and the Ottoman Empire, 1620–1760", *Bulletin of the Council of British Research on the Levant*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2011), 13–20; G. J. Toomer, *Eastern Wisedome and Learning: The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Miles Ogborn, *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007); For political influence of western expansion see Pulsipher, Subjects; Carla Gardina Pestana, *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution, 1640–1661* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Robert Bliss, *Revolution and Empire: English Politics and the American Colonies in the Seventeenth Century* (Manchester; Manchester University Press, 1993).

8   Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Exploration, 1560–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Smith, "Risky Business" (2017).

9   Charles Reid, "Rights in Thirteenth-Century Canon Law: A Historical Investigation" (unpublished PhD diss., Cornell University, 1995), 6.

and the "web of individual rights" that were granted through a "corporate existence."[10] The pre-reformation "web" of corporate rights, described by Charles Reid and Bruce P. Frohnen, provided the English church with layers of security from the overreaching power of the Vatican. Furthermore, the Magna Carta in theory (although this was often tested) secured the independence of the pre-reformation English church to appoint its own officers away from crown interference, which stated that the church "shall be free, and have her whole rights, and her liberties inviolable."[11] Obtaining individual corporate rights, medieval ecclesiastical corporations developed their own legal characters that made them more than just the sum of their members. They developed corporate personalities, which they held in perpetuity, possessing their own legal rights, such as corporate seals and a common chest, which was later a characteristic of England's seventeenth century overseas companies.

The rights and roles of members of medieval Catholic ecclesiastical corporations were similarly protected and defined by their corporate involvement. Members could be involved in the election of church leaders and officials, the most iconic moments involving this corporate right included election of the Pope by the College of Cardinals.[12] Other members had a series of rights that ultimately depended on their position within the corporate structure. However, these rights did not look too dissimilar from those of Mayors, or Governors in the urban and trading corporations of the seventeenth century.[13] Corporations were a civic tool unifying groups of people into one commonwealth or society and, thereby, policing their behaviour, both religious and secular, in a manner befitting that of a commonwealth. Oliver Cromwell's lawmaker, William Sheppard, argued the importance of corporations as numerous "Body Politic" in which men were "fram'd" together.[14] In doing so, Sheppard like many of his contemporaries believed that good government was ensured as the corporations acted to police the religious, political, commercial and social behaviour of its members. Described as "the best of Polities" early moderns believed that the behaviour of the individual and the communities that made up the corporation would be governed in such a manner that would not damage

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10   Bruce P. Forhnen, "Individual and Group Rights: Self-Government and Claims of Right in Historical Practice", in Bruce P Frohnen and Kenneth L. Grasso, *Rethinking Rights: Historical, Political, and Philosophical Perspectives* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri, 2009), 111.

11   Magna Carta (1215).

12   Reid, *Rights in Thirteenth-Century Canon Law*, 395.

13   Frohnen, "Individual and Group Rights," 112–15.

14   William Sheppard, *Of Corporations* (London: 1659), 1.

the corporation, and thereby the nation.[15] Phil Withington and others have pointed out the proliferation of corporations in the early modern period, highlighting that England was an "incorporation of local communities into a national society and state."[16] The reason for this was that corporations, whether commercial, urban, or religious, were established to organise and ensure that the behaviour of its members was not damaging or detrimental to the mission of the whole body politic.[17] Building upon Emily Erikson's work on how networks help to understand the mediation of behavioural patterns, religious governance can be seen as a "micro-level" attempt to police behaviour.[18] Through Religious governance we can then see the development of the "macro-level" social, political and corporate organisation abroad. Through this lens we can see how corporations were organisations that engaged, established and finally policed the behaviour of its members.

In the same way that the seventeenth century jurists Edward Coke had highlighted shared origins between corporations and *"Collegium* or *Universitas"*, there was a similar perception towards church congregations, who were "Distinct Corporations *or* Churches of *Christ"*.[19] For example the Governor of Madras, Streynsham Master, noticed similarities between the two merging Coke's definition with that of a church congregation describing the company's community. Master's in a complaint to the East India Company (EIC) concerning the 1668 rules and orders, believed that the company's leaders had not done enough to establish control and good government over the English community in India. For this, the Factory according to him needed to be "more like

15   Sheppard, *Of Corporations* (London: 1659), 1–3.

16   Phil Withington, *Society in Early Modern England: The Vernacular Origins of Some Powerful Ideas* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010), 4; "Public Discourse, Corporate Citizenship and State Formation in Early Modern England" *American Historical Review*, Vol. 112, No. 4 (2007), 1016–38; *Citizens and Freemen in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009), especially chapter 2; For a insight into the position of urban and town corporations in early modern English state formation, in particular both secular and religious patronage in town corporations see Catherine Patterson, *Urban Patronage in Early Modern England: Corporate Boroughs, the Landed Elite, and the Crown, 1580–1640* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

17   To understand more about the role of corporations in policing the behaviour of individuals and networks that formed them see Emily Erikson, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: The English East India Company, 1600–1757* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 22.

18   Erikson, *Between Monopoly*, chapter 1.

19   Edward Coke, *An Abridgement of the Lord Coke's commentary on Littleton*, (London, 1651), sect. 412, 413 L. F., *A speedy remedie against spirituall incontinencie Shewing it to be sinfull in any, to heare, a flase ministrie. With a briefe description of a true Church of Christ* (London, 1641); Stern, *Company-State*, 6.

unto the College, Monasteries or a house of Religion."[20] Through the shared characteristics of collectivism and fellowship, the congregation and company, during the seventeenth century, existed within the language of corporations. By "covenanting" merchants were seen as establishing "Corporationall" bodies whose members congregated together much like a church covenant. Whether the merchants of the EIC who had "covenanted" together in a joint-stock company or Presbyterians and Anglicans whose congregations had "Covenanted to be a Church Body", both formed social entities that were seen as companies of people.[21] Furthermore, in broad terms, overseas companies were made up of members of congregations and, as such, both the church and overseas companies were a "Company of Christians" who, as corporate bodies, shared in the "Joint-Stock of religion" in which "all bear a great adventure" both financial and spiritual.[22] As communal organisations corporations acted on behalf of their membership or congregation, providing them with the structural framework "for continuous and systematic public activity" in order to achieve their goals.[23]

The extension of English authority across the globe through the seventeenth century was fuelled by the involvement of English overseas companies. Joint stock and regulated corporations advanced English commercial and colonial endeavours abroad, governing and structuring these ventures. Overseas companies were used to advance English commercial and territorial desires from eastern Canada to Japan. However, their connected place in the development of English overseas expansion has often been overlooked in studies that focus on colonial ventures in the Atlantic rather than the entangled world of corporates overseas expansion in the seventeenth-century.[24] Furthermore, the distinction between colonial and commercial enterprises has been misleading,

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20   Unsent letter by Strenysham Master, BL IOR. Eur Mss E/210.

21   BL IOR. Eur Mss E/210.

22   BL IOR. Eur Mss E/210; Samuel Kem, *An olive branch found after a storme in the northern seas. And presented to his Majesty in a sermon at the court in New-Castle. By Samuel Kem, a little before his Majesties going to Holmbey* (London, 1647), 11

23   Phil Withington, "Public Discourse", 1017.

24   For Atlantic history, see David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick eds, *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Elizabeth Mancke and Carole Shammas, *The Creation of the British Atlantic World* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005); Allan Macinnes and Arthur Williamson eds, *Shaping the Stuart World, 1603–1714: The Atlantic Connection* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); Pestana, *English Atlantic*; Bliss, *Revolution and Empire: English Politics and the American Colonies in the Seventeenth Century*. For the limitations of Atlantic history see Peter A. Coclanis, Alison Games, Paul W. Mapp, and Philip J. Stern, "Forum: Beyond The Atlantic" *William and Mary Quarterly* Vol. 63, No. 4, (2006), 673–776.

as in both cases the organisational framework of the corporation was used to structure and legally authorise the actions across the globe.

Global corporations were connected, both structurally and through their commercial activities by religious control. English overseas companies had shared structural origins in their charters, which developed in relation to the use of religious governance. However, this did not mean that there were no dissimilarities amongst the many companies and corporations, especially in America, which one nineteenth-century commentator described as needing "the talents of an Alfred" or the "arm of the Norman tyrant" to unite them.[25] Despite differences, these overseas corporate enterprises were connected by their shared structural origins. There have been some attempts to seek to address questions surrounding the connections in English global expansion in this period. For the most part the literature has been limited in its discussion of its corporate foundations.[26] Amongst the limited discussion Phil Stern has suggested that these connections were established in the structural inception of companies, both Eastern and Western, highlighting that their charters ensured that they were formed out "of the same ilk."[27] Both in the East and the West, companies such as the Massachusetts Bay Company (MBC), Virginia Company (VC), Hudson Bay Company and EIC, shared the same legal origins through their corporate charters to govern over their members, trade, towns and inhabitants.[28] However, through their corporate framework these companies shared more that just a structural similarity as each company developed forms of religious control as a means to regulate its governmental identity and the religious behaviour of their populations abroad. The VC and EIC called upon "classical rhetoric", ideas of civic humanism and religious support to establish polities and encourage domestic backing for their temporal and spiritual missions.[29]

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25 St. George Tucker, *Blackstone's Commentaries: With Notes of Reference, to the Constitutions and Laws, of the Federal Government of the United States; and of the Commonwealth of Virginia* (Philadelphia, 1803), 1: 405.

26 Huw Bowen, Elizabeth Mancke and John G. Reid eds, *Britain's Oceanic Empire: Atlantic and Indian Ocean Worlds, c. 1550–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Games, *Web of Empire*; Miles Ogborn, *Global Lives: Britain and the World, 1550–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

27 Philip Stern, "British Asia and British Atlantic: Comparison and Connections," *William and Mary Quarterly,* Vol.63, No. 4 (2006), 700.

28 Stern, "British Asia and British Atlantic," 703.

29 Andrew Fitzmaurice, *Humanism and America: An Intellectual History of English Colonisation, 1500–1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 58–62; " 'Everyman, that prints, adventures': the rhetoric of the Virginia company sermons" in Lori Anne Ferrell and Peter McCullough, *The English Sermon Revised: Religion, Literature and History*

Companies were linked by their use of religious governance, highlighting how their differences not only divided them, but also united them.

The confused nature of English Protestantism spawned a variety of opinions and forms of domestic religious authority in England which, when placed abroad by overseas companies, mingled into complex governmental arrangements. Just as English corporate entities abroad were formed in religiously pluralistic environments, the early Stuart church in England was spawned from dispute and discussion in an "arena of lay activism and, at least potentially heterodox, doctrinal debate."[30] Across England, varying Protestant communities defined in differing ways how religion should be governed. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, religious governance in England began to undergo radical changes as moderate Protestants sought further reform in the church alongside the political and religious life of England as a whole.[31] Debates on civil and religious government had been conducted since the mid to late sixteenth century, with various factions in the church forming around theological theory, formation, and leadership. As Alison Games has commented, the overseas provided an arena in which religious governance could be conducted through "heterogeneity, dispute, [and] experimentation."[32] It was

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       1600–1750 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000); Stern, British Asia and British Atlantic, 700–01, 704–705.

30   Peter Lake, *The Boxmaker's Revenge: "Orthodoxy", "Heterodoxy" and the Politics of the Parish in Early Stuart London* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 5.

31   For the broad spectrum of Protestantism in seventeenth century England see also Peter Lake and Michael C. Questier, *The Anti-Christ's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-Reformation England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002); Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake ed., *Religious Politics in Post-Reform England: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Tyacke* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 2006), particularly Diarmaid MacCulloch, "The Latitude of the Church of England" 41–59 and Paul Seaver. "Puritan Preachers and their Patrons" 128–42; Leo F. Solt's work offers a more traditional approach to church history, but nevertheless includes a broad definition of the varying Protestant, Puritan and Catholic groups in England, arguing that to view these groups as just homogenous blocks "obscures the rich religious diversity" of the Elizabethan and Stuart ages: *Church and State in Early Modern England, 1509*–1640 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 83, 82–87; For a discussion of different strands of Puritanism and debate and discussion see Randall J. Pederson, *Unity in Diversity: English Puritans and the Puritan reformation, 1603–1689* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Carla Gardina Pestana offers a distinctly un-corporate account of the effect of Protestant diversity in England, alongside European, African and Native American religious diversity on the development of the "multiplicity of religious faiths and practices that eventually characterized life at the margins", in *Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

32   Games, *Web of Empire*, 253.

in the corporate world outside of England that many of the domestic debates were put into action. Overseas companies became the structural frameworks, which implemented political, academic and social debates surrounding religion overseas, and connected them back into England.

Between 1600 and 1750 corporate ideas about religious control overseas had their foundations in the domestic debates on the relationship between the church and the English state. Recent discussion concerning the dynamic between English expansion overseas and the debates surrounding the monarchy, church and state, the episcopacy, sacraments and religious liberty, have often been centred in the Atlantic world. Described by Michael Winship as an "umbilical connection", the focus in much of the literature has been on the manner in which English peoples on a broad spectrum of Protestantism were able to act upon religious debates in England through expansion into the Atlantic.[33] Influenced by these debates, English communities formed religious polities and commonwealths that developed ideas of "godly republicanism" and go on to influence the religious and political conflicts in England in the middle of the century, whilst others would eventually, through subtle differences, adapt the established church for their own purposes.[34] However, notably lost in the discussions on religious debate in the Atlantic world is the influence of the corporate structure that was foundational to the establishment of many of these religious polities.

Furthermore, the absence of any in-depth discussion of the corporate personality of these Atlantic religious polities has led to a disconnection between the role of religion in the formation of English communities in the east and west. Subsequently the influence religious life amongst non-Christian peoples has been overlooked, especially concerning the significant impact they had on ideas of governing and controlling religion in these English communities overseas. Sanjay Subrahmanyam highlighted how ideas and mental constructs

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33   For role of religious debates in the formation of American political government see Michael P. Winship, *Godly Republicanism: Puritans, Pilgrims, and a City on a Hill* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 46; *Making Heretics: Militant Protestantism and Free Grace in Massachusetts, 1636–1641* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002); "Godly Republicanism and the Origins of the Massachusetts Polity", *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 3 (2006), pp. 427–62; J.S. Maloy, *The Colonial American Origins of Modern Democratic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

34   For Atlantic imperial activities and links to radicalism see John Donoghue, *Fire Under the Ashes: An Atlantic History of the English Revolution* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2013); Pestana, *English Atlantic*; Bliss, *Revolution and Empire*; For discussion on the evolution of the established church in Virginia see James B. Bell, *Empire, Religion and Revolution in Early Virginia, 1607–1786* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2013).

"flowed across political boundaries" connecting English overseas expansion in geographies across the globe.[35] Similarly the development of political models of government connected English corporate expansion abroad. By understanding the connected development of companies and how religious governance regulated the behaviour of communities and individuals within them historian are able to avoid what Simon Potter and Johnathan Saha have described as "the simplification encouraged by the planetary scale analysis that absorbs Global historians."[36] A connected history of English governmental expansion through corporations provides the space to recognise the agency of communities and individuals.[37] Moreover, by interpreting the role and place of corporations in how people in the past "understood (and sought to influence) patterns of long distance interaction" we can see how companies were integral to the development of experimental ideas in government and how they connected distant geographies in the seventeenth-century.[38] By investigating religious governance in England's overseas companies' we are better able to develop our understanding of expansion English authority abroad as connected enterprise across the east and west.

This does not mean that England's companies trading to the east, in particular the Levant Company (LC) have not attracted interest for their involvement in English religious discussion and debate, both at home and abroad.[39] Although the communities of English people who travelled East under the companies would never number those who settled in the Americas, they, like their corporate brethren in the Atlantic world, transported across the Mediterranean and Indian oceans political and religious debates that "mirrored" those in England.[40] The diverse but small Protestant communities that ventured east would take with them the religious conflicts surrounding church service and sacraments, refusing at times to preach from the Book of Common Prayer "in

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35   Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia," *Modern Asian* Studies, Vol. 31, No. 3 (1997), 748.

36   Simon Potter and Johnathan Saha, "Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories of Empire," *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (2015).

37   Michael Adas, "Comparative History and the Challenge of the Grand Narrative," in Douglas Northrup, ed., *A Companion to World History* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell), 229–243, 238.

38   Potter and Saha, "Global History".

39   Natasha Glaisyer, *The Culture of Commerce in England, 1660–1720* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2006); Daniel Goffman, *Britons in the Ottoman Empire, 1642–1660* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998); Toomer, *Eastern Wisedome*; Gerald M. Maclean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580–1720* (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2004).

40   Daniel Goffman, *Britons in the Ottoman Empire,* 5.

or contempt of the publick service of God."[41] Leaders in both the EIC and LC lamented the variation of the Protestant community abroad, complaining that just as in England, the divisions between Protestants created discord in the lives of the English people who lived in factories and territories.

Officials also protested that the divergent Protestant theologies that were represented amongst the companies' personnel, especially their religious officers, placed in danger any opportunity of evangelism in the religiously cosmopolitan environments in which they operated.[42] Yet, conflict and conversion was largely confined to internal Protestant issues, which was fuelled more-often than not, by denominational diversity rather than the varied religious geographies that they entered. Moreover, the diverse religious environments entered by company personnel also provided intellectual links between faiths that would encourage religious debate in England. Companies such as the LC and EIC were crucial in establishing networks between religious leaders, such as the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church. Furthermore, many individuals who travelled abroad used their positions and experiences to establish links that would put the companies at the centre of a flourishing exchange of religious knowledge. Chaplains became influential figures in developing an exchange of knowledge through their experiences, writing in pamphlets, tracts and books about the religious communities and forms of religious governments they encountered.[43] Not only did these works inform readers back in England of religious governance abroad, but they did so by constructing "a new global geography of empire" at the heart of which were merging and evolving forms of religious governance.[44]

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41   Forster, *English Factories*, XIII: 284.

42   See chapters 3 and 5; Streynsham Masters to Samuel Masters, 9 December, 1678, in Michael Hunter, Antonio Clericuzio, Lawrence M. Principe eds, *The Correspondence of Robert Boyle, 1636–1691* (*BC*) 6 vols, (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2004) VI: 446; The Earl of Winchilsea to the Earl of Southampton, August 13, 1664, *Report on the Manuscripts of Allan George Finch,* Vol. I, (*Finch Mss.*), (London: 1913), 326; Stern, *Company-State*, 110–11.

43   For works relating to the religious knowledge exchange see Henry Lord, *A display of two forraigne sects in the East Indies vizt: the sect of the Banians the ancient natiues of India and the sect of the Persees the ancient inhabitants of Persia· together with the religion and maners of each sect collected into two bookes by Henry Lord sometimes resident in East India and preacher to the Hoble Company of Merchants trading thether* (London, 1630); William Biddulph, *The trauels of certaine Englishmen into Africa, Asia, Troy, Bythinia, Thracia, and the Blacke Sea And into Syria, Cilicia, Psidia, Mesopotamia, Damascus, Canaan, Galile, Samria, Iudea, Palestina, Ierusale,, Iericho, and to the Red Sea: and to sundry other places. Begunne in the yeare iubile 1600* (London, 1609); For the theories of knowledge exchange and the establishment of political power England seventeenth century companies see Ogborn, *Indian Ink.*

44   Ogborn, *Indian Ink*, 22.

Chaplains of the LC and EIC such as Henry Lord, Edward Terry, Edward Po-
cocke and Henry Maundrell became influential through their writings, whilst
corporate chaplains into the eighteenth century such as Samuel Lisle and John
Evans chaplains in the LC and EIC respectively became bishops in the Angli-
can church. An investigation into the complex diversity of English Protestant-
ism, as well as the religious environments these companies operated in, allows
us to better understand the various forms of religious and political ideas that
shaped debates, both in England and abroad.

Several historians have examined the role of religious evangelism in the ex-
pansion of English authority in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,
but very little attention has been given to its role in the foundation of English
government abroad, in the seventeenth century.[45] For example, Penelope Car-
son's work on religion in the EIC investigates how the company "dealt with
religious issues from its early mercantile beginnings to the bloody end of its
rule in 1858."[46] However, apart from a brief discussion on the last two years of
the 1690s, the seventeenth century is excluded from her discussion, and the
vast majority of her of her work on the company in eighteenth century is on
the second half of the century following Plassey. Similarly Rowan Strong, in
his work on the character of imperialism and its association to Anglicanism,
argues that a conscious concern for empire emerged in the eighteenth century
with the formation of evangelical societies.[47] Although the work of Wilson,
Strong, and many others, has provided "concrete ingredients" for the evolution
of imperialism, the focus of much of the historiography on the late eighteenth
and nineteenth centuries has meant that the empire's long seventeenth-
century foundations have often been ignored.

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45 For work on evangelism and the expansion of English governmental authority overseas
    in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries see Penelope Carson, *The East India Compa-
    ny and Religion, 1698–1858* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2012); David Hemp-
    ton, *The Church and the Long Eighteenth Century* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011); Norman
    Etherington, ed., *Missions and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Patricia
    Grimshaw and Andrew May, ed., Missionaries, Indigenous People and Cultural Exchange
    (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2010); Laura M. Steven, *The Poor Indian: British Mis-
    sionaries, Native Americans, and Colonial Sensibility* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsyl-
    vania Press, 2004); Edward E. Andrews, *Native Apostles: Black and Indian Missionaries in
    the British Atlantic World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013); Rowan Strong,
    Anglicanism and the British Empire, c.1700–1850 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007);
    Joseph Hardwick, *An Anglican British World; The Church of England and the Expansion of
    the Settler Empire, c. 1790–1860* (Manchester; Manchester University Press, 2014).
46 Carson, *Company and Religion*, 2.
47 Strong, *Anglicanism*, 6.

Similarly, the connection on religious involvement in overseas expansion has often been centred on its spiritual and evangelical rather than governmental role. The discussion concerning English overseas expansion and religion has often been focused on the role of imperial evangelism during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in which the religious interaction, embodied in the Christian minister or missionary and evangelical societies, followed in the wake of seventeenth-century merchants.[48] This does not mean that historians have not investigated the link between evangelism and commercial and territorial expansion in the seventeenth century. As Gabriel Glickman has pointed out in relation to the New England Company (NEC), evangelical corporations did attempt to change colonial strategies in north-east America, encouraging the association between conversion and commercial and territorial expansion.[49] David Armitage has argued that, whilst evangelism did not necessarily equate to rights of sovereignty, it in conjunction with commerce, plantation and territorial permanence, it was a factor in justifying the expansion of English territory.[50] By examining the role and changing shape of evangelism in England's overseas companies, it is therefore possible to reassess the function of evangelism, observing its governmental role in the global sociology of English corporate expansion between 1600 and 1750. In doing so the role of evangelism becomes more than just a story of the spiritual conversion of a soul but also part of narrative that sees religion as a tool of corporate jurisdictional evasiveness that allowed overseas trading corporation to expand governmental territories and reinforce their authority over the behaviour of numerous European and non-European peoples and their faiths.

Building upon earlier policies of religious governance EIC following the acquisitions of Bombay in 1668 continued a form of passive evangelism. Between 1668 and 1750 this, although gradually more diluted, continued

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48   Brent Sirota, *The Christian Monitors: The Church of England and the Age of Benevolence, 1680–1730* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014); Samuel Clyde McCulloch, "The Foundation and Early Work of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No. 4 (1945), 241–258; Laura M. Stevens, "Why read Sermons? What Amercianists can learn from the Sermons of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts" *History Compass*, Vol. 3 (2005), 1–19; Andrews, *Native Apostles*; Carson, *Company and Religion*; Strong, *Anglicanism*; William Kellaway, *The New England Company, 1649–1776: Missionary Society to the American Indians* (London: Longmans, 1961).

49   Gabriel Glickman, "Protestantism, Colonization, and the New England Company in Restoration Politics" *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 59, No. 2 (2016), 376, 365–391.

50   David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 95–97.

to be the main contribution of the EIC to Protestant propagation in India. During the last half of the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries, the East India Company continued to develop a longstanding policy of passive evangelism placing it at the heart of its religious policy to control both its personnel and native people who were gradually falling into their governmental and spiritual jurisdiction. As the jurisdictions of the EIC religious governance expanded to include a substantial multi-ethnic and multi-religious population, both through the acquisition of territory and encouraging migration, the company's policy of passive evangelism and religious sufferance became more essential to ensuring the spiritual and commercial mission of the company. Religion and evangelism under the company was responsive to the pressures of life in India. At the same time religion helped to advance English spiritual and political authority, it also (for a time) acted to obstruct any overtly aggressive attempts the English had to infringe on the religious and social lives of indigenous peoples. Over the eighteenth century the effectiveness of religion as a preventative to corporate expansion would greatly reduce, form much of the seventeenth century the EIC's officials in India engaged and interacted both with internal and external constituencies developing a distinctly corporate relationship with religion that flexibly advanced the commercial and territorial aims of the company whilst nimbly engaging and interacting with numerous European and Indian religious communities in the east.

Unlike the aggressive evangelism of Jesuits and Portuguese Catholics who had gone before them in Bombay and Madras the EIC policy of passive evangelism highlighted the process of negation of global sociology as the company used its religious policies to present the company as an alternative to their European counterparts.[51] Towards the end of 1729, Viceroy João Saldanha da Gama wrote to João V a long letter accusing the Inquisition of being one of the causes behind the Estado's decline. The viceroy accused the inquisitors extorting wealthy Hindu and Muslim merchants under the threat of confiscating their possessions.[52] According to the letter the Goan inquisitors had forced the non-Catholic populations of the Estado to migrate to other territories, in particular to areas under the control of the English and French companies. As an example, the viceroy mentioned the case of Tana, a town in the Provincia do Norte where a lucrative textile factory was operating until an Inquisitorial *devasa* in the area forced the majority of workers, who were Hindus, to escape

51   Stern, *Company State*, 112.
52   Rivara, APO, Doc. 130, p. 384.

to Bombay, where they were now producing "all the silks, wools, *gorgurões* and silk handkerchiefs and *picotilhas*, which are introduced in this Court [Goa]."[53]

Directly set up in opposition to the Roman Catholic evangelical methods, EIC officials were acutely aware and quick to prevent the continuation of any such practices. The Deputy Governor of Bombay, Henry Young in 1669 expressed concerns and a need to be "more cautious and circumspect" of the Portuguese Catholics if the company and its ecumenical governance were to succeed on Bombay.[54] Furthermore he warned of the evangelical practises of Catholic ministers complaining that their "use compulsion" in converting local Indians was having a damaging effect on relations with the local population.[55] A month later Young and some associates continued to complain about the effects of catholic evangelical practices in Bombay, suggesting that they were forcibly baptising Indians.[56] The effect of this on the company's religious governance was twofold; firstly in the immediacy it caused the company serious problems as it directly undermined the EIC's policy to encourage migration. Not only did such actions directly oppose the EIC's use of sufferance but they also acted to "keepe people from coming on" to the Islands.[57] Secondly Young questioned the conversion itself, and as such both the eternal soul of the individual, and the evangelical aim of the company were placed at risk. For the Protestant Young and his associates "noe Christia" was made through being "forcibly (mocke) baptized" as the act did not include the "confession of faith … or profession to forake the Divell … or to fight under [the] Christian banner."[58] In response to the actions of the Catholic priests Young ordered that they cease, pointing out that it was damaging relations with the local Indian population whilst commanding that they were "not to christen nor punish" any "Gentiles without a licence."[59] In doing so Young not only forced the Catholic community to observe the supremacy of the company's Protestant religious governance and its policy of sufferance, but also ensured that its method of passive evangelism would have priority when trying to convert local Indian peoples.

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53 Rivara, APO, Doc. 130, p. 325.

54 Foster, *English Factories*, XIII: 218.

55 Henry Young and James Adams, to Surat, February 22, 1669, William Foster ed., *The English Factories in India, 1618–1669,* 13 Vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1896) XIII: 218.

56 Young, Adams and Coates, March 17, 1669, Foster, *English Factories*., 219.

57 Young, Adams and Coates, March 17, 1669, Foster, *English Factories*., 219.

58 Young, Adams and Coates, March 17, 1669, Foster, *English Factories*., 219.

59 Young, Adams and Coates, March 17, 1669, Foster, *English Factories*., 219.

For the religious and secular leadership of the EIC, Protestant evangelism was to play an important role in securing the company's relationship with the Indian community, as being a positive alternative to other European commercial companies. For the company in India, the Portuguese provided them with a European contemporary who accentuated the difference between the Catholic evangelism taking place in Goa, and their own passive evangelism. Unlike the zeal and heavy-handed evangelism of Catholic religious government, the EIC's primary objective was to demonstrate their difference through passive ecumenical governance; at the head of which, the Chaplain would establish a well-governed Protestant church godly society.

The evangelical mission of the company's ecumenical governance, which sought to establish English civility in India through the conversion of Indian peoples to Protestantism, struggled in the face of south Asian theological flexibility. Company agents often wrote of their fascination and frustration with the doctrinal malleability of local Indian peoples, able to assimilate certain Christian practices and teaching into their wider faith. Just as with the MBC and the Native Americans, the subject of the appropriation and adaptation of the Protestant doctrines within indigenous religions became a matter of concern for the EIC as well as possible tool for the evangelical aims of the company's religious governance. For the company, it was a complete anathema how Hindus were "by the prinicples of their owne religion they are allowed our sermons (though not our prayers)" however, according to one EIC agent this religious flexibility provided the company with an opportunity.[60] They advocated that they should utilise the ecclesiastical openness of Hinduism to passively evangelise, through the effective policing of its personnel's behaviour, to the indigenous population. By the good behaviour of its personnel alongside the hope that some local people would attend church and hear sermons, agents hoped that the company through this "true pious fraud" would "deceive (or rather undeceive) them into our profession" converting them to Protestantism.[61] For EIC leaders this "pious fraud" was the backbone of their passive evangelical agenda and a core element of the company's ecumenical governance. By ensuring at first ensuring the good behaviour of its personnel, and then slow exposure to the practices of the Protestant faith, EIC officials believed themselves to be involved in some form of religiously, true and sanctioned trickery were they would encourage the local people to believe they had fallen rather than been pushed into the Christian embrace. Despite the problems Protestant

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60 Bombay to Surat, October 18, 1668, Foster, *English Factories*, XIII: 72.
61 Bombay to Surat, October 18, 1668, Foster, *English Factories*, XIII: 72.

evangelical interaction with native faiths posed it was the aim of the EIC religious governance to ultimately by "guile catch them in the net of the Gospel", bringing native Indians into the fold of English Protestant civility.[62] However, this doctrinal flexibility provided the company with problems as the adoption of Protestant religious practices by Hindus, did not necessarily equate to full blown conversion or membership in the company's governmental structure.[63]

Much like the EIC in the Indian Ocean, religion and evangelism played an important factor in the Atlantic world, helping to define the characteristic of corporate identity in New England. Although a distinctly different direction, to its eastern counterpart, the MBC corporate evangelism highlights the integrative relationship between the development of religion in a corporate world that stretched across the eastern and western oceans. Two years after William Castell's petition to parliament concerning evangelism in New England, Hugh Peter and Thomas Weld arrived back in England. Ordered by the MBC council, Peter and Weld, published the evangelical tract *New England First Fruits*, highlighting that, just as parliament was succeeding in England, the MBC was remembering its charter evangelical charge. The commonwealth and the New England Mission became "transatlantic sibilings."[64] In doing so the MBC emerged as an Atlantic solution to ideas surrounding religious governance in England, its corporate governance providing a solution to issues that plagues the religious and political debates of Cromwellian England.[65]

Following the publication of *First Fruits*, the MBC's evangelical aims obtained growing support on both sides of the Atlantic. Whilst ministers in Massachusetts began to evangelise, in England reports of these ministers' works were published in pamphlets. By the winter of 1645, the General Court in Boston had formerly made requests to ministers to consider what could be done to embark on some form of evangelical agenda.[66] A series of pamphlets initiated in 1648 by Thomas Shepard and the publication of his tract *The Clear Sunshine of the Gospel*, the necessity of evangelism was finally considered. However, it would not be till the publication of Edward Winslow's tract, dedicated to parliament in the spring of 1649, that any legislative progress was made. By the

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62   Bombay to Surat, October 18, 1668, Foster, *English Factories*, XIII: 72.

63   22 February, 1669, Foster, *English Factories*, XIII: 218.

64   Karen Bross, *Dry Bones and Indian Sermons: Praying Indians in Colonial America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004), 6–7.

65   For more information see Susan Hardman Moore *Pilgrims: New World Settlers and the Call of Home* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007),

66   N. B. Shurtleff, ed., *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay New England* (RCM) 5 vols. (Boston, 1853–54), II: 84, 134, 166; III: 85–96-97.

summer of that year, the Act for "promoting and propgating the Gospel of Jesus Chirst in New England" was passed.[67] This act laid the foundations for the establishment of England's first overseas evangelical company 13 years later, offering a financial life raft to the struggling MBC who, through the society and later the NEC, could obtain funds in England to support the evangelical aims of its government. Moreover, it signified a slow but noticeable change in the way in which the English state saw the responsibility of religious governance overseas slowly move away from chartered commercial companies, to specifically evangelical corporations.

The establishment of the first evangelical corporation marked the beginning of a gradual change in domestic ideas on the character of English overseas expansion corporate government, and the development of religious governance. The Act, which called for the "glorious propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ amongst those poor heathen", was established to successfully achieve this "one Body Politque and Corporate in Law."[68] This, England's first overseas evangelical corporation, was to be called "The President and Society for propagation of the Gospel in New-England" and, after the restoration, would be known as the New England Company. Structurally, it was much like any corporate body including the MBC; it had a president, a treasurer and a court of assistants. However, unlike the MBC, its government, according to its charter, was to remain in England.

Quickly, the evangelical corporation drew in support from mostly wealthy Congregationalist and independent merchants in London, who immediately set about raising funds and publishing a series highlighting the evangelical aims of the corporation.[69] The tracts offered an insight into reformation of Native

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67   Edward Winslow, *The Glorious Progress of the Gospel Amongst the Indians in New England manifested by three letters under the hand of the famous instrument of the Lord, Mr. John Eliot, and another from Mr. Thomas Mayhew Jun., both preachers of the world, as well to the English as Indians in New England* (London, 1649); July 1649: "An Act for the promoting and propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in New England," in C. H. Firth and R. S. Rait, *Acts and Ordinances*, II: 197–200.

68   Rait, *Acts and Ordinances*, II: 197–98.

69   Between 1651 and 1660 the company published five tracts, Henry Whitfield, *The light appearing more and more towards the perfect day. Or, a farther discovery of the present state of the Indians in New-England, concerning the progresse of the Gospel amongst them. Manifested by letters from such as preacht to them there* (London, 1651); Henry Whitfield, *Strength out of Weakness. Or a Glorious Manifestation Of the further Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New-England* (1652); John Eliot, *Tears of repentance: or, A further narrative of the progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New-England: setting forth, not only their present state and condition, but sundry confessions of sin by diverse of the said Indians, wrought upon by the saving power of the Gospel; together with the manifestation of their faith and hope in Jesus Christ, and the work of grace upon their hearts.* (London, 1653);

Americans, who had been enlightened by the "Clear-sunshine of the Gospel."[70] These tracts not only illustrate the reformation of Native Americans, but also the wholesale reimagining of the purpose of the MBC, along with other New England governments. They suggested that their mission was no longer to set a godly example both for and over English brethren but to propagate godly governance to New England's Native Americans. As Henry Whitfield wrote, "the Lord hath now declared one great end he had of sending many of his people to those ends of the earth" and that was the conversion of the Native American people to god's governance.[71] Such an evangelical movement was perceived by John Eliot as an alternative conquest, which traded the violent conquest of the Spanish, (and replicated by the settlers of the MBC) for a benevolent occupation of the soul and mind. Writing in 1652, Eliot explained that many who had settled in America "have onely sought their owne advantage to possesse their Land, Transport their gold, and that with so much covetousnesse and cruelty". In doing so, they had "made the name of Christianitie and of Christ and abomination", both to their own and to the Native Americans.[72] Part of this abomination lay in the perceived ideas of the genuine conversion; a convert by violent conquest had not truly repented. Instead, Eliot's benevolent conquest, in line with Puritan theology, would be like the planting of the "mustard seed" which would slowly grow and amount to true believers in Christ.[73] Authors would then revel in informing their readers of the successes of evangelism, offering examples of true conversion and confession of Native Americans such

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A late and further manifestation of the progress of the gospel amongst the Indians in New-England declaring their constant love and zeal to the truth: with a readiness to give accompt of their faith and hope, as of their desires in church communion to be partakers of the ordinances of Christ: being a narrative of the examinations of the Indians, about their knowledge in religion, by the elders of the churches (London,1655); *A further account of the progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England: being a relation of the confessions made by several Indians* (*in the presence of the elders and members of several churches*) *in order to their admission into church-fellowship. Sent over to the corporation for propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ amongst the Indians in New England at London* (London, 1659).

70   Thomas Shepard, *The clear sun-shine of the gospel breaking forth upon the Indians in Nevv-England. Or, An historicall narration of Gods wonderfull workings upon sundry of the Indians, both chief governors and common-people, in bringing them to a willing and desired submission to the ordinances of the gospel; and framing their hearts to an earnest inquirie after the knowledge of God the Father, and of Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world* (1648); Bross, *Dry Bones*, 9.

71   Whitfield, *The light appearing*, 44–5.

72   Eliot's letter in Whitfield, *Strength out of Weakness*, introduction.

73   John Wilson, *The Day-breaking, if not the sun-rising of the Gospell with the Indians in New-England*, (1647), frontispiece, 16, 23.

as Monequassun and Toteswamp.[74] It was precisely this slow mission that the MBC leaders embraced, rebranding its theological government through evangelical agenda taking hold in England.

This subtle, but nonetheless noticeable, shift in policy for the MBC's theological governance towards active evangelism was not only predicated by an identity crisis triggered by moral superiority, but also economic incentive. This incentive was both spiritual and real, offering "comfort to your owne accounts in the day of the lord", whilst also providing those in the MBC and the rest of New England with a financial lifeline.[75] The Wars of the Three Kingdoms, return migration and a downturn in trade had left the colony facing an economic crisis and the knitting together of an evangelical agenda with financial speculation offered the possibility of reprieve. In 1648, Eliot linked conversion to the growth of material wealth amongst populations of both Native American and English settlers, as converted Native Americans sought to adopt the practices of English "civil" society. The example one evangelist gave involved the adoption of English clothing, suggesting that Native American conversion would lead to a rise in the sale of English textiles and clothing, describing how Praying Indians "have some more cloths" than the "wicked Indians" who practiced their own faiths.[76] Shepard would go on to write that, at one public sermon, so many Native Americans arrived dressed in English clothing that "you would scarce know them from English people."[77] The financial possibility opened up through convert communities was not only limited to textiles, but also in technology, architecture and construction, and was key to the evangelical mission.[78] Conversion equated to the wholesale adoption of English Protestant civility over barbarous native practices and, as such, it opened up new markets for New Englanders' goods.

Conclusion

By 1750, England's overseas companies, such as the EIC, MBC and NEC had used religious control to stamp their authority over peoples and faiths across

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74   Eliot, *Tears of repentance*, 16; *A late and further manifestation*, 7–8.

75   Shepard, *Clear sun-shine*, 5.

76   Shepard, *Clear sun-shine*, 26–27.

77   Shepard, *Clear sun-shine*, 11; for more on clothing, status and symbolism in the New England during the seventeenth century see Ann M. Little, "Shoot That Rogue, for He Hath an Englishman's Coat On!': Cultural Cross-Dressing on the New England Frontier, 1630–1760," *New England Quarterly*, Vol. 74, No. 2 (2001), 240–42.

78   Bross, *Dry Bones*, 24.

the globe, thereby securing their governmental autonomy. However, as a new century approached, the English metropole took steps to centralise the role of religion, evangelism and the overseas. Consequently, this changed the character of English imperial expansion and the relationship between English corporate governance and religion forever. Despite the successes of England's overseas companies at establishing visible forms of English religious governance from New England to the Coromandel Coast, there was mounting pressure within England to do more to advance English Christian government abroad.

In 1687, John Dryden dryly wrote, "with my country's pardon, its said, Religion is the least of all our Trade". Eight years later, Henry Prideux, the future dean of Norwich, decried that the EIC "had done nothing to instruct" in the Christian faith the many Hindus and Muslims under their jurisdiction and not been given the "means whereby they may be sav'd."[79] Prideux would also go on to state, in a report of religion in the company's factories in India, that the company had "failed to propagate the Gospel among the Natives," whilst claiming that it was in the "secular interests" of the company "as well as Spirituall" for them to focus on evangelism.[80] As criticism continued to mount over the EIC's corporate religious governance and its "inability" to actively evangelise parliament, the crown and leaders in the Established Church took steps to formally impose strict codes to religious governance in these companies, through their charters. Moreover, the establishment of evangelical corporations such as the NEC, SPCK, and the Society for Promoting the Gospel in Foreign Parts, weakened the incentives to establish forms of corporate religious governance in England's commercial companies, as it transferred much of the religious responsibility away from them. By removing this responsibility, it freed up corporations from the constraints of having to be religiously mindful in its government, allowing a new era of aggressive imperial expansion to take shape that differed greatly from the corporate overseas expansion of the seventeenth century.

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80   LPRA MS 933, no. 2.

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Governance

Edmond J. Smith

According to John Wheeler, the Secretary of the Merchant Adventurers, "there is nothing in the world so ordinary, and natural unto men, as to contract, truck, merchandise and traffic one with another, so that it is almost impossible for three persons to converse together two hours but they will fall into talk of one bargain or another".[1] With the potential to be conducted by all people, and in all places, contemporaries of Wheeler believed that trade was not only a global phenomenon, but that it required careful governance to ensure that it was conducted in an orderly fashion. Corporations like the Merchant Adventurers were the primary means of encouraging and enforcing good practice as English trade and empire spread across the world. Proponents of the corporation argued that "the companies, especially the Merchant Adventurers, do by their orderly trading and selling themselves in a Mart Town gain many privileges". Without corporate governance trade would suffer as European and non-European rulers would react negatively to a "straggling trade" and impose severe duties on English goods or even cut them out of the trade altogether.[2] Even critics of companies' monopolies were careful to highlight their understanding that "regularity and government is commendable in all things, otherwise disorders and a promiscuous kind of confusion will follow".[3] Providing structure for governing people, practices and places, corporations were therefore an essential component of England's overseas activities across the globe.

New forms of trading and colonial corporation developed between 1550 and 1750 that provided a range of approaches for governing the activities and behaviour of people in England and overseas. England's burgeoning global activities across these two centuries were governed through a range of formal and informal means that were reinforced by corporations that at different times acted as court, community, network and even ruler. Through these organisations,

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1   John Wheeler, *A Treatise of Commerce: Wherein is Shewed the Commodities Arising by a Well Ordered and Ruled Trade, Such as That of the Society of Merchants Adventurers is Proved to be* (London: 1601), 6.

2   British Library [BL], Lansdowne Ms 487, ff. 146–148.

3   Thomas Johnson, *A Discourse Consisting of Motives for the Enlargement and Freedom of Trade* (London: 1645).

structures were established and maintained that helped facilitate interaction with non-European peoples, provided essential structures for complex transnational activities, and tied to ensure that English people worked with, rather than against, each other.

Governance meant a number of different things to members of early modern corporations, and existing ideas about how to govern people and trade fed into the development of new organisations just as new challenges altered practices in existing ones.[4] Flexibility in governance across corporations was therefore an essential aspect of their development – they were not exclusive entities and relied on some ability to be responsive to outside influences to be successful.[5] At heart, corporations were integrative, first between the individuals that they brought together as members and later through the connections they facilitated across local, regional and global geographies.[6] Examining ideas of governance – how they shifted from the formal to informal, from local to global, and back again – enables us to re-assess the corporation. Instead of rigid, bordered organisations tightly controlled and distinct from one another, corporations should be seen as porous, adaptable and overlapping organisations.

To understand the governance of later corporations dedicated to overseas trade and empire it is essential to understand the environment from which they developed.[7] In doing so we can better reflect on the ways in which mercantile government adapted to better reflect the needs, aspirations and role of new stakeholders and communities that were drawn into corporate activity as this period progressed. Livery and urban corporations had played an important role in how commerce was organised in England for centuries, providing a framework for commercial education, institutions and law that became central pillars of the new corporate bodies that facilitated global activities.[8]

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4   Phil Withington and Alexandra Shepard, eds., *Communities in Early Modern England: Networks, Place, Rhetoric* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001); Phil Withington, *The Politics of Commonwealth: Citizens and Freemen in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

5   See, for example, Aske Brock's and William Pettigrew's chapters in William Pettigrew and Mahesh Gopalan eds., *The East India Company, 1600–1857: Essays on Anglo-Indian Connection* (Delhi: Routledge India, 2016).

6   For examinations of corporate interlocutors see, Brock, "The Company Director: Commerce, State and Society" (PhD Diss., University of Kent, 2017).

7   Anne Goldgar and Robert L. Frost, eds., *Institutional Culture in Early Modern Society* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); William Scott, *The Constitution and Finance of English, Scottish, and Irish Joint-stock Companies to 1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), ix, 1–7.

8   Ian Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Steve Rappaport, *Worlds Within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-Century London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

At those times when new corporations were established, and then throughout their development, these organisations adapted existing practices in response to pressures – often from European or non-European actors – to better facilitate trade and empire in different parts of the world.[9] According to Kirti Chaudhuri, the significance of the East India Company lies in the fact that it represented a "manifestation of and causal force behind the changes that were taking place in the structure of England's overseas trade", playing a crucial symbolic and practical role in the evolution of English trading arrangements during the seventeenth century.[10] The governance of corporations was a process of negotiation between the members of each corporations and external actors, including the English and foreign states and other merchants and corporations across the world.

At the heart of England's growing global activity were the leaders and members of corporations that lived and worked in London, an urban centre and port with longstanding corporate traditions through its municipal government and livery companies.[11] Essential for underpinning the commercial culture that made trade possible, the city was the largest port in England and was home to many of the country's most successful merchants.[12] In the sixteenth century, it was the central point of organisation for numerous attempts to expand overseas trade, and it was also undergoing a rapid process of development that would make it a truly global port by the mid-eighteenth century.[13] The social and cultural fabric of the city was altered too through its experience of international travel and exchange, whether through returning merchants,

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9   Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Indians and English: Facing off in Early America* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2000); John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Pettigrew and Gopalan, *East India Company*.

10   K.N. Chaudhuri, *The English East India Company: The Study of an Early Joint-Stock Company, 1600–1640* (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1965), 3.

11   Rappaport, *Worlds Within Worlds*; Perry Gauci, *The Politics of Trade: The Overseas Merchant in State and Society, 1600–1720* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

12   Nuala Zahedieh, *The Capital and the Colonies: London and the Atlantic Economy, 1660–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

13   A. L. Beier and Roger Finlay, *Making of the Metropolis: London, 1500–1700* (London: Longman, 1986). In the Low Countries, cities were undergoing similar developments, and after the Dutch revolt, Amsterdam would rapidly develop and become London's major international competitor. See, Oscar Gelderblom, *Cities of Commerce: The Institutional Foundations of International Trade in the Low Countries, 1250–1650* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

the movement of exotic goods, the exchange of news or the impact of profits from trade and empire across the city.[14]

Corporate bodies were key parts of the daily lives for people in the commercial community and colonial and trading companies were no different. They were not distant, impersonal institutions in which people invested but social organisations, where members invested time and energy on behalf of the "public" community that the corporation represented.[15] Essentially, corporations supplied a means for members to act together towards common goals, providing "a framework, or structure, for continuous and systematic public activity by their citizens".[16] Over the course of the seventeenth century these corporations took on new powers, privileges and activities that changed the way they understood governance.

Across the multiplicity of corporations that governed English activities across the world we can see a set of shared social and cultural conditions that provide an effective means of approaching global history. Through corporations the early modern world became increasingly connected; examining how they were governed in a comparative framework reveals what different corporations shared, but more importantly how they negotiated and adapted to different environments. Overseas, corporations had considerable autonomy from the oversight of the English state and were able to respond with agility and innovation to better operate in the jurisdictional no-mans-land between nation states and empires.[17] The experience of participating in a variety of starkly different local environments forced corporations to alter their approach to the governance of their employees, their relationships with other peoples and the ways in which they negotiated trans-cultural communication and exchange.

Definitions of Governance

Members of corporations used governance to refer to numerous aspects of their activities. Here, these have been separated into three distinct, but overlapping terms – communal governance, societal governance and political governance.

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14   Robert Batchelor, *London: The Selden Map and the Making of a Global City, 1549–1689* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2014).

15   Withington, *Politics of Commonwealth.*

16   Phil Withington, "Public Discourse, Corporate Citizenship, and State Formation in Early Modern England" in *American Historical Review* 112, 4 (2007), 1017.

17   There has been considerable debate about the ways individuals operated in these free-spaces between empires, in particular in relation to the Atlantic. See, Eliga Gould, "Entangled Histories, Entangled Worlds: The English-Speaking Atlantic as a Spanish Periphery" in *American Historical Review,* 112, 3 (2007), 764–786.

First, then, the idea of governance could refer to communal governance, whereby the ordered, civil practices of merchants and their factors, servants and other representatives were ensured by pressure from the community and a range of cultural norms and expectations that regulated the behaviour of participants in commercial activity. This form of governance was intended to ensure that individuals could operate successfully. It was also not necessarily enforced from above, but relied on mutually supporting practices that strengthened the community as a whole. Communal governance enabled trade to function with or without direct oversight from corporations, and it was an essential part of England's commercial and colonial development as corporate bodies in turn adopted and adapted longstanding cultural values and standards into their new institutional structures.

Once integrated, these values became part of the regulations, bye-laws and standing orders of trading and colonial corporations and were used as a means to effectively regulate members of these societies. In addition to institutionalising customs and common practices, the process of incorporation facilitated the creation of management structures and formal hierarchies. Societal governance could, therefore, include the active administration of communal standards within a particular organisation – uncivil members of a corporations or people who broke its rules and regulations could be punished to enforce goods behaviour – but also went further, with the aim of developing a common strategy for the whole corporation.

Finally, governance was used to describe powers for political government that numerous corporations held – often, but not always, in relation to the direct government of people in settlements and factories overseas. Rather than societal governance, where rules and regulations regulated members of the society, political governance applies to activities where corporations became the government of particular overseas colonies and settlements. In this situation, the corporation would develop laws, political structures and hold power over people who were not members of the organisation. In the case of English corporations, political governance could replicate policies of the state but would often be adapted to suit local conditions and even integrate non-European structures in response to non-European agency.

Of course, these three uses of governance often overlapped. In the case of the Virginia Company, whose dissolution in 1624 followed a bitter debate regarding the governance of the colony, the failure of the company's leaders to govern the corporate body in London was directly linked to the unrest and failings of in governing the colony overseas. Reflecting on the company's troubles one commentator, the merchant Robert Johnson, highlighted that "when Sir Thomas Smith left the government" in 1619, one thousand people "were there inhabitants [in

Virginia] with plenty of corn, cattle, swine, poultry and other good provisions to feed and nourish them, a competent number of able and sufficient ministers to instruct them, worthy and excellent commanders, captains and officers to direct them and govern them".[18] Under the government of Smith, "the plantation did flourish, and was well governed" but "since which time we understand that diverse factions and disordered people of the said company" had led it towards ruin.[19] In an attempt to restore what he saw as effective governance, Charles I ordered his Privy Council to "resolve by altering the charters and letters patent of the said company as the points of government, wherein the same might be found defective, to settle such a course as might best secure the safety of our people there and cause the said plantation to flourish". Without resolving the internal governance of the corporate body the colony would "suffer much inconvenience for want of good government".[20] The central argument in favour of this course of action was that the corporation's failure to effectively govern meant it had failed to live up to its contractual agreement with the state.

Communal Governance

Undertaking trade in early modern England was a communal practice. It was built on a number of shared practices that made commerce possible, such as the acceptance of credit for payments, and was underpinned by cultural standards that enabled trust between participants. Without trust trade would grind to a halt and the practices of merchants were governed by a range of written and unwritten regulations that would – much of the time – allow trade to commence without issue.[21] When these rules were broken, even if the law was not, it could be rectified through a communal response.

In 1606, for instance, Launcelot Peacock faced the brunt of his community's wrath after his actions landed a young member of the Haberdashers' Company – Lambert Olbolton – in prison. Olbolton was not blameless, and owed Peacock £70, but the response of his creditor was deemed excessive, disordered and uncivil. Rather than giving the young merchant some leeway in paying his debt, Peacock instead had looked outside the community for satisfaction, levelling

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18   Susan Kingsbury eds., *The Records of the Virginia Company of London, Vol. 4* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1935), 4–5.

19   Kingsbury, *Records, Vol. 4*, 85–6.

20   Kingsbury, *Records, Vol. 4*, 492–8.

21   Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1998).

a charge against Olboton at the King's Bench. He had also threatened the wife of another merchant who had acted as surety for Olbolton, who had paid the interest owed to Peacock "to her great grief and vexation". The Haberdashers' came to Olbolton's aid and entreated Peacock to accept the interest and drop the charges or else accept that they would appoint members of the company to assess the case independently. Peacock, in spite of "all the entreaties and persuasion that this whole court [the Haberdashers' senior members] could use" refused. Worse, "in very uncivil terms both of scoffing and of threatening, [he] abused not only the worshipful Sir John Garrard [but also] some of the wardens and assistants". Peacock's "most indiscreet, uncivil and disordered manner" was "in the hearing of this whole court" and highlighted his disreputable character during a dispute with another member. Rather than siding with Peacock and ensuring Olbolton's debts were paid, this outburst changed the discussion towards consideration of Peacock's "former misdemeanours" and his "cruel and hard dealing not only with the said Olbolton as aforesaid but also with diverse of those that have been his apprentices". Peacock's lack of participation in the community's positive development, and his personal lack of creditability and poor character altered the direction of the dispute, and the court concluded "the said Peacock [was] unfit to be of the livery of this company or to bear any office of the same" and removed him from this position.[22] In a dispute that began with poor financial creditability of Olbolton, it was the character of Peacock that was judged to be of lesser worth, and his inability to operate within a business environment that was social, public and corporate was his undoing.

As this episode suggests, through corporate participation, often a requirement for undertaking particular trades, and broader commercial activities, merchants were part of communities in early modern London that expected them to act in particular way. Participation in these groups allowed individuals to experience a variety of different institutions, activities, and relationships and also taught them how they were expected to act and operate.[23] As Keith Wrightson has demonstrated, a "tangled, messy, skein of overlapping and intersecting social networks" made up English society, and within this environment, individuals relied on a variety of different communities in their daily lives.[24] These communities created new allegiances and relationships for their

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22 Guildhall Library, Ms 16842/001, f. 152.

23 Phil Withington, "Company and Sociability in Early Modern England" in *Social History* 32, 3 (2007), 291–307.

24 Keith Wrightson, "Reformation of Manners in Early Modern England" in Paul Griffiths, Steve Hindle and Adam Fox (eds.), *The Experience of Authority in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1996), 11.

members, and these experiences would not be lost as they joined and led the development of overseas ventures.[25] Societies and companies could range from informal interactions to formal corporations, with connections across each likely.[26] Individuals' relationships across these different interactions could easily influence how they thought about the world and how the world thought about them.[27]

As English merchants struck out to make their fortunes trading overseas, either as representatives of corporations or independently, their success or failure was often dependent on their ability to interact effectively with other commercial actors around the world – both European and non-European. In doing so, they drew on their experience of commercial culture found in early modern England, and relied heavily on pre-existing relationships, personal recommendations and corporate support.[28] Taking advantage of this complex web of relationships was essential when developing successful commercial activities abroad.[29] Merchants operated in an environment where global trade went hand in hand with community and as more individuals were drawn into corporate activity, whether merchants or not, they were expected to abide by the same rules. By examining global trade and empire through the shared cultural values by which the participants formed a deeply interconnected community, we can see how interconnectedness, collaboration and shared commercial culture lay behind the revolutionary transformation of England's global trade during this period.

People across the communities, corporations and empire that developed as part of an increasingly globally connected world, shared sets of behaviours governed how they undertook trade. As Lauren Benton has argued, people relied on a "combination of personal ties, market deals, and legal contracts to overcome the risks of long-distance trade". These were supported by sets of "multiplex relationships", such as family, marriage and community membership that increased incentives to cooperate. Though these far from guaranteed "commercial proficiency

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25   Phil Withington, *Society in Early Modern England: The Vernacular Origins of Some Powerful Ideas* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), 205–231.

26   Withington, *Society in Early Modern England,* chapter 4.

27   Natasha Glaisyer, *The Culture of Commerce in England, 1660–1720* (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2006).

28   Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in and Age of Expansion, 1560–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

29   Richard Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism: Marriage, Family, and Business Networks in the English Speaking World, 1580–1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

and rectitude" and trust certainly was not assured even between siblings or other family members, shared commercial culture "generated, if not trust, at least firm expectations about behaviour".[30]

Francesca Trivellato has demonstrated how this was made possible as "routines grew from customary legal norms and social systems of interlocking interests" that became ingrained in commercial activities in England and elsewhere. This in turn "rendered expectations more predictable and created the necessary incentives for cooperation" among family members, business partners and even between strangers.[31] Over time, shared commercial experiences, education and corporate governance generated "a regularity of behaviour" through rules, beliefs, norms, and organisations.[32] Although corporations provided essential institutional support for overseas trade, they depended heavily on the "unwritten rules and social norms" of commercial culture to operate effectively.[33] By agreeing to certain standards and practices the community was able to govern the ways people undertaking overseas activities acted.

This governance was dependent on participants buying into and accepting the standards of the community, and this was guaranteed in part by the activities of courts, companies and other groups. Just as importantly, the requirements of early modern trade depended on other merchants' willingness to work wither other merchants and their business activities depended on trust between individuals.[34] Reputation, trustworthiness and creditability were vitally important for the commercial community. As Craig Muldrew has convincingly argued, "credit was a public means of social communication and circulating judgement about the value of other members of communities" that helped people assess who to do business with.[35] Contemporaries were well aware of this, and the eighteenth century merchant Malachy Postlethwayt

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30   Lauren Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures: Legal Regimes in World History, 1400–1900* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002), 22.

31   Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 4.

32   Anver Greif, *Institutions and the Path to the Modern Economy: Lessons from Medieval Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 30, 382–3.

33   Trivellato, *Familiarity of Strangers*, 13.

34   Muldrew, *Economy of Obligation*; Alexandra Sheppard, "Manhood, Credit and Patriachy in Early Modern England, c. 1580–1640" in *Past & Present,* 167 (2000), 75–106; Ceri Sullivan, *The Rhetoric of Credit: Merchants in Early Modern Writing* (London: Associated University Presses, 2002); Nuala Zahedieh, "Credit, Risk and Reputation in Late Seventeenth-Century Colonial Trade" in *Research in Maritime History,* 15 (1998), 53–74.

35   Muldrew, *Economy of Obligation,* 2.

pointed out how the "capacity, industry and honesty" of merchants was judged through assessments of their creditability.[36] The early modern economy was a system of cultural as well as material exchanges, in which the central mediating factor was credit or trust – without which commerce in the early modern world would have been impossible.

In moments where English merchants struck out to develop new business overseas they entered environments where similar practices were undertaken, both to govern trade practices and to assess who to do business with.[37] When abroad, a merchant's success was often dependent on their ability to operate effectively in "cosmopolitan" environments and build relationships with local agents and states. As trade and empire took English people further and further from England's shores, skilled merchants and other actors followed cross-cultural practices that had been successful elsewhere and applied them across the globe.[38] In developing English activities, these cosmopolitans and their communities provided a vital means of connecting English activities across the world and integrating them with local networks elsewhere.

Alison Games has pointed out how "overlapping and intersecting worlds of commercial and colonial enterprise" were brought together in people who represented substantial connectedness across ventures in spite of limited state involvement or imperial centralisation throughout this period.[39] Merchants and their agents spun a web of empire that crisscrossed empires, oceans and continents and tied England into rapidly maturing global networks of trade and exchange. These webs were supported by the same sets of relationships that facilitated commercial activities in England – including family, business and corporate ties – and were sustained by an understanding of cultural values that were just as important for trade overseas as they were at home.[40] The

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36   Malachy Postlethwayt, *The Universal Dictionary of Trade and Commerce* (London: 1763), 548.

37   Sebouh Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa* (California: University of California Press, 2011); Ashin Das Gupta, *The World of the Indian Ocean Merchant, 1500–1800* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001); Xabier Lamikiz, *Trade and Trust in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World: Spanish Merchants and Their Overseas Networks*, (London: Boydell & Brewer, 2010).

38   Games, *Web of Empire;* H. V. Bowen, Elizabeth Mancke and John Reid eds., *Britain's Oceanic Empire: Atlantic and Indian Ocean Worlds, c. 1550–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Jonathan Eacott, *Selling Empire: India in the Making of Britain and America, 1600–1830* (Williamsburg, VA: University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2016).

39   Games, *Web of Empire*, 6–15.

40   Emma Rothschild, *The Inner Lives of Empire: An Eighteenth-Century History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011); Hancock, *Citizens of the World;* Trivellato, *Familiarity of Strangers*.

organisations that drove these ventures were drawn from communities with a global outlook who benefitted from a commercial culture that lent itself well to the cosmopolitan challenges found in other commercial environments.[41]

The multiplicity of networks created via personal relationships, corporate associations and shared endeavours – and an understanding of how these were navigated through shared cultural values and societal expectations – allowed members of corporations to navigate the complex, global environment they thrust themselves into. They pursued careers that moved between various local, national and global spheres of activity, and within numerous corporate bodies and economic activities. To operate successfully in this environment commercial actors worked within a carefully calibrated and enforced cultural system and the cultural norms that bound them together in early modern England also bound them together overseas.

Societal Governance

Whereas communal governance ensured an approach to trade and exchange that covered the widest definition of the commercial community, and helped integrate English actors into networks across the globe, many activities were further governed through the creation of specific societies. Corporations facilitated the creation of commercial networks "bound together by ties of obligation which linked individuals at the inter-personal level and also connected companies, investors, and the government".[42] By joining corporations, people could obtain numerous rights and support but they also agreed to abide by the specific laws and regulations of each organisation. This meant that different parts of England's global activities were carried out with subtly different approaches to governance depending on the decisions and development of particular corporations. Although built on shared practices discussed already, corporations could further their aims by adding additional restrictions or orders deemed necessary to facilitate activities in different local conditions around the world.

Within corporations, governance was managed – in most circumstances – by small groups of senior merchants who acted as arbiters during disputes,

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41   Derek Keene, "Cities in Cultural Exchange" in Donatella Calabi and Stephen Tark eds., *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe, Vol. 2: Cities and Cultural Exchange in Europe, 1400–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

42   Natasha Glaisyer, "Calculating Credibility: Print Culture, Trust and Economic Figures in Early Eighteenth- Century England" in *Economic History Review,* 60 (2007), 708.

undertook the day to day management of the company and oversaw strategy. In the case of the East India Company, the Court of Committees consisted of twenty-four elected committees (or directors), a governor and deputy governor. This group would meet regularly to make decisions about the company and make judgement about disputes between members, receive petitions from employees and interact with the state.[43] In addition to these meetings, the company also held a number of General Courts each year where all members of the company were brought together to elect the governor, deputy and committees and vote on major decisions about the direction of the company. By 1621, when the East India Company published its *Lawes and Standing Orders*, the purpose and regularity of General Court meetings were strictly regulated. When ships returned from overseas the directors would "deliver and debate the affairs of the Company" with the generality.[44] Although convening only occasionally, these meetings gave all members of a company the opportunity to participate in the future governance of the organisation, and they provided an essential conduit for internal communication between the managers and other members of the society.

Between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, as possibilities for overseas trade and empire grew dramatically, more and more merchants were drawn into corporate organisations who used their newfound wealth and power to participate in trade and empire across the globe. As Douglas North has argued, in addition to sustained mercantile interest, the "development of long distance trade … required a sharp break in the characteristics of economic structure" and English merchants adopted and adapted a range of innovative corporate models to facilitate their activities overseas.[45] In addition to allowing merchants to group their capital together, these organisations were responsible for regulating the behaviour of members and employees, acting as a single body during interactions with the English and foreign states, and contributing to the upkeep of essential infrastructure such as ambassadors, warehouses, ships or even military forces.[46] To overcome the considerable strains of overseas trade and empire, companies provided essential institutional support, bringing merchants together and enforcing common standards and practices.

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43 F. J. Fisher, "Experiments in Company Organisation in the Early Seventeenth Century" in *The Economic History Review* 4, 2 (1933) 177–194; Scott, *Constitution and Finance*.

44 East India Company, *Lawes and Standing Orders* (London: 1621)*, 2.

45 Douglas North, "Institutions" in *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 5, 1 (1991), 97–9.

46 S. R. H. Jones and Simon P. Ville, "Efficient Transactors or Rent-Seeking Monopolists: The Rationale for Early Chartered Companies" in *Journal of Economic History* 56, 4 (1996), 898–915.

While historians have sought to trace the development of modern corporations in this period, their focus on financial and management structures often overlook the most important contribution early modern corporations made – a framework for communication and commercial activity that connected England and other localities around the world.[47] Rather than approaching these organisation as decentred, complex communities that sought to enable – rather than necessarily control – commercial activities, these studies have oversimplified the purpose of governance for early modern organisations.[48] Even where companies did seek to place more control over a particular trade, such as the Levant Company's decision to develop a joint-stock "for the better government and managing of the sale of their currants", they took control of the commodity once it was imported into London rather that intruding into the activities of their agents actually purchasing goods in the Mediterranean.[49]

That is not to say that employees had an entirely free-rein. As Philip Stern points out, the governance of the East India Company "has tended to be approached most frequently as a problem of business not political history […] rather than the institutions and ideologies that condition political authority, obedience, coercion, and negotiation".[50] The company sought to govern its employees and shareholders and adopted increasingly stringent controls over these groups in both Asia and Europe. In this environment, "company officials understood their official business to be that of 'public affairs', which constituted both commercial and political duties, distinguished from the 'private interest' or particular affairs of their own personal trading concerns".[51] Corporations provided essential infrastructure for their members, creating internal networks that followed their own laws and customs.[52]

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47   Jan De Vries, "Understanding Eurasian Trade in the Era of the Trading Companies" in Maxine Berg, Hanna Hodacs and Chris Nierstrasz eds., *Goods from the East, 1600–1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015).

48   Ann Carlos, "Principal-Agent Problems in Early Trading Companies: A Tale of Two Firms" in *American Historical Review* 82 (1992), 140–45; Ann M. Carlos, "Bonding and the Agency Problem: Evidence from the Royal African Company, 1672–1691" in *Explorations in Economic History,* 31 (1994), 313–335.

49   The National Archives UK, SP 105/148, General Court, 14th February 1618.

50   Philip Stern, "Companies: Monopoly, Sovereignty, and the East Indies", in Philip Stern and Carl Wennerlind, *Mercantilism Reimagined: Political Economy in Early Modern Britain and its Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 130.

51   Stern, "Companies", 135.

52   Stern, "Companies", 179; Edward Cavanagh, "A Company with Sovereignty and Subjects of its Own? The Case of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670–1763" in *Canadian Journal of Law and Society* 26, 1 (2011), 25–50.

A recent resurgence in corporate and company history has focused attention on how the particular institutional forms of different organisations could provide essential structure, but also flexibility, while engaging in a variety of enterprises. In William Pettigrew's recent examination of corporate constitutionalism, he suggests that recent work exploring non-commercial determinants of success, such as political and governmental routes, played an important role in how companies operated.[53] By examining corporations as constitutional bodies, historians can explore how they provided the government necessary for trading overseas, limiting liability and promoting commercial collaboration.[54] Detailed examinations of company bureaucracy, in particular the creation and control of written information, demonstrate the vital institutional environment that they created for the effective management of people, relationships and resources, which ultimately made overseas activities possible.[55]

As such, societal governance provided the opportunity for corporations to depend more on their agents overseas. They understood that these individuals would act within accepted behaviours of early modern commerce even as they integrated this with specific demands of the corporation. Difficulties arose when agents acted in ways that contravened accepted mercantile practice – an action that would not just damage a single trade deal but potentially the whole reputations of the company. This challenge remained in cases where interlopers operated in regions where the company was the single-face of interaction with foreign rulers. As Emily Erikson has demonstrated, the role of interlopers in Asia could actually provide a positive benefit for the East India Company in expanding members networks into otherwise untapped regions.[56] Yet, if these interlopers damaged the company's reputation through acting in opposition to common commercial practice – such as participating in privateering – the company would harshly punish them.[57] In most circumstances then, corporations took little direct control of overseas activities, instead operating on the principle that its agents on the ground would be able to better respond to local agency and act on the company's behalf. The corporation allowed merchants

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53   William Pettigrew, "Corporate Constitutionalism and the Dialogue between the Global and Local in Seventeenth-Century English History" in *Itinerario,* 39, 3 (2015), 487–501.

54   Joshua Barkan, *Corporate Sovereignty: Law and Government Under Capitalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

55   Miles Ogborn, *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2007)*,* 67–103.

56   Emily Erikson, *Between Monopoly and Free Trade: The English East India Company, 1600–1757* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014).

57   Eacott, *Selling Empire*.

to represent something bigger themselves and agreements made by the company were sustained beyond the life-span or geographical reach of any individual merchant.

Political Governance

In most circumstances then, corporations sought to regulate the behaviour of employees as far as was necessary to ensure continued access to markets. Yet, as companies moved away from trade towards the colonisation and direct political control of populations overseas they developed new forms of political governance to impose their authority. These would, inevitably, build on many similar principles as communal and societal governance but would take them a step further in order to effectively impose laws and govern diverse populations across the globe.

This was particular clear in situations where corporations obtained privileges to settle plantations and colonies. In turn, historians of empire have identified corporations as the first stage of longer-term imperial programmes of conquest and empire.[58] For some, corporations were little more than state sponsored facilitators of colonisation, and the corporate elements of government overseas have been largely overlooked. However, during this period, when the state was "very much in formation, coexisting and sharing power with a range of allies and rivals" it would be a mistake to overlook the influence of corporate actors in developing new means of controlling, organising and ordering people.[59] Many individuals in England participated in one corporation or another and the contributed to a process of "national incorporation" that helped fashion the English state.[60] Corporations developed governmental structures that were applied to their own organisations and made a considerable impact on state development as ideas were developed, practiced, adapted and adopted across a range of activities both at home and abroad.[61]

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58   James D. Tracy (ed.) *The Political Economy of Merchant Empires: State Power and World Trade, 1350–1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

59   Philip Stern, "Companies", 178; Michael Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England, c. 1550–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and its Competitors: An Analysis of Systems Change* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994); Janice Thompson, *Merchants, Pirates, and Sovereigns: State-Building and Extraterritorial Violence in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994).

60   Withington, *Society in Early Modern England,* 217–8.

61   Withington, "Public Discourse, Corporate Citizenship", 1207.

While corporations did depend on the state for support and legal validity, the shape and texture of particular forms of government overseas depended on numerous influences, including numerous English, European and non-European interests.[62] The political governance of corporations depended on much more than simply their relation to states, and can be analysed as "company-states" in their own right, deeply integrated with the overlapping sovereignties that defined state formation in the seventeenth century.[63] In particular, Philip Stern has suggested that corporations generally, and the East India Company specifically, can be examined as entities with their own political and social histories.[64] He further submits that rather than functioning simply as business concerns, companies also provide "institutions and ideologies that condition political authority, obedience, coercion, and negotiation".[65] In turn, the creation and development of strategies for political governance provided corporations to re-examine, adapt and export a variety of different approaches for the rule of people overseas.

These, inevitably, stemmed from ideas related to communal and societal governance and the government of places and people overseas was strongly tied to prior experiences in England. For example, when the city of Madras was incorporated by the East India Company the directors in London were careful to insist that people living within its jurisdiction in India "shall forever remain in the same freedom, as if they were English men borne, and enjoy a perpetual liberty as to their religion and Property as to their Inheritances". Yet, it was equally important to insist that "they must never expect to be freer than all free men are in England".[66] Corporations had significant room for manoeuvre in developing political governance overseas, but in doing so they were restrained both by English laws and ideas of social and communal governance already influential within these organisations.

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62 The relationship between the commercial community and the state is considered in Robert Ashton, *The City and the Court, 1603–1643* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); J. Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688–1783* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Gauci, *The Politics of Trade*; David Harris Sacks, "The Countervailing of Benefits: Monopoly, Liberty and Benevolence in Elizabethan England" in Dale Hoak (ed.), *Tudor Political Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

63 Philip J. Stern, " 'A Politie of Civil & Military Power': Political Thought and the Late Seventeenth Century Foundations of the East India Company-State" in *Journal of British Studies* 47, 2 (2008): 253–83.

64 Philip Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

65 Stern, *The Company-State.*, 130.

66 BL, IOR E/3/9, London to Fort St George, 22nd March 1687.

The commercially focused strategy of the East India Company, which was informed in part by "the presence of significant and large-scale and well or-ganised Empires, and smaller-scale competitive and flexible coastal and island states, [which] meant that the European companies could get nothing from trades in and with Asia without the collaboration and co-operation of Asian intermediaries".[67] One consequence of this is that the history of the East India Company in Asia is deeply embedded with histories of the trading and po-litical environment of the region.[68] Within these studies, European trading companies have attracted considerable attention for their role in the emerging interconnected environment of Indian Ocean and Asian commerce.[69]

As this suggests, corporations' approach to political governance had a con-siderable impact on the places they governed, but these were tied into wider conceptions of government held by many in England. Many colonies and plan-tations overseas drew on ideas of corporate political governance even when they fell outside the jurisdiction of corporations.[70] Across the world, the de-veloping English empire was built on corporate ideas. In America, Asia, Africa and Europe the development of new societies were not just ordered by laws and regulations with a corporate flavour, but their very success was often de-pendent on the development of communal governance that had made Lon-don's merchants so successful in the seventeenth century.

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67   Ogborn, *Global Lives*, 79.

68   Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600–1800* (Minneapolis: Minne-sota University Press, 1976); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Com-merce: southern India, 1500–1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Om Prakash, *European Commercial Enterprise in Pre-Colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

69   Sinnappah Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast: 1650–1740* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986); Sinnappah Arasaratnam, *Mar-itime Trade, Society and European Influence in South Asia, 1600–1800* (Aldershot: Rout-ledge, 1995); D. K. Bassett, "Early English Trade and Settlement in Asia, 1602–1690" in J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossman eds., *Britain and the Netherlands in Europe and Asia: Papers Delivered to the Third Anglo-Dutch Historical Conference* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1968); K. N. Chaudhuri, *The Trading World of Asia and the English East India Company, 1660–1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Niels Steensgaard, *Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century: The East India Companies and the Decline of the Caravan Trade* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1974).

70   Thomas Leng, " 'A Potent Plantation Well Armed and Policeed': Huguenots, the Hartlib Circle, and British Colonization in the 1640s" in *The William and Mary Quarterly,* 66 (2009), 173–194.

Conclusion

Between 1550 and 1750, English merchants had established their presence across the world. They participated in global exchanges that saw Asian, American, African and European goods cross vast geographic distances, move over an array of different jurisdictional and political borders, and change the way people the world over participated in commercial activities. Merchants' approaches to navigating the complex challenges this exchange entailed dramatically altered the communities, corporations and individuals who participated in overseas activities. New companies and commercial practices linked merchants, creating new networks across the commercial community where ideas could be shared, plans developed and fortunes won and lost. In turn, these merchants linked global trade with local social, economic and cultural environments in which they improved, competed and flourished. England underwent considerable change as a consequence – social change, political upheaval and economic development were all, at one time or another, influenced by merchants' global activities.

By approaching the topic of corporate governance from a global perspective offers numerous avenues for adjusting our understanding of English activities overseas, and potentially new ways of thinking about the impact of global connectivity in the early modern world. First and foremost, the shared cultural values that held the commercial community together suggest long-term, slow-changing values were adopted my merchants across the globe. English merchants participated in different ventures with expectations of similar commercial practices. They took these ideas into the development of commercial and colonial enterprises, and the governance behind the East India Company in Asia, Virginia Company in America and Royal Africa Company in Africa were drawn from the same environment. In turn, this could suggest that major divisions within the historiography of this field – which remains keenly divided by geography – could be brought together not through links between agents in each region but through the shared values that drove corporate activity across the globe.

This would reinforce the work of historians who have recently sought to highlight the connections between English activities across the globe, particularly between agents on the ground overseas.[71] Through these studies, the

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71   This is particularly clear in attempts to integrate Atlantic history with English activities in Asia. See, Lauren Benton, "The British Atlantic in a Global Context" in David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick eds., *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2009); Nicholas Canny, "Asia, the Atlantic and the Subjects of the British Monarchy" in Barry Coward (ed.), *A Companion to Stuart Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

connectivity of English activity during this period is becoming clearer, and the role of corporations is emerging as an important topic within explorations of the early English empire. In particular, it presents an analysis of the British Empire that draws on multiple, connected threads, rather than focusing simply on North American settlements.[72] In wide-ranging examinations of English overseas commerce in the early seventeenth century, the lives of English "cosmopolitans" have offered a superb opportunity for analysis.[73] By exploring the actions of these globetrotters that enabled English engagement with regions around the world – in spite of the weak state – it places merchants, traders and travellers at the centre of discussion. The "overlapping and intersecting worlds of commercial and colonial enterprise" were brought together through the experience of travellers who represented substantial connectedness across ventures that remained decentralised throughout this period.[74] This approach enables the examination of both the global connections of individuals in the British Empire and how agents' experiences connect different ventures around the world.

Finally, examining the ways corporations sought to govern people and practices overseas suggests numerous possibilities for examining how English people interacted with non-European peoples. On an initial level, corporate actors understanding of communal governance meant they entered transnational spaces across the world with an awareness of, and willingness to accept, the importance of building and sustaining relationships with non-English people. These relationships were sustained by corporate social governance that enforced common practices among members and provided essential structure for overseas activities. This contributed to corporations' ability to operate in areas where they operate under the jurisdictional authority of non-English states – by governing their members' activities in this manner they were better able to adapt to local circumstances more effectively. Through corporations, individuals were able to depend on a reliable structure for their activities that made engaging and interacting with other legal, commercial and political networks possible. Finally, in some parts of the world corporations obtained, often by force, populations under their control that required political governance.

Various forms of corporate governance underpinned English activities across the globe, but they were not imposed from above. Corporations took

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72   Bowen, Mancke, and Reid eds., *Britain's Oceanic Empire,* 1–4.
73   Games, *Web of Empire*; Miles Ogborn, *Global Lives: Britain and the world, 1550–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
74   Ogborn, *Global Lives*, 6–15.

ideas from the wider community in England and overseas in order to develop governance structures that could fulfil the ambitions of members who believed in a universality of trade. In doing so they were often integrative, responsive and flexible to best overcome the specific challenges faced by doing business in local, regional and transnational spaces across the globe.

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Gender

David Veevers

The study of England's overseas corporations is not a particularly new field of enquiry. The spectacular collapse of the Virginia Company two years after the "Massacre of 1622" triggered a corpus of printed reflection in what was, admittedly, a politically charged public sphere.[1] Similarly, the emergence of the English East India Company as an expansive imperial and colonial power in the eighteenth century triggered intense study of the nature and characteristics of the corporation as a territorial ruler, from contemporaries and Victorians alike. From Robert Orme to Thomas Babington Macaulay, a host of company officials turned historian in an effort to explain the transformations of the corporation, supposedly from commerce to sovereign rule.[2] As early as the beginning of the twentieth century, the theorist Harold Laski asked important questions about the separate legal and political identity of the corporation, and its autonomous role within the state.[3] And, more recently, both Phil Withington and Philip J. Stern have reintegrated the corporation into central understandings of the formation of the state, both domestic and colonial.[4]

One of the most significant and fruitful lines of enquiry to have emerged from recent research on the centrality of the corporation to early modern public and political life, is its social nature. As Stern observes, the corporation may have been a "body politic", but as their charters announced, they were also "a fellowship as well".[5] Conceptualised and described interchangeably as associations, companies or societies, they were incorporated not just for the regulation

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1 For example, John Bargrave. *The Information of Iohn Bargraue, Shewing the Seuerall Abuses of the Gouernment of the Plantation in Virginia.* London, 1624.

2 Robert Orme. *A History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan.* 2 volumes. London, 1803, reprinted 1861; A. J. Grieve, ed. *Thomas Babington Macaulay, Critical and Historical Essays, Volume 1.* Edinburgh, 1840, reprinted London, 1907.

3 Harold Laski. "The Early History of the Corporation in England", *Harvard Law Review* 30 (1917).

4 Phil Withington. *The Politics of Commonwealth: Citizens and Freemen in Early Modern England.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005; Philip J. Stern. *The Company-State: Corporation Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

5 Stern, *Company-State*, 8.

of their legal, commercial, civic or religious interests, but for the formalisation and ordering of their social ties. Although not the only body to do so in early modern England, nonetheless corporations and especially their emerging overseas incarnations, were key agents of social regulation and change, "with all the elaborate rituals, restricted membership, rules, conventions, and internal hierarchies that they entailed", and the diversification of – and challenge to – these that occurred in this period.[6]

Understanding England's overseas corporations in the years 1550 to 1750 therefore demands an appreciation of their more inherent social mechanisms and dynamics which defined their structure and behaviour. The study of gender, in particular, can help us shed light on the legal, political and commercial properties that defined the way in which corporations developed beyond the local and national levels, to what was an increasingly transoceanic and global scale of operation and, subsequently, integration. Indeed, the distinctive global sociology of the corporation comes into sharp relief when observed through the lens of gender. Perhaps most broadly, the constitutional parameters of the corporation can be traced through the erection and transplantation of regulatory regimes between the Mediterranean, Atlantic and Asia which defined the roles of the sexes as well as governed the sexual relationship between them. More specifically, the way in which corporations subordinated themselves to foreign states in an effort to entrench their members and networks within local and regional orders is illustrated in their adaption to non-European gender norms and regimes in places such as Virginia. The most visible manifestation of this consisted of the marriage of company officials to non-European women in an effort to consolidate political, commercial and cultural ties. Similarly, the processes of integration undertaken in corporate settlements is revealed through the protection and adoption of polygamous cultural practices and beliefs in places such as India. All of these social mechanisms utilised and exercised by overseas corporations make gender a primary lens through which to view them in practice, and in doing so, sheds light on the protagonist nature of the corporation in Global History in the years 1550 to 1750.

Finally, if the primary task of Global History is to recast Europe from the "knowing subject" to the "object", as Maxine Berg has rightfully demanded, then the overseas corporation proves the actor best suited to meeting this challenge. A study of gender serves to uncover the extent to which non-European communities, agents and contexts shaped these supposedly nationalist,

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6   For the breadth of incorporated communities in this period, see Phil Withington. "Company and Sociability in Early Modern England", *Social History* 32 (2007): 298.

mercantilist enterprises at every conceivable level. As Durba Ghosh observed in her survey of the field of gender, its study "eschews national histories and narratives, promotes transnational and interdisciplinary work, and challenges the bounded fields with which historians conventionally identify".[7] As such, viewing corporations through the lens of gender also shines a bright light on the non-European agency that was critical to integrate into corporate activity and operations if they were to establish durable networks and local partners across the world. The non-European slaves, mistresses, wives, families, agents and trading partners of company officials transformed not just the formation and expansion of corporate settlements and the local realities of corporate trade and diplomatic relations. They also challenged metropolitan policies and strategies for the wider development of the corporation, forcing them to adapt to the changing realities on the ground in the Atlantic and Asia. In doing so, corporations diverged from the social and cultural expectations of their domicile nation-state, illustrating, as they did, their jurisdictional evasiveness and political autonomy.

Gender in England and Empire

The early modern world order was a gendered one. From social hierarchy to cultural norms, from economic production to political debate, gender shaped English society. The relationships between men and women and their place within local society were inextricably defined by their gender. In the years 1550 to 1750, this consisted predominantly of the organisation and regulation of the sexes through "a clear subordination of wives to husbands", a principal that "provided the model for all relationships between men and women".[8] Contemporaries were fully conscious of the gendered order of their lives, and institutions of state and society were obsessed with reinforcing this patriarchal principal at the familial, local and national levels. As Daniel Defoe stated in *The Complete Family Instructor* in 1715, fathers had to constantly look to their "duty in the future directing, teaching and governing his family".[9] Vicar Charles Primrose followed this advice to the letter in Oliver Goldsmith's *The*

7   Dura Ghosh. "Gender and Colonialism: Expansion or Marginalization?", *The Historical Journal* 47 (2004): 755.
8   Susan Dwyer Amussen. *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England*. Oxford: Columbia University Press, 1988, 95.
9   Daniel Defoe. *The Complete Family Instructor: in five parts*. 2 volumes. London, 1715–1717, 1, 32.

Vicar of Wakefield, describing his household as "The little republic to which I gave laws".[10] With the right to govern and exercise authority reserved for men, women were expected to subordinate themselves accordingly and assume domestic identities and responsibilities. According to a Grey's Inn lecturer in 1660, women were largely excluded from local office because their "incapacity to learn the law rendered them incapable of exercising discretion".[11]

By the later century, the patriarchal regulation of household and family was woven into the fabric of social authority and cultural practice to such an extent that it became symptomatic of the wider English polity. This period witnessed an explosion in the publication and circulation of manuals and guides to the good government of the household. These rule-books anxiously "elevated the household as the key unit of social control", so that the regulation of sexual relations also became the cornerstone of political stability as well.[12] As Gordon Schochet has shown, the organisation of gender relations within the household into a patriarchal order was one of the most defining currents of political thought in the seventeenth century, a period in which "public" and "private" spheres had yet to emerge as distinctively as they would in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Political theorists such as Sir Robert Filmer advocated the dominance of men over women in an attempt to legitimise the authoritarian aspirations of the Stuart monarchy.[13]

Filmer's *Patriarcha* opened up half a century of political argument over the construct and meaning of gender and the family household, a debate heightened by John Locke's criticism of patriarchal government through the promotion of consensual and contractual gender relations in his *First Treatise*, as well as the constitutional ramifications of the Glorious Revolution of 1688–9.[14] As Laura Gowing has pointed out, the prominence of patriarchal discourse did not always reflect the reality and day-to-day practice of gender.[15] Men may have anxiously justified and projected patriarchal principals,

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10   Oliver Goldsmith. *The Vicar of Wakefield*. Harmondsworth, 1766, reprinted London: Penguin, 1986, 50.

11   Steve Hindle. *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England, 1550–1640*. Basingstoke: 2000, 214.

12   Lena Cowen Orlin. *Private Matters and Public Culture in Post-Reformation England*. London: 1994, 3.

13   Gordon J. Schochet. *The Authoritarian Family and Political Attitudes in 17th Century England*. London: 1988, chapter 1.

14   Rachel Weil. *Political Passions: Gender, the Family and Political Argument in England, 1680–1714*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999, 50.

15   Laura Gowing. *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words and Sex in Early Modern England*. Oxford: 1996, 185–6.

especially in the household, but "Many women resisted ideals of female sub-missiveness".[16] Indeed, gender was certainly "Bound to a historical-social or-der", but it was also "challenged through the practices of everyday life".[17] In the early seventeenth century, historians have even identified a "crisis" of social order partly brought about by a collapse of the patriarchal order. "Was there ever seen less obedience in youth of all sorts, both menkind and womenkind, towards their superiors, parents, masters and governors?" declared one Puri-tan at the time.[18] Women challenged their husbands' support for the Glorious Revolution, and the politics of divorce took on a new prominence in Parlia-ment.[19] By the early eighteenth century, the social and political landscape of England was populated with a plurality of gendered positions and tensions, and contemporaries were more aware than ever of the centrality of gender to the world around them.

As may be obvious from this brief survey, histories of early modern gender have proliferated in recent years. Historians of all fields and backgrounds are now increasingly situating – or re-situating – their research within a gendered context. This has especially been the case for historians of New Imperial and, more recently, Global History, for which "gender is a particularly useful analyt-ical category for transcending national and imperial frameworks".[20] Following the release of the *Oxford History of the British Empire*, a companions series on gender was published which stressed that "the building of empires themselves cannot be understood without employment of a gendered perspective", one that, crucially, did not just constitute "women's history".[21] As Catherine Hall observes, "ideas about masculinity and femininities permeated the practices of empire".[22] At the same time, as David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick formalised the "British Atlantic World" as a new analytical framework for the

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16   Karen Harvey. *The Little Republic: Masculinity and Domestic Authority in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, 3.

17   Kathleen Wilson. *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Cen-tury*. London: 2003, 1.

18   Cited in D. E. Underdown. "The Taming of the Scold: the Enforcement of Patriarchal Au-thority in Early Modern England", in Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson, eds. *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, 116.

19   See Weil, *Political Passions*, chapters 1 and 3.

20   Susan D, Amussen and Allyson M. Poska. "Restoring Miranda: Gender and the Limits of European Patriarchy in the Early Modern Atlantic World", *Journal of Global History* 7 (2012): 343.

21   Philippa Levine. "Introduction", in Levine, ed. *Gender and Empire*. Oxford: Oxford Univer-sity Press, 2004, 1.

22   Catherine Hall. "Gender and Empire", in David Cannadine, ed. *Empire, the Sea and Global History*. London: 2007, 134.

integrated study of Europe, Africa and the Americas in the years 1500 to 1800, Sarah Pearsall impressed the critical need to bridge this with the burgeoning literature on gender, with the caution that "Melding them is a profound challenge to historians in both fields".[23] As England's early modern trading corporations similarly begin to present an exciting new framework for understanding, in this case, Global History, both the urgency and caution of Pearsall's survey of gender in the British Atlantic World must also be echoed. Unlike the latter concept at that time, however, corporations already enjoy a long historical scholarship, and thus the need to bridge these two historiographies within the context of Global History is therefore equally fraught with difficulty.

One of the primary difficulties in a transoceanic analysis of gender and England's overseas corporations is the perceived imbalance of population and, in consequence, of the sexes. As James Horn has argued, unlike the large scale migration of European men and women to the settlements of the Virginia and Massachusetts Bay Companies, the settlements of the Levant, Royal African and East India Companies in comparison hosted much smaller European populations.[24] In the seventeenth century, 300,000 people migrated from England to the Atlantic settlements. In contrast, by 1700 there were perhaps no more than 1,000 English men and women in Asia, including soldiers, covenanted servants, and their families. By 1680, New England alone had a population of approximately 80,000 people. On the other hand, the Madras agency numbered about 500.[25] Indeed, Atlantic corporate territories are seen as spaces of settlement and families, with an approximate balance in the ratio of men to women, perhaps slightly in favour of women in Massachusetts in this period. In contrast, corporate activity in the Mediterranean, Africa and Asia is seen as a predominantly male enterprise, with corporate settlements overwhelmingly masculine in nature.[26] An integrative analysis of the role of gender in both

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23   Sarah M. S. Pearsall. "Gender", in David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick, eds. *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800*. London: 2002, 133.

24   James Horn. "British Diaspora: Emigration from Britain, 1680–1815", in P. J. Marshall, ed. *The Oxford History of the British Empire: the Eighteenth Century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, 28.

25   Estimates for the Atlantic are taken from Peter C. Mancall. "Native Americans and Europeans in English America, 1500–1700", in Nicholas Canny, ed. *The Oxford History of the British Empire: the Origins of Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, table 15.1, 331; for Asia, see Henry Davison Love. *Vestiges of Old Madras, 1640–1800*. 4 volumes. London: 1913, volume 1.

26   For this concern, see Philip J. Stern. "British Asia and British Atlantic: Comparisons and Connections", *William and Mary Quarterly* 63 (2006): 693–712.

Asia and the Atlantic may therefore seem like a specious study in face of this overwhelming imbalance.

However, a number of factors serve to mitigate this somewhat misleading comparison. As Stern has shown, the East India Company did not comprise just its European employees in Asia. It formed, was granted, and acquired substantial jurisdictional government across India and South Asia over hundreds of thousands of Indian and Asian peoples – both men and women.[27] The city and corporation of Madras, for example, included not just the European "White Town" of Fort St. George, where the civil and military establishment was headquartered, but also the adjacent "Black Town" where the majority of the Indian population were resident, as well as a number of surrounding villages, some of which were newly "planted" by the company, consisting of thousands of imported weavers and dyers.[28] The company's own estimates of the size of Madras varied, and the directors were embarrassed when they could not provide a definitive answer when James II enquired in 1686. Following this, their concerted efforts estimated the population in 1692 at 400,000 men and women.[29] Even a quarter of this certainly inflated figure of a single East India Company city places the demographics of corporate settlement across Asia and the Atlantic on a far more similar pattern.

Constitutional and Regulatory Gender Regimes

Domestic corporations, whether municipal, civic, commercial or otherwise, were established for the government of their members and subjects, a remit which led them to order and regulate the corporate body for the public good.[30] As this extended to everything from moral behaviour to cultural practices, the corporation was therefore anxiously concerned with defining and regulating the roles of the sexes. Even as corporations in early modern England undoubtedly empowered men and worked to uphold patriarchal authority, they also legitimised women as citizens and imbued them with legal and constitutional representation that made them more than just wives or daughters.[31] The prominence of the corporation within the English state-formation process from the

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27   Stern, *Company-State*, 31.

28   See Neild, Susan M. "Colonial Urbanism: The Development of Madras City in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries", *Modern Asian Studies* 13 (1979): 217–246.

29   Love, *Vestiges*, 1, 547.

30   See the chapter by Edmond J. Smith.

31   Withington, *Politics of Commonwealth*, 197.

mid-seventeenth century onwards and the gendering of its body of members placed it at the forefront of the discourse and practice of gender in the years 1550 to 1750. Thus for historians, gender presents an immensely valuable gateway into perceiving the constitutional parameters of the corporation. As they exercised a variety of constitutional tools to proscribe and regulate the gender roles of their members, including the use of legal and religious institutions and authority, overseas corporations were also forced to redefine and adapt to the more every day, porous and contested reality of gender in corporate spaces. They reacted to this by seeking expanded powers from new Crown charters and non-European privileges and concessions.

Indeed, if the social order of gender became highly contested in England, enforcing traditional gender roles and relations in overseas corporations was even more difficult. Trading companies had to engage with a broad range of foreign constituencies, over or even across a vast array of global regions. This meant, most principally, operating within societies and cultures with different gender orders and values to those of their own domicile nations.[32] Moreover, members of trading corporations had to adapt and integrate themselves within these if they hoped to achieve commercial and political success.[33] Unlike later large-scale colonial settler societies of the Atlantic, a majority of English overseas corporations ingratiated themselves into larger and more centralised polities, such as the Levant Company in the Ottoman Empire or the East India Company in Mughal India. The need to impose and maintain a homogenous gender order upon a corporate community entrenched within dozens of drastically distinct foreign states and cultures, therefore caused more emphasis and rigidity on regulatory regimes of gender in corporate spaces – especially by metropolitan bodies – such as on-board ships, at trading factories and in settlements.

The constitutional nature of England's overseas corporations becomes most visibly perceptible through their attempts to regulate the relationship between the sexes. In the later seventeenth century, the East India Company launched a reformation of the social order and behaviour of its factories and settlements, from St Helena in the Atlantic to Madras in India. The Company's directors believed that affairs had become increasingly disorderly due to their servants' "absence from prayers, adultery, fornication" and other such "debauched"

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32   For the sexual division of labour amongst Native American cultures, see K. M. Brown. *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial America*. North Carolina: 1996.

33   See the introduction in this volume, also Alison Games. *Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560–1660*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, 83.

behaviour.[34] In India, Streynsham Master toured for thousands of miles around the Company's factories and settlements between 1678–81, issuing at each his "Ten Commandments" concerning, amongst other things, marriage and sexuality.[35] At the same time, in 1681, the court of directors in London instructed their servants on St Helena to avoid "Fornication", whilst the island's governor published a table of punishments following "very scandalous Reports of loose Women goeing on board our Ships".[36] Corporate authorities believed that any deviation from polite and orderly gender roles and behaviour may have undermined its commercial operations and the stability of its government overseas. In the Levant Company, factors were forbidden altogether from bringing out female companions, whether wives, daughters or otherwise. According to James Mather, "the general expectation was for the Levant merchant to sustain bachelorhood until he had made his fortune, then marry upon his return".[37] The general absence of women in Levant Company factories was therefore seen as a successful gendered policy, allowing young men to prepare themselves for marriage without the distraction of female companionship. Only the most senior officials were allowed to bring wives out with them to the Levant, and when they did, their roles were suitably domestic, no matter the context. While her husband conducted matters of state with Ottoman officials, the wife of Sir Thomas Bendish entertained guests at the English palace in Galata with her "obliging carriage".[38] In codifying social behaviour at Madras, exercising judicial punishment on St Helena, and banning European women from Levant factories, overseas trading companies exercised their constitutional powers to erect a gender regime based upon the patriarchal organisation of the sexes, on a transoceanic scale.

Servants of England's overseas corporations were of course acutely aware of the hemispheric and even regional differences within which they operated. "These people", the East India Company's Agent of Madras observed of the inhabitants of the Kingdom of Golconda in 1650, "are not lyke ye naked, unlearnt Americans, but a most subtle and pollitique nation".[39] Conscious of the distinctiveness of the cultural and political landscapes of Asia and the Atlantic,

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34   Miles Ogborn. *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company*. London: 2007, 87.

35   Stern, *Company-State*, 108.

36   Ibid., 109.

37   James Mather. *Pashas: Traders and Travellers in the Islamic World*. Oxford: 2009, 80.

38   Mather, *Pashas*, 81.

39   Cited in Beckles Willson. *Ledger and Sword: The Honourable Company of Merchants of England Trading to the East Indies, 1559–1874*. London: 1903, 254.

England's overseas trading corporations and their members nonetheless exchanged, circulated and disseminated the discourse, experience and traditions of both regions to provide a global framework of corporate integration. For example, the East India Company's new "plantation" of St Helena purchased male and female slaves from the Royal African Company in West Africa. The new settlement was modelled on that of Barbados, and in 1683 "a system of the laws and customs of Barbadoes" was adopted, which included the regulation of male and female slaves.[40] When the company established factories on the West Coast of Sumatra from 1685 onwards, they received shipments of these Barbadian regulated St. Helena slaves, and the Atlantic "system" was adopted at Bengkulu.[41]

The transoceanic integration of ideas, systems and practices meant that the regulatory regimes of corporations were shared across the globe. Servants of Atlantic and Asian corporations travelled between one another, bringing with them their experiences and expertise, in what Alison Games has termed a "Web of Empire". Thomas Dale, for instance, served as governor of the Virginia Company's settlement of Jamestown in 1611, and in 1618 took employment as a soldier with the East India Company in 1620 to defend against Dutch aggression.[42] In fact, when Dale arrived there, he met Patrick Copland, a company chaplain. As Copland informed and educated Dale about Asia, he returned the favour by recounting his stories of Virginia, which subsequently inspired Copland to travel there himself and raise money for a new school in the Atlantic settlement.[43] The English overseas corporate world was criss-crossed by such transoceanic actors, circulating and disseminating the models, practices and experiences of one corporate theatre to another. Both Sir Thomas Roe and later Sir William Hedges had served the Levant Company in the Ottoman Empire, only to travel to India in the service of the East India Company later in their careers. When he arrived at the Nawab of Bengal's court in Dacca in 1682, Hedges used his Levant expertise in his negotiation to reduce custom dues on Company goods. When Hedges conducted these in Turkish and Arabic, the Nawab was "pleased and admired to hear [their language] from a Frenge (as they call us)".[44]

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40   Court of Directors to St Helena, London, 1 August 1683, in Hudson Ralph Janisch. *Extracts from the St. Helena Records*. St. Helena: 1885, 23.

41   See Frenise A. Logan. "The British East India Company and African Slavery in Benkulen, Sumatra, 1687–1792", *Journal of Negro History* 41 (1956): 339–348.

42   Games, *Web of Empire*, 3.

43   Games, *Web of Empire*, 3–6.

44   Henry Yule, ed. *The Diary of William Hedges during his Agency in Bengal*. 3 volumes. London: 1887–1889, 1, 44.

As they traversed the early modern world, corporate actors transplanted regulatory gender regimes from one region to another. This was particularly evident in the formulation and projection of gendered ideas of power when interacting with foreign states and host societies.[45] Proprietors and colonists of the Virginia Company drew on patriarchal thought to inform and legitimise regimes of authority there. Bloody reprisals against Native Americans following the Virginia Massacre of 1622 was justified with the statement that "Children are pleased with toys and awed with rods".[46] Members of the Massachusetts Bay Company recorded how the Native American societies they dealt with defined their structures and relationships of power through a gendered hierarchy. The language of kinship was paternal, chiefs being defined as "fathers", and those subject to their authority were "children" and "women".[47] But, as Malcolm Gaskill has shown, native articulations of power as gendered was often an imposition of English understandings of their own gender order. Thus according to the Virginia Company clergyman Alexander Whittaker, when disparaging his Native American counterparts in 1612, they were "much like to the counterfeit women in England who faine themselves bewitched, or possessed of some evil spirit".[48] For early seventeenth century corporations in the Atlantic, gender shaped not just the contours of political authority, but the perception and understanding of foreign cultures and polities.

The constitutional rights acquired and exercised by corporations through Crown charters similarly placed gender at the centre of governmentality and the projection of state power in the Atlantic and Asia. Kathleen Wilson has emphasised that the formation of corporate government at settlements such as St. Helena in the Atlantic and the West Coast of Sumatra in Asia "focused on the organization of social life … among colonizers and colonized alike". For Wilson, the challenges of governance, regulation and demographic control "permeated" corporate regimes at these places, "where the imperatives of 'trade', security, and social stability often violently contended".[49] The need to create a stable gender regime in an effort to stimulate government efficiency and commercial growth was the paramount concern of Deputy-Governor

45   Amussen and Poska, "Restoring Miranda", 344–5.

46   Cited in Bernard Sheehan. *Savagism and Civility: Indians and Englishmen in Colonial Virginia*. Cambridge: 1980, 170.

47   Jenny Hale Pulsipher. *Subjects Unto the Same King: Indians, English, and the Contest for Authority in Colonial New England*. Philadelphia: 2007, 12–15.

48   Cited in Malcolm Gaskill. *Between Two Worlds: How the English became Americans*. Oxford: 2014, 30.

49   Kathleen Wilson. "Rethinking the Colonial State: Family, Gender, and Governmentality in Eighteenth-Century British Frontiers", *American Historical Review* 116 (2011): 1296.

Joseph Collet at Bencoolen. This ardent Baptist and City merchant sought to govern the West Coast of Sumatra as he did his own expansive family: as *paterfamilias*. In 1714 Collet arranged for his four daughters to be brought up with "Virtue and a good education". From Asia, he dictated to his daughter Elizabeth in London how best to correspond with potential suitors, in a way that "ought to avoid both the distance of a Mistress and the fondness of a Lover". The women of his family, he declared, must dedicate themselves to the study of religion and the "Domestick Life".[50] In 1718, he reminded his eldest daughter that "Whenever you marry, remember that is the Husband's part to be head and Protector", encapsulating the patriarchal order of gender in its entirety, adding "and the Glory of the Wife to be his delight".[51] His son, who had travelled with him to Asia in the service of the East India Company, was no less regulated. He was ordered to improve himself "in Writing and Accounts", and was warned to avoid alcohol and women, the latter being "the fatall rock on which so many Youths miscarry".[52]

Joseph Collet conducted his deputy-governorship almost entirely in reference to gendered thought and practice. In the years 1712 to 1716, he held a frequent correspondence with his old Clapham minister, Moses Lowman. The minister was a prolific publisher of literature on the rights of magistrates and princes to regulate social relationships and exercise the "Power of directing the Actions of the Community" as a means of strengthening the "Soul of the Body Politick".[53] Typically, this centred on ordering the sexes into a patriarchal hierarchy. Collet preached from these, and other influential patriarchal tracts such as those by John Tilloston and John Wilkins, to the inhabitants of Fort Marlborough at Bencoolen every Sunday. The covenanted servants under his rule accepted subordinate male roles, such as those of children. "Gov'r Collet useth me like a Son", declared his secretary, William Palmer.[54] Collet addressed the second most senior official on the West Coast, Henry White, chief of Bantal, "in the Stile and with the freedom of a Father … which he returns with the duty and affection of a Son".[55] Unmarried European women meanwhile were "adopted" by Collet as the *paterfamilias* of the government and community, and he arranged their marriage to the most promising of his subordinates.[56]

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50   BL, APAC, MSS Eur D1153/2, Joseph Collet to Elizabeth Collet, York Fort, 26 August 1714.
51   BL, APAC, MSS Eur D1153/3, Joseph Collet to Elizabeth Collet, Fort St George, 28 August 1718.
52   BL, APAC, MSS Eur D1153/2, Joseph Collet to John Collet, York Fort, 8 June 1714.
53   Moses Lowman. *A Sermon Preach'd to the Societies for Reformation of Manners*. London, 1720, 6.
54   Lowman, *Sermon*, 6.
55   BL, APAC, MSS Eur D1153/2, Joseph Collet to Elizabeth Collet, York Fort, 5 May 1714.
56   BL, APAC, MSS Eur D1153/2, Joseph Collet to John Bedwell, York Fort, 23 October 1712.

To his brother at home, Collet summarised the rigid gender order that he had erected on the West Coast of Sumatra in 1714: "And as for the English we make up one great Family of which I am the head and common Father, to whom all pay the Reverence, Respect and Obedience of Children".[57]

The Malay subjects of the Company, both within the town of Bencoolen and up and down the West Coast at various forts and outposts, were similarly brought under Collet's patriarchal rule. According to Wilson, he "vigorously campaigned to reform and regulate the sexual and gender … practices of local people".[58] Collet claimed that Malay men were "addicted to Women", and so he set about regulating social and marital practices, intervening in disputes and punishing instances of adultery, prostitution and fornication.[59] But to those not directly subject to Collet's authority, and especially to those states that the East India Company relied upon for political and commercial privileges, Collet had to adapt his gendered interactions and subvert the political dominance demanded by his patriarchal authority. Thus in 1714 the neighbouring Raja Dupaty Kalippa wrote to "humbly beg of my Brother the Govr. Of Bencoolen", an egalitarian dynamic which was evidently an established practice by Malay rulers on the West Coast, especially in regards to European Companies whom they treated not as superiors or masters, but as allies, partners, and sometimes even subordinates.[60] Whether as a subordinate or as an equal, then, corporate regimes shaped social relationships and political governance through a gendered perception of the world and its inhabitants, whatever their race or culture. Most crucially, when Collet left Sumatra in 1716, he transplanted his patriarchal government to India as Governor of Madras, from where he also discussed and encouraged a "reformation of manners" at the Levant Company factory at Smyrna, across the other side of the world.[61]

As in England, however, the regulatory gender regimes constructed by corporations from the Atlantic to Asia, were also highly contested, but perhaps even more so. As Betty Joseph has argued, the expansion of commerce in this period, largely instigated by corporations, "enlarged existing social networks" so that "all markers of identity and subjectivity (whether gender, nationality,

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57   BL, APAC, MSS Eur D1153/1, Joseph Collet to Samuel Collet, York Fort, 1 March 1714.

58   Wilson, "Rethinking the Colonial State", 1302.

59   Wilson, "Rethinking the Colonial State", 1302.

60   See Barbara Andaya Watson. *To Live as Brothers: Southeast Sumatra in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1993.

61   Joseph Collet to Daniel Dolins, Madras, 28 August 1718, in H. H. Dodwell, ed. *The Private Letter Books of Joseph Collet*. London: 1933, 196.

or race), previously held to be 'natural,' were rendered ambivalent and unsta-
ble".[62] In fact, the time and resources dedicated to enforcing and upholding
patriarchal regimes of authority by corporate actors was largely a response to
its highly contested nature. As Christian Laidlaw has shown, many corporate
settlements were host to populations of European women who had either re-
jected or been ejected from patriarchal gender regimes. One deputy-governor
of the East India Company in 1675 complained to London that "some of these
women are grown scandalous to our nation, religion and Government inter-
est". Independent and, more importantly to corporate authorities, unregulated
women in settlements undermined the entire social and political order, and
could rarely be tolerated. In this case, their persistent "scandalous" behaviour
resulted in the threat of imprisonment where they would be restricted to
"bread and water".[63] If women failed to conform to their obedient roles, men
could also fail to live up to the paternal patriarchy demanded of masculine
authority. In Levant Company factories, there were complaints of young fac-
tors engaging in "Gaming, Drinking, Whoreing".[64] Similarly, the Council and
quarter sessions records of St. Helena betray a gender regime that had, in many
respects, completely broken down by the turn of the eighteenth century, with
instances of, amongst other things, polygamy, prostitution, sodomy, incest and
even child rape.[65] Clearly, overseas corporations sought to uphold a transoce-
anic gender regime, but it was one that was highly contested and, in some re-
gions, not altogether successful.

Sexuality, Marriage and Strategies of Integration

A transoceanic gender regime of regulation and governance was therefore
the product of England's early modern overseas corporations integrating a
global framework of movement, thought and expertise. From the Levant to
Virginia, from Massachusetts to Sumatra, the patriarchal order of gender was
circulated and transplanted from one global region to another. Yet if the gov-
ernment of corporate actors such as Joseph Collet on the West Coast of Suma-
tra represented the formalisation of this process, they were also reflective of

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62   Betty Joseph. *Reading the East India Company, 1720–1840: Colonial Currencies of Gender*.
      London: 2004, 37.
63   Christian Laidlaw. *The British in the Levant: Trade and Perceptions of the Ottoman Empire
      in the Eighteenth Century*. London: 2010, 173.
64   Mather, *Pashas*, 84.
65   Wilson, "Rethinking the Colonial State", 1310.

the subordinate and responsive nature of corporate regimes, settlements and societies in relation to non-European cultural agency, social forces and even political supremacy. The fiscal-military weakness of most English overseas corporations relative to their host societies in the years 1550 to 1750 forced them to adapt and negotiate new strategies for securing their ends, whether the acquisition of trade goods or the security of colonial enclaves. This meant seeking non-European sources of constitutional and commercial authority distinct from those delegated by the English Crown. And, like the latter, in exchange for these, corporations were expected to subordinate themselves to non-European systems and societies. When corporations attempted to operate beyond this system, for example by exercising force to achieve political or commercial advantages, it usually ended in failure or, more dramatically, the collapse of the corporation altogether.[66]

Considering the significant role played by gender in the ordering and regulation of overseas corporate spaces and communities, it is little surprise that the sexes bridged the gap between the political and commercial aims of English corporations and their accommodation with, and adaptation to, non-European cultural and social orders in an effort to achieve these aims. Sexual relations and more formal arrangements of "marriage" were the mechanics of these cross-cultural ties and channels of interaction. Of course illicit liaisons, temporary unions and illegitimate offspring permeated company settlements. Sexual encounters ranged from "long-term cohabitation to short-term sexual alliances as well as polygamous arrangements", many of which "emerged as part of the master-servant contract", as Durba Ghosh reminds us, "between many men and their housekeepers, maidservants, and slaves".[67] Exploitative sexual encounters and rape of non-European women were a common feature, especially owing to the significant slave populations of corporate settlements. These were not just confined to the Atlantic, either. On the West Coast of Sumatra, East India Company settlements developed sizeable slave villages. One hundred miles south of Joseph Collet at Bencoolen, the English resident of the pepper trade post at Silebar lived publically and openly with a company slave.

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66   For the collapse of the Virginia Company following the 1622 "Massacre", see Wesley Frank Craven. *Dissolution of the Virginia Company: the Failure of a Colonial Experiment.* Oxford: 1932; for the instability and chaos unleashed by the East India Company's wars on the West Coast of Sumatra, see David Veevers. " 'The Company as their Lords and the Deputy as a Great Rajah': Imperial Expansion and the English East India Company on the West Coast of Sumatra, 1685–1730", *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 41 (2013): 687–709.

67   Durba Ghosh. *Sex and the Family in Colonial India: the Making of Empire.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006, 107–108.

When he visited the Deputy-Governor at Fort Marlborough to the north, as he did in 1714, he brought a new-born boy with him, "born last month of one of our Slaves … begot by himself".[68] But such coercive sexual encounters were not confined to slaves alone. In Japan, English factors wrote about their sexual relationships with disturbing and violent language. Furthermore, not only did they share and circulate their Japanese mistresses, but they were often commodified and sold off.[69]

However, in keeping with more formal corporate gender regimes, there was an emphasis on stable social relations and the integration of non-European families into the hierarchy of corporate community and life. Interracial family-formation was rarely the same as European family-formation, marriages often being "temporary" or consisting more of a formal household arrangement through social contract. Nonetheless, these cultural marriage constructs were widely acknowledged as socially acceptable and even officially sanctioned by corporate authorities. As Linda Colley has argued, company officials upheld the institution of marriage as they believed that, for women, "marriage offered protection, children and a guard on their virtue". But at the same time "it signalled and confirmed women's dependent status, and accordingly reinforced and made clear the differentiation between male and female roles".[70] Indeed, non-Europeans were incorporated into England's overseas corporations through sexual and marital unions, as long as these also conformed to the regulated gender regimes that so anxiously sought to uphold patriarchal authority. If they did not, whether due to adultery or prostitution, then the full force of corporate governance and law would be brought to bear on both men and women. In the Massachusetts Bay Company colony, English courts developed complex rules and regulations in regards to the marriage of Christianised Native Americans with English colonists and "freemen", in which adultery was vehemently prosecuted and punitively punished with expulsion from the colony.[71] In this respect, English corporations could be as discerning of gender as they were of race or culture.

The integration of non-European women and mixed-race families into corporate communities and hierarchies was sanctioned and encouraged on a number of levels. First, and most powerfully, non-European women provided

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68   BL, APAC, MSS Eur D1153/2, Joseph Collet to Henry White, York Fort, 13 March 1714.

69   Games, *Web of Empire*, 105.

70   Linda Colley. "Gendering the Globe: The Political and Imperial Thought of Philip Francis", *Past and Present* 209 (2010): 144.

71   See Ann Marie Plane. *Colonial Intimacies: Indian Marriage in Early New England*. New York: 2000.

emotional companionship and sexual gratification for company officials. Dudley North of the Levant Company maintained a household for a local Greek woman on the shores of the Hellespont with "the view that a little recreational sex helped him concentrate on his business".[72] Further East, the English consul of Aleppo hoped that the Levant factor John Lethieullier would settle down with an Englishwoman on his return home, rather than his own preference for "Miss Modesty of Scanderoon, or any of your Scio Madams".[73] Similarly, James Phipps, captain-general of the Royal African Company on the Gold Coast, complained that it was "very hard for a Gentleman to live abroad … and there to spend his youthful years … in a continual view of a threatening death".[74] Thus, despite the gentrified pretensions of his father in London, Phipps married a local mulatto woman, with whom he had four daughters and a son, and lived happily together as a family at Cape Coast until his death.[75] Such families were the norm in corporate settlements. Over half of marriages at Madras in 1700 were between European men and non-European women.[76] When official figures did become available in the later eighteenth century for births, more than half of baptisms at Calcutta were for "natural children", meaning those that were either illegitimate or of mixed-race.[77]

Second, non-European women were viewed as valuable cultural and commercial brokers, imbedding corporate commerce and settlements more durably into the local economy and landscape. At the East India Company factory in Hirado, marrying a Japanese woman was considered fundamental to navigating the complex cultural rituals and norms which determined commercial success. Similarly at Nagasaki, where the Japanese wives of company factors tended to be Christian, valuable political channels to the ruling Christian elite were opened up – at least before the religious persecution of 1616 onwards.[78] The Virginia Company regularly sent young boys to live in Indian communities as a way to learn the language and customs, although this often led to a fuller cultural conversion than the Virginia Council had sought. As an alternative,

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72   Laidlaw, *British in the Levant*, 167.

73   Mather, *Pashas*, 83.

74   Cited in David Henige. " 'Companies Are Always Ungrateful': James Phipps of Cape Coast, a Victim of the African Trade", *African Economic History* 9 (1980): 33.

75   Henige, "Companies", 38.

76   David Veevers. "The Contested State: Political Authority and the Decentred Foundations of the Early Modern Colonial State in Asia", in William A. Pettigrew and Mahesh Gopalan, eds. *The East India Company, 1600–1857: Essays on Anglo-Indian Connection*. Abingdon: 2017, 187.

77   Ghosh, *Sex and the Family*, 39–40.

78   Games, *Web of Empire*, 105.

the cultural assimilation of Native American women was sought through marriage to Englishmen, creating kinship alliances with Indian elites without the threat of compromising the loyalty of company-men. Of course the most well-known instance of this is the marriage of John Rolfe to Pocahontas, the daughter of Powhatan, chief of the Tsenacommacah Indians of the Tidewater region of Virginia. The possible advantages for the Virginia Company through this marriage alliance were so tantalising that another mission was sent from Jamestown to the chief in the hope of persuading him to marry another daughter to the governor, Thomas Dale.[79] According to Alison Games, while this did not go ahead, the Spanish Ambassador to London informed Philip III in 1612 that at least fifty other Englishmen had married Native American women.[80] As well as commercial advantages, such marriages had considerable political implications, too, with Rolfe's marriage to Pocahontas bringing an end to the Virginia Company's war with her father in 1614.[81]

Third, the colonising dynamic which underpinned many corporations encouraged demographic expansion to create self-sustaining colonial communities, and even new sources of revenue-raising. This was certainly the case for the East India Company, who conceived of their settlements as both bases for securing and expanding their trade, but also increasingly by the eighteenth century as "colonies" and "plantations" which provided markets, revenues and even self-sustaining garrisons. "As in other European overseas plantations", demonstrates Phil Stern, the company "understood attracting women to these settlements as a key to sustaining a solid colonial population".[82] Following the failure of the company at home to attract female British migrants to its settlements in Asia, it encouraged its servants on the spot to cultivate local marriages and establish interracial families for the growth of its settlements, even providing European soldiers with a financial incentive to marry non-European women.[83] As the directors in London declared to the governor of Madras in 1687: "The marriage of our Soldiers to the native women of Fort St George is a matter of such consequences to posterity".[84]

While each of these factors served or catered to the interests and needs of English corporations, non-European constituencies facilitated and often

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79   Games, *Web of Empire*, 131.
80   Games, *Web of Empire*, 132.
81   See Helen C. Rountree. *Pocahontas, Powhatan, Opechancanough: Three Indian Lives Changed by Jamestown.* London: 2005, especially chapter 7.
82   Stern, *Company-State*, 35–7.
83   Ibid., 38.
84   BL, IOR/E/3/91, Court of Directors to Madras, London, 8 April 1687.

instigated these cross-cultural unions for their own ends. To return to that ardent patriarch Joseph Collet, when he first arrived on the West Coast of Sumatra in 1712, no less than three Malay rajas sent him their wives or daughters as gifts "to attend me", as he delicately put it to his brother in England.[85] Collet rejected these sexual liaisons, but the Sumatran elite succeeded in tying themselves to other senior Company servants on such a level, forging lucrative commercial and political alliances. Similarly, while the Virginia Company expected to establish a straightforward trade with the Powhatans which involved the provision of corn and pelts in exchange for metal goods and textiles, they discovered that Indian exchange culture also demanded the formation of alliances, gift giving and even consolidation of negotiations through marriage. The expectations of the Virginia Council in London had to adapt in the face of advice from their servants on the ground not to offend the Indians.[86] Corporations quickly realised that in operating in non-European regions, they would have to service the wide variety of needs foreign rulers and their elites demanded in exchange for commercial and political cooperation, from Western gifts and trinkets to military intelligence and expertise. Unsurprisingly, corporations were also called upon to supply European women. In 1614 the Sultan of Aceh requested an English wife in exchange for privileges in the pepper trade for the East India Company. The court quickly procured a young woman, whose father offered to accompany her to Sumatra, but domestic pressures, including clergy anxiety for the woman's spiritual purity, eventually led to the project's demise. However, as noted by Games, the importance placed on this potential union by the court betrays the urgency corporations placed on satisfying non-European interests and needs.[87]

The adaption and incorporation of non-European practices and expectations gradually widened the stakeholder constituencies of overseas trading corporations, serving the needs of Native American chiefs and Mughal princes as much as they did directors and shareholders in London. In fact, as James Mather has shown, when European men entered into marriages with local women, they became subject on a private level to non-European constitutions, law, cultural customs and social expectations that often caused grave concern in metropolitan bodies for the loyalty of their servants. When the Levant Company factor Samuel Pentlow married a Greek resident of Smyrna, it was remarked that "whosoever marries a Woman that was a Subject of the Grand Seignior, did by virtue of such

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85   David Veevers. "Inhabitants of the Universe: Global Families, Kinship Networks and the Formation of the Early Modern Colonial State in Asia", *Journal of Global History* 10 (2015): 106.

86   Games, *Web of Empire*, 135.

87   Games, *Web of Empire*, 103.

a Match make himself a Subject to the Grand Seignior also".[88] And indeed when
Pentlow died, by law his property passed to the Ottoman Sultan, not the Levant
Company. Thus even when metropolitan or senior authorities within corpora-
tions sought to manipulate or even cease some of these sexual or marital strat-
egies altogether, their utility to non-Europeans rarely made such changes pos-
sible. Interracial unions were one way in which English corporations, through
their transoceanic expansion in the seventeenth century, ultimately conceded
agency over their development and expansion to non-European constituencies.
The Japanese daimyo Matsura Takanobu was well aware of the centrality sex-
ual relations played in his interactions with the East India Company factory in
his province. When the Clove arrived in his port, he went aboard to greet the
English factors with four women, clothed in silk garments, "well faced, handed,
and footed ... very curteous in behaviour, not ignorant of the respect to be given
unto persons according to their fashion".[89] The non-European strategy of tying
company servants into the local social, political and commercial order, one that
placed them within a subordinate position to local rulers, was highly successful.
All of the English factors at Hirado had Japanese mistresses or wives, whom they
lavished with expensive gifts, independent households and their own retinues
of servants and slaves.[90] As Games notes, "the terms of relations [between En-
glish men and Japanese women] were shaped and dictated by the Japanese".[91]
England's overseas corporations continued to act as vehicles for the interests of
their domestic audiences and stakeholders, but by the turn of the eighteenth
century these had to contend just as much with non-European stakeholders and
the interests of global audiences if they hoped to survive and flourish.

Conclusion

This chapter has hopefully shown the utility in observing the corporation
through the lens of gender in the early modern period. In doing so, we're able
to understand the distinct characteristics and dynamics of England's overseas
corporations that made them uniquely suitable and adaptable to the global

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88   Cited in Mather, *Pashas*, 82.
89   Cited in Games, *Web of Empire*, 104.
90   Derek Massarella. *A World Elsewhere: Europe's Encounter with Japan in the Sixteenth and
      Seventeenth Centuries*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990. See also Anthony Far-
      rington, ed. *The English Factory in Japan, 1613–1623*. 2 volumes. London: The British Li-
      brary, 1991.
91   Games, *Web of Empire*, 107.

stage. It does not present a picture of the projection or expansion of nation-alist, monopolistic ambitions through the vehicle of the company, as has been the traditional analytical perspective of historians when pondering the Royal African or East India Companies, for instance. Rather, it has shown the process through which corporations sought to accommodate themselves with non-European rulers and states in an effort to create durable and successful relation-ships around the world. By the eighteenth century, the strategies, systems and models companies adapted to achieve this had established a global framework that was distinctly corporate, and very much integrative. When corporations came and went relatively quickly, such as the Virginia Company, it is because they were unable to adapt to this process or failed to sufficiently subordinate themselves or integrate, or negotiate with, internal and external constituencies. Yet when corporations succeeded in these respects, and when they were able to remain autonomous and jurisdictionally evasive, the scope of their operations could prove remarkable. The Muscovy, Hudson Bay, Levant, Royal African and East India Companies lasted beyond this period, to certain degrees, largely be-cause their distinctive global sociology succeeded in integrating their European and non-European interests, stakeholders and communities into a functioning framework, whether at the local, regional or global level.

Understanding the gendered nature of the corporation brings these dynam-ics into sharp relief. The need to regulate patriarchal hierarchies across spatial-ly and temporally diverse regions demanded the expansion of constitutional powers to enforce these on ships, at settlements and in garrisons across the world. As actors and agents circulated between different corporate regions, from Virginia in the Atlantic to Sumatra in Asia, they transplanted these reg-ulatory regimes and adapted them into forms of governance over both Euro-peans and non-Europeans. Perhaps more importantly, however, the marriage of company officials to non-European women demonstrated the way in which corporations regularly subordinated themselves to local rulers, elites and mer-chant communities in an effort to entrench and expand their own commercial networks. This was especially evident in India, where newly formed corporate settlements relied on the credit and capital provided by cross-cultural kinship networks. Marriage to local women frequently placed non-European women and their male relations in a position of power over Europeans and corporate settlements, as in the Levant when marrying local women placed European men and their property under Ottoman jurisdiction, or in Virginia when mar-riage into local tribes demanded conformity to Native American traditions and norms. The establishment of sexual and marital relations between European men and non-European women may have often been a corporate strategy to realise commercial or political ends, but as such unions became durable and

entrenched, creating interracial settlements, cross-cultural trading systems and interdependent diplomatic and political arrangements, the importance of non-European stakeholders within the corporation increased, to the extent that satisfying such interests often took precedence over the demands and orders of metropolitan directors, shareholders and interests. Ultimately, the formation and development of England's overseas corporations in the years 1550 to 1750 was neither a national nor a European phenomenon, but a distinctly global one.

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Building

Emily Mann

Far beneath the busy Reading Rooms of the British Library in London, where manuscript and printed sources do the rounds, assorted artefacts hang side by side and one above the other in the quiet gloom of high-security vaults. Here lies a material and visual record that both complements and competes with the documentary archive. Among the artworks in the library's India Office Records, the repository of the archives of the English East India Company (1600–1858), is a series of six oil paintings that were commissioned in 1730 for display in the newly remodelled East India House on Leadenhall Street—a well-inhabited "great Thorough-fare" and "Place of a great Trade," according to John Strype's survey of the globalising City in 1720.[1] The East India Company's updated and enlarged headquarters, located a few minutes from the Royal Exchange to the west and the Royal African Company's offices to the east, faced the outside world with a proudly Palladian-style street frontage. The symmetrical and balanced composition of classical giant pilasters in the Doric order (associated with serious purpose and sobriety), between a rusticated base and rooftop balustrade, was designed by the merchant turned architect Theodore Jacobsen to make a statement of authority and autonomy, suggesting fiscal order as well as fashionability to all who visited or passed by—or saw the print.[2] Inside, the six large canvases had pride of place on the walls of the Court Room, and it was in this room that the company directors, according to the minutes of their meeting on 1 November 1732, "Ordered that the Secretary do pay Mr. George Lambert £94.

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1 John Strype, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster* (London: Printed for A. Churchill et al, 1720), I, iv, 82.

2 The company decided to adopt the "ground plat and front presented by Theodore Jacobsen" in 1726 and, on the building's completion in 1729, thanked him with a piece of plate worth 200 guineas. The surveyor was John James, surveyor to the fabric of St Paul's and clerk of works at Greenwich, among other eminent positions. See Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600–1840*, 3rd edn (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 533–35. It's interesting to consider that the design was apparently criticised for not being sufficiently grand to reflect the activities inside.

10s for Six Pictures of the Forts &ca [...] at fifteen Guineas per Picture as per agreement."[3] The same year, the engraver and antiquary George Vertue remarked in his notebook on the "six pictures of the principal Forts & settlements belonging to the East India Company having lately been set up in their house in Leadenhall Street."[4]

Shifting in a single sentence from overseas settlements to one of the nation's chief commercial streets, Vertue's jotting emphasises the spatial reach of the corporation's transnational constitution and operations—in particular its building projects—and provides an insight into their public nature and noteworthiness. His use of the word "belonging" points to how buildings manifested and served to secure the company's claims of sovereignty over space in distant lands; and while fortifications formed borders of sorts as and when required (varying with conditions and over time, even opening and closing from day to night), the company's interests, clearly delineated by the series of artworks, stretched beyond multiple borders and across jurisdictions to form a transoceanic framework. The "Forts &ca" depicted in the paintings lay dispersed across more than 7,000 miles, from the island of St Helena in the South Atlantic to Calcutta (now Kolkata) in Bengal; the four other canvases feature the Cape of Good Hope in southern Africa (in fact under Dutch control, but the gateway for the English company's monopoly of trade over all areas east of this point), Bombay (Mumbai) and Tellicherry (Thalassery) on India's western coast, and Madras (Chennai) to the east. At the centre of each view is the fortified coastal settlement, painted by Lambert, while the marine specialist Samuel Scott filled the watery foregrounds with company ships. In their content and original context in East India House, through which they linked London with both the Atlantic and Asian worlds—an illustration of the corporation's capacity to integrate local and global—the paintings do more than demonstrate, as Geoff Quilley has observed, the company directors' awareness of the value of the visual in corporate conduct and publicity; more specifically, they draw attention to the powerful significance of building for an early modern trading company and

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3   British Library IOR/B/62. Brian Allen sets out what is known about the commission and discusses the paintings in "The East India Company's Settlement Pictures: George Lambert and Samuel Scott," in *Under the Indian Sun: British Landscape Artists*, ed. Pauline Rohatji and Pheroza Godrej (Bombay: Marg, 1995), 1–16; and "From Plassey to Seringapatam: India and British history painting," in *The Raj: India and the British 1600–1947*, ed. C. J. Bayly (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1990), 26–37.

4   George Vertue, "Notebooks," *Walpole Society* 22 (1933–34), 37.

(now as then) invite consideration, comparison and connection of its global sites and sights.[5]

With these canvases suspended like thought bubbles just above the directors' heads as they deliberated business matters in the purpose-built Court Room, the company men evidently had building(s) on their minds. For the English East India Company, as for its European competitors and for other British-based companies with their own trading and historical trajectories, the construction of settlements as well as ships had become fundamental for the creation and control of corporate profit and identity on both a national and an international level. In the diverse built environments that the companies inhabited, established and shaped, in many cases through negotiation with and use of local peoples and resources, European and non-European peoples came into contact and conflict. Buildings were more than mere background to events: they were instrumental in the processes of encounter and exchange. Investigation of corporate initiatives and investment in building—and, more generally, the construction and experience of corporate spaces—is therefore a strong line of enquiry when seeking to identify and understand the global agency of early modern trading companies, and their multilevel, multidirectional activities and relationships.

Corporations and Construction in a Global Perspective

Despite interest in the history of corporations such as the English East India Company and its Dutch counterpart, little attention has been focused on the role of these multinationals in building overseas settlements. However, the direction of scholarship on commerce and culture more generally in the early modern world both confirms the potential and provides foundations for further enquiry into corporations as global protagonists through the theme of building. The study of early modern trade has been transformed in recent years through the combined effect of spatial, global and material turns.[6] The

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5   Geoff Quilley, "Signs of Commerce: The East India Company and the Patronage of Eighteenth-Century British Art," in *The Worlds of the East India Company*, ed. H. V. Bowen, Margarette Lincoln and Nigel Rigby (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2002; repr. 2006), 183–99 (184).

6   See Anne Gerritsen, "From Long-Distance Trade to the Global Lives of Things: Writing the History of Early Modern Trade and Material Culture," *Journal of Early Modern History* 20 (2016): 1–19; and Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, eds, *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 1–28.

concepts of mobility and connectivity have helped to dismantle both national and European frameworks, or at least bypass and blur them, producing studies focused on the movement and relationships of people or on the circulation and exchange of objects "as part of wider stories that crossed geographical and chronological zones."[7] Studies of "things," tracing the journeys of goods from places of production to places of consumption, and revealing the layers of meaning that accumulate around objects over space and time, have greatly enriched understandings of the material practice of trade and helped to widen the subject's appeal.[8]

Given the intensifying interest in materiality, studies of early modern trade and corporations in particular still devote surprisingly little attention to the built infrastructure that facilitated and structured the movement of people and goods, and which may provide greater insights into the material impact as well as practice of companies and wider trade.[9] Most related discussions touching on building, apart from the study of what is commonly called early American architecture, have been focused on questions of legal possession and sovereignty—of fundamental importance but often largely theoretical.[10] Charles Parker's overview of global interactions in the period, which broadly reflects the direction of scholarship in recent decades, discusses the "global integration of space" with barely a mention of the built spaces that underpinned the integration; "empire building" with no explicit reference to material processes and expressions; the destruction of ecological systems but not the construction of physical environments that were a contributory factor; and religion without the creation of places of worship.[11] He evokes economic but

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7   Gerritsen and Riello, *Global Lives of Things*, p. 13. On the movement and relationships of people see, for example, Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) and Charles H. Parker, *Global Interactions in the Early Modern Age, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), esp. "The Movement of Peoples and Diffusion of Cultures," 110–45.

8   The appeal traded objects and their stories was amply demonstrated in the exhibition "Asia in Amsterdam: The Culture of Luxury in the Golden Age," organised by the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (October 17, 2015–January 17, 2016) and Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA (February 27–June 5, 2016), and accompanying catalogue of the same name (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015).

9   Liam Haydon and Tristan Stein turn attention to the subject through the concept of corporate space in " 'A House by way of a Factory': Delineating the Corporate Space" (forthcoming). See also Tim Riding's research on the East India Company's Western Presidency (forthcoming).

10   Ken MacMillan discusses fortifications and mapping in *Sovereignty and Possession in the English New World: The Legal Foundations of Empire, 1576–1640* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), esp. 121–77.

11   Parker, *Global Interactions*, esp. 1–12, 146–81, 182–221.

not physical infrastructure, referring generically to the "factories" constructed by English, Dutch, French, Danish and Swedish companies along the Indian coastline in the 1600s and 1700s.[12] Parker is clearly not concerned with buildings, but the lack of references to any in his synthesis of diverse scholarship suggests a common neglect. The question raised by Carole Shammas—"To what extent did European-based empires of trade invest in their offshore enterprises and colonies in this period and what did they build?"—remains underexplored, let alone the critical questions of how and why, and specifically what role trading corporations played.[13]

There are manifold reasons why building lingers in the shadows of global stories of corporations and the early modern age. One reason is that, while global and "networked" studies of architecture are gradually emerging, relatively few architectural historians have entered this scholarly scene; while being specially equipped to tackle questions of materiality and spatiality, they have been slow to look beyond national frameworks, especially in this period.[14] The remit of European Architecture Beyond Europe, a collaborative initiative that ran from 2010 to 2014 but whose agenda of understanding architecture in its global capacity continues through *ABE Journal* (*Architecture Beyond Europe*), is currently confined to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[15] A more practical reason is that architectural historians, like others, can be put off (misled even) by a scarcity of identifiable material remains. Just as economic historians may struggle to work beyond or between the archival records, the discipline of architectural history still favours surviving buildings, individual patrons and named architects, all of which are rare in the world of early modern trade.

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12   Parker, *Global Interactions*, 2, 93. As Haydon and Stein note, the term "factory" in the seventeenth century referred to a commercial community "as much or more than it did to a specific building or set of buildings"; modern historians tend to use it in a similar way.

13   Carole Shammas, ed., *Investing in the Early Modern Built Environment: Europeans, Asians, Settlers and Indigenous Societies* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 18.

14   Attempts at global surveys giving equal weight to western and non-western architecture include Francis D. K. Ching, Mark Jarzombek and Vikramaditya Prakash, *A Global History of Architecture*, 2nd edn (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2011); and Kathleen James-Chakraborty, *Architecture Since 1400* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2014), whose starting point is influenced by John Darwin's *After Tamerlane: The Global History of Empire* (London: Allen Lane, 2007). A recent contribution with a global scope, yet within the frame of a single empire (and also predominantly focused on the late eighteenth century onward), is G. A. Bremner, ed., *Architecture and Urbanism in the British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

15   For a report on this EU COST Action, see G. A. Bremner, Johan Lagae and Mercedes Volait, "Intersecting Interests: Developments in Networks and Flows of Information and Expertise in Architectural History," *Fabrications* 26, no. 2 (2015): 227–45.

Only slowly is corporate patronage becoming the subject of sustained study. Some would simply place the infrastructure of trade beyond their definition of architecture, and so the subject falls between stools.[16] The very success of the concept of mobility may contribute to buildings being overlooked by other historians. In global histories, the movable has been given greater emphasis than the immovable; as our gaze follows the moving person or object, it is led away from "things" such as buildings that were ostensibly static (never mind that they were in fact, in most respects, far from fixed). A more deeply embedded explanation is the historiographic bifurcation of early modern European empires geographically (east and west) and chronologically (first and second ages), which, although increasingly challenged, has left lingering dichotomies between trade and territory, commercial and colonial, seafaring and settlement, mobile and fixed, impermanent and permanent.[17] This, in addition to the greater presence of surviving buildings (plus a few unhealthy dashes of British nostalgia), helps to account for the much more considerable literature on recognisably imperial architecture after 1750, which largely approaches the subject through the unit of single empires or select regions.[18]

The nascent field of Atlantic architectures (which has been correspondingly slow to emerge in response to Atlantic history) is pushing the conventional boundaries of chronology and geography, reaching back to 1600 and ranging

16   Nicholas Taylor's brief survey in *Monuments of Commerce* (Feltham, Middlesex: Country Life Books, 1968) includes warehouses, but grand ones from the industrial revolution and all within Britain.

17   On this "bifurcation," see Philip J. Stern, "Neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth: Early Modern Empire and Global History," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 72, no. 1 (2009): 113–26; also "British Asia and British Atlantic: Comparisons and Connections," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Ser., 63, no. 4 (2006): 693–712. Patrick Griffin raises questions of "west v. east; global v. Atlantic; America v. Asia; free trade v. colonization" and suggests a more "seamless worldview" in his review of Peter Mancall's *Hakluyt's Promise: An Elizabethan's Obsession for an English America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007): "Richard Hakluyt, Chicken Little, and the Ends of Atlantic History," *Reviews in American History* 35, no. 3 (2007): 325–34 (330–31; see also 328).

18   See, for example, Thomas R. Metcalf's (non-nostalgic) *An Imperial Vision: Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989; Oxford India Paperbacks, 2002). Metcalf attempts to locate architecture in British India within an expanded regional context in *Imperial Connections: India in the Indian Ocean Arena, 1860–1920* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007). Earlier literature includes Philip Davies's *Splendours of the Raj: British Architecture in India, 1660–1947* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1987; John Murray, 1985), which deals very lightly with the period before 1800. Sten Nilsson broke the single imperial frame but focused on one region in *European Architecture in India, 1750–1850* (London: Faber, 1968).

from Puritan meeting houses in America to slave forts in West Africa.[19] Bringing together the tools and perspectives of art and architectural history, archaeology, historical geography, environmental history, material culture, cultural history and economic history, and more, and giving attention to diverse spaces from the domestic to defences, the field is also pushing the conventional boundaries of the study of architecture. Indeed, architecture and the built environment is proving a convincing medium for exploring the connectivity that Atlantic approaches propose. As Alex Bremner argues: "The built environment may be seen as providing a great deal of concrete evidence one way or the other concerning how ideas, knowledge, and material culture were carried around the Atlantic basin, affecting the physical landscapes of the various locations involved. Moreover, through such an exploration, continuities and differences can be drawn out and compared in a way that gives substance to claims of continuity and connectedness through time and space."[20]

The field of Atlantic architectures is vulnerable to the same criticism as Atlantic history for its oceanic limits, and for privileging (so far) an English/British frame. However, as Bremner notes, it has already made a powerful case for the built environment as primary evidence for transcontinental and transcolonial history.[21] This potential provides encouragement to push Atlantic architectures (as with Atlantic history more generally) further and wider around the globe, but existing global studies of architecture expose the challenges of such ambition.[22] The early modern trading company is a valuable lens through which to gain an expanded view, given its transnational, global nature, and the focus on building reflects light back on to the characteristics of the corporation. What, where and how companies decided to build—or indeed when they didn't, or were prevented from doing so—provides insights into their agendas, priorities and ambitions; how they saw themselves and wanted to be seen. Bremner in effect makes the case in his study of the architecture of the opium

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19   For an introduction to the field, see Daniel Maudlin and Bernard L. Herman, eds, *Building the British Atlantic World: Spaces, Places, and Material Culture, 1600–1850* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016). A significant example is Louis Nelson's *Architecture and Empire in Jamaica* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016).

20   G. A. Bremner, review of *Building the British Atlantic World: Spaces, Places, and Material Culture, 1600–1850* (ed. Daniel Maudlin and Bernard L. Herman), *Britain and the World* 10, no. 1 (2017): 115–18 (116).

21   Bremner, review of *Building the British Atlantic World*, 116. Bremner also notes how building provides a valuable means of exploring reverse flows of ideas and influence in an imperial context (117).

22   See Murray Fraser's review of James-Chakraborty's *Architecture Since 1400*, *ABE Journal* [Online], 9–10 (2016): http://abe.revues.org/3090, accessed 19 April 2017.

trade in nineteenth-century Asia.[23] Just as the "infrastructure" created by Jardine, Matheson & Co in Canton (Guangzhou) is important for understanding the corporation in its private and imperial roles, so the buildings constructed and occupied by the English East India Company were crucial aspects of the older corporation's agency on local and global levels.

Recent studies of corporate building projects in colonial contexts in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries show the advantages of focusing on one enterprise, but also the potential for exploring the networks that connected different companies.[24] The same may be said of new research on the building (and rebuilding) activities of London's livery companies through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, both within the City and in the colonial settlement of northern Ireland, as well as Audrey Horning's comparative archaeology of the colonial projects in Ireland and Virginia.[25] These growing areas of study confirm the rich potential of, and provide useful models for, approaching multiple trading corporations through the theme of building. Bremner and Diego Caltana even suggest (albeit implicitly, by insisting on the broad definition of what constitutes a "corporation") that commercial companies should be considered in relation to other corporate bodies whose activity "sustained European imperial projects," such as missionary organisations and the institution of the church.[26] The early modern trading corporation, through its

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23 G. A. Bremner, "Black Gold: Opium and the Architecture of Imperial Trade in Nineteenth-Century Asia," *Proceedings of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand* 33 (2016): 66–74. Bremner's paper marks the beginning of a bigger project on the subject. For a similarly useful take from a nineteenth/twentieth-century perspective, see Wendy Roberts, "Company Transfer: The Architectural Dialect at the Edges of Empire," *Proceedings of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand* 31 (2014): 591–600.

24 For example, Roberts on the Van Diemen's Land Company (chartered in England in 1825), in "Company Transfer," esp. 591, 594.

25 On London see, for example, Jasmine Kilburn-Toppin, "Crafting Artisanal Identities in Early Modern London: The Spatial, Material and Social Practices of Guild Communities c.1560–1640" (doctoral thesis, Royal College of Art, 2013); Sarah Ann Milne, "Merchants of the City: Situating the London Estate of the Drapers' Company, c.1540–1640" (doctoral dissertation, University of Westminster, 2016); and Anya Matthews, "The Architectural Development and Political Uses of London's Livery Halls, 1603–1684" (doctoral thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, 2016). On northern Ireland, see James Stevens Curl, *The Londonderry Plantation 1609–1914: The History, Architecture, and Planning of the Estates of the City of London and its Livery Companies in Ulster* (Chichester: Phillimore, 1986) and *The Honourable The Irish Society and the Plantation of Ulster 1608–2000* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2000). Audrey Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian Sea: Colonialism in the British Atlantic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

26 G. A. Bremner and Diego Caltana, "Corporations, Corporate Identity, and Imperial Architectures?," *ABE Journal* [Online] 2 (2012): http://abe.revues.org/352, accessed April 19,

economic, social and political connectedness on a national level, and competition (sometimes collaboration) on an international level, lends itself well to cross-corporate study.[27]

Connections and Competition through Building

Lambert and Scott's paintings of English East India Company forts are highly suggestive of how the theme of building not only has much to tell us about the company's own operations, deliberations and ambitions, and its relations with the state and other agencies, but may facilitate and feed a cross-corporate approach on both local and global levels, as well as over time.

The commission for the artworks—and indeed the rebuilding of East India House in London after it had reached quite a decrepit state—came at a time of intense public and parliamentary scrutiny of the company's affairs and role. Two contemporaneous pamphlets represent just the latest polemical publications in a decades-long dispute between those who supported the company's monopoly and those in favour of free trade. The author of *Some Considerations on the Nature and Importance of the East India Trade* (1728) asserted the trade's "great Importance" to the nation and the "vast Benefit the Public reaps" from the company, the company being necessary to build "strong Forts and Magazines […] an Expence that private Men can't possibly support."[28] Meanwhile, in *A Collection of Papers Relating to the East India Trade* (1730), the company was accused of keeping "Forts abroad, at a great Expence to colour the Necessity of such Monopolies, and to oppress and rob the Natives there with security."[29] Later the pamphlet insisted the forts, in any event, were not worthy of the name: "the Forts of St George [Madras], Bencoolen [Sumatra], and St David's [south of Madras, near Cuddalore] were never of any Use, more than

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2017. See also G. A. Bremner, "The Corporatisation of Global Anglicanism," *ABE Journal* [Online] 2 (2012): http://abe.revues.org/357, accessed April 19, 2017.

27   On connectedness on a national level, see Edmond J. Smith, "The Networks of the East India Company in Early Modern London, c.1599–1625" (doctoral thesis, University of Cambridge, 2015); and Aske Laursen Brock, "The Company Director: Commerce, State, and Society" (doctoral thesis, University of Kent, 2017).

28   *Some Considerations on the Nature and Importance of the East India Trade* (London: Printed for John Clarke, 1728), 2, 6, 8.

29   *A Collection of Papers Relating to the East India Trade: Wherein are Shewn the Disadvantages to a Nation, by Confining any Trade to a Corporation with a Joint-Stock* (London: Printed for J, Walthoe, 1730), ix. The compiler of the collection is here citing a 1722 essay from *Cato's Letters*.

as Warehouses; and as such, Fort St George and Bombay are not very service-able."[30] The publication of the *Collection of Papers* was no doubt timed in connection with the renewal of the East India Company's privileges the same year (which was passed by Parliament, but only for a further decade and a half), and the paintings of apparently well-fortified and frequented settlements served to counter claims that the forts, and thereby the company, were unnecessary to uphold the trade. The same year, with England's Royal African Company similarly under attack and especially vulnerable, a series of prints showing off the forts under the company's control on the coast of West Africa was advertised as "At this Time very proper for all Members of Parliament."[31] Both sets of images—Royal African Company and East India Company (which were likewise widely disseminated in two series of prints)—were evidently interventions in the political-economic debate and reveal, through their focus on fortified settlements, the significance of building in creating a corporate image of strength and creditability: very basically, in showing the company's worth.[32]

Building signified both history and assets on which trust depended, not just in negotiations with the British state, but with overseas rulers and communities too. As Jonathan Eacott notes of the old East India Company in its dispute with the new company between 1698 and 1708: "The directors […] had their servants impress upon Indian leaders that the company's forts and warehouses backed its credit, in contrast to the new company, which had no history and no significant assets in India."[33]

Events a century earlier established expectations that a chartered company (or proprietorship) should, as per its charter's provisions, invest in building

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30   *Collection of Papers Relating to the East India Trade*, 68.

31   London *Daily Journal*, February 5, 1730. For a full discussion of the prints of Royal African Company forts in the context of contemporary political debates, see Emily Mann, "*Thirty different Drafts of Guinea*: A Printed Prospectus of Trade and Territory in West Africa," in *Court Country, City: British Art and Architecture, 1660–1735*, ed. Mark Hallett, Nigel Llewellyn and Martin Myrone (New Haven and London: Yale Center for British Art and Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2016), 411–32.

32   For useful discussions of the role of visual culture in the construction of corporate identity, see Victoria Barnes and Lucy Newton, "Constructing Corporate Identity before the Corporation: Fashioning the Face of the First English Joint Stock Banking Companies" (discussion paper, Henley Business School, University of Reading, 2014); and, on building specifically, Joseph Giovannini, "The Grand Reach of Corporate Architecture," *New York Times*, January 10, 1985.

33   Jonathan Eacott, *Selling Empire: India in the Making of Britain and America, 1600–1830* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 84.

in the pursuit and protection of trade.[34] In Virginia, as in Ireland, companies were given responsibility to build fortified settlements and were judged on their performance in this task. Concerns about progress in building and fortifying were shared on both sides of the Atlantic and, as Horning has pointed out, the year 1622 proved significant in the fortunes of each project.[35] Under a royal commission that year, Thomas Phillips and Richard Hadsor undertook a survey of the Londonderry plantation, with maps by Thomas Raven.[36] Phillips conducted his survey with the intention of highlighting the London companies' failings in their responsibilities, and it was through their buildings—or rather the half-built or unbuilt—that he sought to demonstrate the weakness of the enterprise in northern Ireland in general. Petitioning James I in 1624, he declared that "their towns and fortresses are rather baits to ill-affected persons than places of security."[37] The same criticism of the Virginia Company contributed to the loss of its charter that year. Returning from Virginia after several months leading attacks against native peoples in 1622–23, Nathaniel Butler laid before the Privy Council an indictment entitled "The Unmasked Face of Our Colony in Virginia."[38] The houses, Butler wrote, were generally the worst he had ever seen, "the meanest Cottages in England beinge every way equall (if not superior) with the most of the beste," and they were even more vulnerable because situated "improvidently and scatteringly." The meaning of "cottages" was pointed: a particular concern for authorities in Elizabethan England, which tried to legislate against their proliferation, "cottage" signified a "habitation of poor men, without any land belonging unto it" and therefore lacked legal as well as symbolic power in the possession of land.[39] Moreover, Butler found "not the least peec of Fortification."

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34   On the case of the Virginia, Bermuda and Barbados, see Emily Mann, "To Build and Fortify: Defensive Architecture in the Early Atlantic Colonies," in *Building the British Atlantic World*, ed. Maudlin and Herman, 31–52.

35   Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian Sea*, 276.

36   Lambeth Palace Library, Carew MS 634.

37   Thomas Phillips cited by Henry Jones Ford in *The Scotch-Irish in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1915), 124.

38   Nathaniel Butler, "The Unmasked Face of Our Colony in Virginia as it was in the Winter of the Yeare 1622," in *Records of the Virginia Company of London, 1622–24*, ed. Susan Myra Kingsbury, 4 vols (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906), II, 374–76.

39   The definition of a cottage is from *Les Termes de la Ley, Or, Certaine Difficult and Obscure Words and Terms of the Common Lawes and Statutes of this Realme Now in Use Expounded and Explained* (London: John More, 1636), fol. 96v, an "inlarged and augmented" edition of John Rastell's *Exposiciones terminorum legum anglorum* (London: John Rastell, 1523), the first English law dictionary. Cottage was a new entry in the 1636 edition, but the definition cites the first statute made in 1275.

The fortification of Bermuda under company control since 1612, strengthened under Butler's governorship from 1619 to 1622, stood in stark contrast with Virginia to judge by the image printed in Captain John Smith's *Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England and the Summer Isles*, published in 1624.[40] A map of the archipelago based on a survey completed by Richard Norwood in 1616–17 is surrounded by views of ten stone forts, along with the great cedar frame of "Riches Mount" ("the warneinge peece of the fortes," designed for both "strength and hansomenesse") and three bridges that allowed communication between islands; visually incorporated into this military system is the State House and the town of St George, dominated by the church and governor's house flanked by guns. The timing of this image was critical on both a national and international level: the activities of leading company figures was under investigation by a royal commission; and, as war with Spain loomed, English settlement of Bermuda in the face of Spanish claims was in the spotlight. In print, Bermuda doesn't much look like the nest of pirates that critics described. If, as Karsten Harries has argued, building is the "domestication of space" in order "to tame it," here we are presented with the fortification of space in order to domesticate it.[41] The threatening collection of rocks and reefs that Spanish sailors had called the "isle of devils" is tamed into an English stronghold—the Summer Isles, as Smith's image calls the islands, in the inset above the map. Showing as it does the division of the land, this map affirms the comprehensive occupation and ownership of the islands. The formal familiarity of the built fortifications offered reassurance of protection. With company men's names imprinted both on the land and in the names of the forts, the image declared the company's investment in administering and defending the island, and therefore the company itself as a safe investment.

The contrasting cases of Bermuda and Virginia provide a picture of the multiple negotiations involved in corporate building and wider business, both with peoples and environments. The governor, council and assembly in Virginia, responding to Butler's scorn for their weakness, stressed that different conditions on the ground on the mainland demanded an alternative architectural strategy. The houses were "most built for use, not ornament," they insisted, proudly professing themselves to be chiefly "labouring men."[42] As for "artificiall Fortifications," they argued that almost every plantation was palisaded

40   John Smith, *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles* (London: Michael Sparkes, 1624).

41   Karsten Harries, "Building and the Terror of Time," *Perspecta* 19 (1982): 59–69 (59).

42   "The Answers of Divers Planters That Have Long Lived in Virginia," in *Records of the Virginia Company*, II, 381–85 (383).

and many had trenches; a captain had just been sent out to dig these defences. James City, Flowerdew Hundred, Newport News, Elizabeth City, Charles City and Henrico were mounted with "great ordinance."[43] Nonetheless, the Virginia Company had failed to build a visibly and visually strong defence of the interests of its investors back in England. The problem is suggested by Smith's reuse, in his *Generall Historie*, of a map of the territory that he dated 1606 and first published in 1612, on which the anglicisation of native place names fails to overcome the sheer scale of the land.[44] A series of crosses, difficult to discern between the hills, trees and native houses, demarcates the "discovered" and the vaster unknown, thus exposing the limits of knowledge and control. The stark difference between the two maps illuminates why the Crown revoked the Virginia Company's charter and allowed the Bermuda Company to carry on.

The strong, arguably pivotal, presence of building in the debates and negotiations of the 1620s within companies, and between company and Crown, sets down seventeenth-century understandings of the significance of building as both physical process in corporate activity and idea in corporate identity and reputation—a reputation that extended far and wide (Bermuda's forts were to be seen by the Spanish as well as the English). The images introduced in this chapter are complex sources, not to be taken as straightforward evidence of actual structures, but nonetheless crucial testimony of both the material and the ideological instrumentality of building for early modern corporations in their local and global roles. The images themselves, as with textual representations, should be considered as agents in the expansive project of building; they did not describe a reality, but sought to create one.[45]

It was common—indeed, perhaps the norm—for representation to differ from reality. Governor Butler, although proud of the "very fair shewe out to sea" made by his building work at Southampton Fort in Bermuda, acknowledged that without sufficient munitions even the best forts "are little better than scare-crows."[46] The same was echoed a century later of the forts occupied

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43   Ibid., 383.

44   John Smith, *A Map of Virginia, With a Description of the Country, the Commodities, People, Government and Religion* (Oxford: Joseph Barnes, 1612).

45   On the complexity of images as sources, see Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001; repr. London: Reaktion, 2006).

46   [Nathaniel Butler], *The Historye of the Bermudaes or Summer Islands*, ed. J. H. Lefroy (London: Hakluyt Society, 1882), 279. Vernon A. Ives, ed., *The Rich Papers: Letters from Bermuda 1615–46* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 229.

by the Royal African Company on the coast of West Africa, giving a sense of how rhetorical devices and positions involving building were formed through corporate experience over time as well as across corporate entities. As Liam Haydon shows in this volume, the idea of the fort was harnessed by both sides in the battle of the monopolistic joint-stock versus free trade (which involved the Hudson's Bay Company as well as the Royal African and East India companies), signalling through its purported condition either strength and permanence and a worthy investment, or weakness and pointlessness and a disastrous waste of money.[47]

A company's decisions over how much to invest in building and what to build were influenced not just by national concerns, but also by physical and political conditions overseas; indeed, geopolitical contingencies and diplomatic negotiations with external agencies could in practice hold far greater sway. Each construction project overseas involved a complex process determined by shifting relationships between Europeans and non-Europeans that were at once local and global in their influence and effect. Difficulties and obstacles presented by local constituencies might encourage a degree of subterfuge and stealth in building. For example, one of the "Rules for Fortifications and Settlement at the Coast of Guinney, observed by all that trade thither," printed in *The Golden Coast* in 1665, directed that the King of Haban "bee moved about the building of some forts, so as that hee may not understand our meaning."[48] The meaning of this line is itself not straightforward to understand. To "bee moved" likely means to be persuaded. Yet the wording in the original source for the *Golden Coast*'s rules, articles "touching a voyage to Guinea" drawn up in 1561 and printed in Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations* in 1599, suggests a more physical movement or separation had also been the initial intent: "To moove the king of Haban a farre off, for the making of a fort, and to note how he will like it; but use your communication so, that although there might fall out good cause for the doing of it, yet he do not understand your meaning."[49] Local rulers were sometimes willing to help with the construction, as at Makassar in Indonesia, and supposedly strong, solid walls dividing European and non-European space could prove pliant and porous (officially or otherwise). By contrast, suspicion of European intentions

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47   See chapter 4 in this volume.

48   *The Golden Coast, or A Description of Guinney* (London: Printed for S. Speed, 1665), 52.

49   "Certaine Articles delivered to M. John Lok […] the 8 of September 1561, touching a voyage to Guinie," in *The Principal Navigations, Voiages, Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation*, ed. Richard Hakluyt the younger, 2nd edn, 3 vols (London: Printed by George Bishop and others, 1598–1600), II, Part 2, 52–53 (52).

meant decisions were made for the East India Company by local officials in Surat in the early seventeenth century. As William Foster wrote, on the basis of English archival documents, there was "much friction regarding the house which served as the English factory at Surat." Local officials, fearing that "the strength of the building and its proximity to the castle and the principal mosque" risked an English attempt to seize Surat, or at least the castle, ousted the company servants from the house and obliged them to relocate to three different sites—a clear attempt to divide and rule—which the English might have opposed by force had they not been distracted by the outbreak of hostilities with the Dutch in the Far East.[50]

Rivalry between the English and Dutch companies was as great in their architectural and artistic endeavours as in their commercial enterprises. Further examination of Lambert and Scott's paintings for the English East India Company suggests the influence of ten oil paintings delivered to East India House in Amsterdam in 1663 (seven of which survive in the Rijksmuseum). Produced in the studio of Johannes Vingboons and displayed in the meeting room of the Heren XVII and other rooms of the Dutch East India House, the canvases depict Cochin (Kochi), Cananor (Kannur) and Raiebagh in India, Canton in China, Ayuthaya in Thailand, the lodge at Lawec in Cambodia, Banda Neira in the Moluccas, Bijapur, the bay of Sualy near Surat, and the town and castle of Surat (the latter three paintings now lost).[51] Referring to Dutch displays of force—forged, as we have seen, in paint as well as brick or stone—the English council at Surat wrote to the directors in London in 1668: "we have by the Dutch proceedings largely Experimented it is better in Trade to be feared, then beloved, if faire means will not prevayle."[52] Several of the prints of Royal African Company forts in West Africa pointedly show competing Dutch fortifications, which often lay within gunshot of the English settlements. The text beneath the prospect combining the Dutch headquarters at Elmina and the English castle at Cape Coast remarks pointedly that the Dutch forts "are far better armed and manned than the English, who have not such good encouragement to support a trade of so great importance to their

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50   William Foster, *The English Factories in India, 1618–1669: A Calendar of Documents in the India Office, British Museum and Public Record Office* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906), xvi–xvii.

51   Kees Zanvliet, *Mapping for Money: Maps, Plans and Topographic Paintings and their Role in Dutch Overseas Expansion during the 16th and 17th Centuries* (Amsterdam: Batavian Lion International, 2002), 220–27.

52   BL IOR G/40/2, f. 24r. On Dutch claims of territorial possession see Adam Clulow, "The Art of Claiming: Possession and Resistance in Early Modern Asia," *American Historical Review* 121, no. 1 (2016): 17–38.

nation." On the coast of West Africa, Dutch and English forts neighboured others occupied by the French and Danes (as also in India), as well as Germans and Portuguese.

Multinational Spaces between Land and Sea

The force of the *idea* of the fort in early modern (and indeed modern) imaginations—whether their image of the fort was robust or flimsy—has not only confused debate about the utility of fortifications in global trade, as Ian Bruce Watson observed in the case of the English East India Company, but also, through centring attention on that very debate, hindered broader investigation of corporate investment in building (including occupying and repurposing buildings, as in Surat) and building's material impact.[53] Questions of labour, construction materials and costs, form and function remain, all of which have implications for the corporation's local and global character and role. On the ground, company buildings, and forts especially, came in a great variety of forms, as the East India Company paintings in fact suggest. The "development from factory to fort," to borrow Watson's words, suggests a trajectory that didn't exist in any clear or coherent way.[54] These were from the start, and enduringly (some to the present day), entangled and multifunctional spaces, as recent research on the European fortifications scarring West Africa's coast convincingly shows.[55]

The force of the idea of the fort has also forged a false dichotomy, then and now, between the architectures of land and sea. Thomas Roe and others opposed fortifications on the basis that ships were far more efficient means of controlling trade.[56] Ships were "floating castles" to contemporaries, and thousands of pounds were invested in the construction and maintenance of company ships.[57] The movable ship could provide greater security than the immovable fort. Nonetheless, they were dependent on each other, parts of

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53   I. Bruce Watson, "Fortifications and the 'Idea' of Force in Early English East India Company Relations with India," *Past and Present*, no. 88 (1980): 70–87 (71).

54   Watson, "Idea of Force," 71. On the diversity of factories, see Paul Mackenzie Mason, "The Early English Factories of South-West India: A Historical Archaeology Perspective" (masters dissertation, Durham University, 2014).

55   John Kwadwo Osei-Tutu and Victoria Ellen Smith, eds, *Shadows of Empire in West Africa: New Perspectives on European Fortifications* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018). See also Haydon and Stein on the integration of EIC forts with their surroundings.

56   Watson, "Idea of Force," 71.

57   National Archives, CO 388/25, f. 322r. Eacott, *Selling Empire*, 159.

the same international infrastructure. The ships are the crucial link between the six sites depicted on canvas in the Court Room at East India House, and indeed between those sites and London's docks. As Bremner stressed after asserting the importance of company-constructed docks, warehouses, offices and so on in an "extended network or 'system' of critical relations," ships, "as moving spaces of containment and transfer, were an extension of the factory spaces into which they off-loaded and up-lifted their cargoes. The existence and operation of the one was almost entirely dependent upon that of the other."[58] Through studying the multiple, multinational points of contact between land and sea created by early modern trading companies, blue and green histories, as Glen O'Hara vividly colour-codes the usually separate scholarship on sea and land, may be blurred and a major barrier to truly global history broken down.[59]

Conclusion

By examining corporate initiatives and investment in the construction and maintenance of fortified settlements on three continents—America, Africa and Asia—through the long seventeenth century, this chapter has demonstrated how in each case the corporation, like the built spaces it created, was a process of negotiation between its internal constituencies, within states, and between communities (and other corporations) around the globe. The connected, comparative approach over space and time has hopefully illuminated how the experience of one company influenced not only the attitudes and activities of commercial counterparts, but also the ideas and expectations of shareholders and the state. In particular, the chapter has considered the corporate/colonial business of building in the context of the emerging fiscal-military state and its global frame. At the same time, we have enhanced understanding of the material impact that trading corporations had on overseas territories and their inhabitants, and of the impact that building and maintaining fortifications overseas had on the development of corporate and state constitutions. In and around these entangled spaces, corporate cultures came into contact with others, and European practices and ideas were challenged and reshaped by non-European customs and conditions. The chapter's focus on fort-building

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58   Bremner, "Black Gold," 80.

59   G. O'Hara, " 'The Sea Is Swinging into View': Modern British Maritime History in a Globalised World," *English Historical Review* 124, no. 510 (2009): 1109–34 (1128).

facilitates discussion of the corporation's operations on local and global levels, and across commercial, state and transnational spheres, and in so doing sharpens awareness of the interactions and tensions between them.

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Science

Anna Winterbottom

That the so-called scientific revolution coincided with the rise of global trading companies is no coincidence. 'Science' in the modern sense was a creation of the nineteenth century. Retrospectively, its origins have often been located in the scholarly societies that began to be founded in various European countries from the seventeenth century onwards.[1] Thus, although rooted in the pan-European 'Republic of Letters', the emergence of science has usually been discussed in national terms. In fact, much of what made knowledge and scholarship in this period distinctive from what came before was its increasing embeddedness in a global context. For natural philosophers and others who have been considered proto-scientists, access to information from distant places was often enabled by contacts with trading companies. The process of gathering and assessing such information necessitated new ways of establishing trust in informants; evaluating and experimenting with objects; testing claims; collecting, storing, and collating and comparing. In turn, the global activities of trading companies relied on the results of these processes of gathering and transforming information to assess the goods that they traded in, the lands in which they planned to establish settlements, and the seas they had to navigate.

In this contribution, I will highlight in particular the interactions, formal and informal, between members of the English East India Company (EIC) and scholars associated with the Royal Society and the English universities. These connections overlapped with connections between scholars and other trading companies, including the Royal African Company, once called the 'twin sister' of the Royal Society,[2] and the Levant Company. They also closely resembled the contemporary links between the *Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (VOC) and Dutch scholarly institutions including the Universities of Leiden and Utrecht and between the *Companie des Indes* (CdI) and *l'Académie royale des science* in France. Such connections also had precedents in the interactions between Iberian institutions like the Spanish Consejo de Indias and *Casa de Contratación* and the Portuguese *Estado da Índia* and *Casa da Índia*. As well as

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1   Steven Shapin, *The Scientific Revolution* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2008).
2   James Delbourgo, *Collecting the World: Hans Sloane and the Origins of the British Museum*. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2017), 30.

the parallels that can be drawn between these relationships, there were also key differences. The particularities of each of these relationships – centrally, the particular global connections that they sought to navigate and understand – would in fact shaped the distinctive national or colonial practices of science that would emerge by the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Reverting to the terminology of the early modern period, it would be more accurate to speak of 'useful knowledge' than of science. Both savant institutions like the Royal Society and the trading companies strove to prove their usefulness throughout this period. As the introduction to this volume makes clear, trading companies had to please multiple constituents, including European and non-European rulers, their own shareholders, and their critics, again, at home and abroad. Similarly, organisations like the Royal Society had to convince royal and governmental funders, sceptical publics, and their own correspondents and informants, that their inquiries were practically useful rather than nonsensical and possible heretical fantasies.[3]

Trading companies were interested in natural products that could be traded and the machines and techniques used to process them. But, their interests ran far deeper than this. They also wanted to know about the languages, customs, systems of government and religions of the people they traded with. They wanted accurate accounts of their systems of weights and measures and their currencies. It was important to understand architecture and ship-building when establishing settlements and shipyards. Trading companies wanted to know about the environment and climate of each of their potential settlements, whether they were 'healthful' or bred disease and what could be done to improve them. Some members of trading companies were even keen to garner support for their own positions in metaphysical debates over the nature of the universe through observations of the foreign beliefs they encountered. The shared interests of the trading companies and savant institutions encouraged the development of networks through which natural and mechanical knowledge could be transformed into useful and profitable information.

While in the early modern period both trading companies and savant institutions lacked formal structures of support for scholarly endeavours, the promise of patronage – both in the settlements and in Europe – led company servants to investigate the natural and mechanical worlds around them. Through such collections of information, members of the trading companies hoped to level

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3   Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer, *Leviathan and the Air-Pump: Hobbes, Boyle, and the Experimental Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); Delbourgo, *Collecting the World*, for satires and critiques aimed at the Royal Society during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

patronage, wealth, and even fame as well as to achieve advancement within the company ranks. In what follows, I will discuss some early modern forms of natural and mechanical knowledge to which the EIC's members, servants, and slaves contributed to creating.

Natural Histories, Travel Accounts, and Cabinets of Curiosity

'Natural histories' were early modern data banks on which theories about the world were built: or, as stated in the introduction to Boyle's 'General Heads for the Natural History of a Country', 'the only sure foundation of natural philosophy'.[4] Cabinets of collection formed the physical counterparts of written accounts and both savants and merchants often contextualised material objects using written texts and vice versa. The EIC was involved in generating both sorts of data, both directly through its instructions to its servants and the collections it maintained in London and indirectly, through its networks of correspondents and advisors.

As Rubiés and Stagl point out, the aim of directing and methodising travel and reports of foreign lands was not new in the mid-seventeenth century, but had its roots in the Renaissance.[5] Official collections of information about colonial possessions, like those commissioned by Philip II of Castile in the 1570s often followed similar schema to humanist instructions to travellers.[6] The humanist emphasis on the importance of method was been adopted by compilers of voyages including Richard Hakluyt,[7] early advisor to the East India Company, and Samuel Purchas.[8] Purchas' contemporary, Francis Bacon, stressed the importance of methodical or orderly observation, unconstrained as far as possible by theory or prior knowledge, in both natural history and travel.[9] Natural histories themselves had been pioneered in the Americas, including sixteenth century works like Fernández de Oviedo's 'General and natural history

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4   Robert Boyle, *General Heads for the Natural History of a Country, Great or Small: Drawn Out for the Use of Travellers and Navigators* (London, 1692). The essay was first published in *Philosophical Transactions,* 1 (1665–1666), 186–189.

5   Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'Instructions for Travellers: Teaching the Eye to See', *History and Anthropology*, vol 9, nos. 2–3, (1996): 139–190; Justin Stagl, 'The Methodising of Travel in the 16th Century', *History and Anthropology*, vol 4 no. 2 (1990): 303–338.

6   Rubiés, 'Instructions for Travellers', 155–6.

7   Richard Hakluyt, *Principall navigations, voiages, and discoveries of the English nation* (London, 1589 and 1598–1600).

8   Samuel Purchas, *Purchas his Pilgrimage: Or Relations of the world …* (London, 1613).

9   Rubiés, 'Instructions for Travellers', 176–7.

of the Indies' and Acosta's 'Natural and Moral History of the Indies'.[10] Boyle's younger contemporary Hans Sloane produced a natural history of the English colony of Jamaica.[11]

Boyle's 'General Heads' are conventional in many senses, including the division of the things to be observed, which begin with the heavens or the airs, followed by the water, and the earth. Like Ovieda and Acosta, Boyle included human customs under the rubric of natural history, a practice that was based on the assumption that people were intimately connected to and shaped by their natural environments. Boyle's instructions were part of a recurrent interest on the part of Royal Society in compiling a comprehensive natural history and they clearly draw on the set of 'Directions' that the Royal Society compiled and sent to correspondents abroad, some of which were published in the *Philosophical Transactions* along with the responses they received.[12] The main innovation in Boyle's text might be the several instruments which he suggests should be provided to a traveller in order to make observations, many of which had been invented by Boyle himself or by his associate Robert Hooke. These include a 'travelling baroscope' for measuring the 'specific gravity of the air'; a pair of scales and weights for examining the weight of water along with a device for drawing up water from deep below the surface of the sea.[13] That some travellers were equipped with such instruments is evident from a list of the instruments that Hooke provided Robert Knox to carry on his later voyages.[14] Nonetheless, the natural histories that were produced in and around Company settlements continued to rely for the most part on the unaided observations of the individual traveller along with information supplied by a range of informants.

Unsurprisingly given both the antecedents of the genre and the popularity of travel literature, seventeenth century natural histories remained entangled

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10   José Acosta, *The Natural & Moral History of the Indies*, trans. Edward Grimeston, ed. Clements R. Markham. London: Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1880; Fernández de Oviedo, *Historia General Y Natural De Las Indias*, ed. José Amador de los Ríos (Madrid, Impr. de la Real academia de la historia, 1851–55).

11   Hans Sloane, *A voyage to the islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica, with the natural history of the herbs and trees, four-footed beasts, fishes, birds, insects, reptiles, &c. of the last of those islands.* London: Printed by B.M. for the author, 1707.

12   M.B. Hall, 'Arabick learning in the correspondence of the Royal Society', in G A. Russell (ed.), *The 'Arabick' Interest of the Natural Philosophers in Seventeenth-Century England* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 147–157, 149.

13   Boyle, *General Heads*.

14   See Anna Winterbottom, 'Producing and Using the Historical Relation of Ceylon: Robert Knox, the East India Company and the Royal Society'. *The British Journal for the History of Science / Publ. for the British Society for the History of Science.* 42 (2009).

with accounts of the authors' own adventures. The first volume of Jean (or John) Chardin's account of Persia, including an account of the travellers of its author from Paris to Istaphan and the coronation of the Shah was published in French and in English in 1686, followed by a full edition in 1711 which also contained the natural history of Persia.[15] Robert Knox's *Historical Relation of Ceylon*[16] similarly mingled an account of his own capture and life on the island with a natural history and political account of the central kingdom of Kandy. The medical man and traveller John Fryer's *New Account of East India and Persia*, also combines personal travel account with a natural history and a political narrative, focusing in particular on the military campaigns of the Maratha leader Shivaji.[17] English natural histories and travel accounts closely resembled other European accounts, and there was a brisk industry of translating these works, often with additional elements added by the translator: for example the work of Jean-Baptiste Tavernier appeared in English only a year after its publication in French, with two other accounts appended to it.[18]

Neither an emphasis on first hand observation of the natural world nor the production of orderly accounts of foreign lands were confined to Europe and its colonies in the early modern period. As Ebba Koch pointed out, the Mughal Emperor Jahangir (r. 1605–27) better fit Bacon's model of a philosopher-king than any of his European contemporaries.[19] In his *Jahangirnama*, the Emperor reports a series of observations and experiments.[20] Jahangir was following a tradition of natural-historical description begun by his ancestor Babur (r. India 1526–30), who described Indian flora and fauna in his *Baburnama*. In terms of travel writing, the ten volumes of the seventeenth century Ottoman traveller Evliya Çelebi are perhaps the most extensive travel narratives

15   John Chardin, *The Travels of Sir John Chardin into Persia and the East-Indies: The First Volume, Containing the Author's Voyage from Paris to Ispahan* ... (London, 1686).

16   Robert Knox, *An Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon* (London, 1681).

17   John Fryer, *A New Account of East-India and Persia in Eight Letters: Being Nine Years Travels, Begun 1672 and Finished 1681* (London, 1698).

18   Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, *Les six voyages de Jean Bapiste Tavernier* (Paris, 1676), translated as *The six voyages of John Bapista Tavernier ... to which is added A new Description of the Seraglio Made English by J.P. Added likewise a Voyage into the Indies &c. By an English Traveller, never before Printed* (London, 1677).

19   Ebba Koch, 'Jahangir As Francis Bacon's Ideal of the King As an Observer and Investigator of Nature', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* vol. 19 no. 3 (2009): 293–33.

20   Jahangir and W M. Thackston, *The Jahangirnama: Memoirs of Jahangir, Emperor of India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). For example, see 143–4 for an experiment Jahangir carried out on a chicken to test the theory that bitumen would heal broken bones and 24 for an account of the fruits recently introduced to India.

of the era, although they were not published until the nineteenth century.[21] Some Ottoman travel texts were printed in the early modern period, including the compendia of travel accounts by Katib Celebi (or Haji Khalifa) (1609–57), which were published in early eighteenth century Istanbul. In both Persia and Iran, early modern accounts of travel and geographical accounts were not published, but did circulate in manuscript form. Chinese accounts of foreign peoples and lands were produced in great numbers in this period, often though not invariably following the formal gazetteer style.[22]

How much of an influence contemporary accounts in non-European languages exerted on natural histories and travel texts produced in and around the EIC settlements is uncertain; while some seventeenth century European authors claimed to have based their works on texts in Asian languages, serious engagement with them probably began only in the eighteenth century when, for example, parts of the *Jahangirnama* were published by James Anderson and Francis Gladwin.[23] However, compilations of voyages made in Europe did continue to include older works on geography and travel in Arabic and Persian. For example, Melchisédech Thévenot's collection of voyages contains a translation of an account apparently by Abu'al-Fida (1273–1331 CE) of the climates of India and China, translated from a manuscript in the Vatican.[24] In other words, there seems to have been a lag, sometimes of centuries, between written descriptions of travel and natural history in non-European languages and their use by Europeans. Nonetheless, those compositors of travel narratives and natural histories who spent time in Asia courtly settings would have had oral access to some of the philosophical debates of the era.

Information drawn from natural histories was used in both scholarly projects and by the East India Company itself, sometimes in collaboration. For example, the orientalist Thomas Hyde (1636–1703) referred to Chardin's account of the inscriptions at Persepolis. Hyde also used Knox's accounts of the Sinhala language in his investigations into comparative linguistics. The EIC's use of Armenians as brokers in their Indian settlements was based on Chardin's account of their role in Persia while Knox's account of rice growing and the production of iron in Ceylon prompted the EIC to experiment with the same techniques

21   Muzaffar Alam and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Indo-persian Travels in the Age of Discoveries, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 6–7.

22   Strassberg, *Inscribed Landscapes*.

23   Translations were made by James Anderson in his Asiatic Miscellany of 1786 and by Francis Gladwin in his History of Hindustan in 1788, c.f. 'Translator's preface, Jahangirnama, ix.

24   Melchisédech Thévenot, *Relations de Divers Voyages Curieux* (Paris, 1696). See also Hall, 'Arabick learning in the correspondence of the Royal Society', 151.

in their settlement on the South Atlantic island of St Helena. Travel accounts in other European languages were also mined for useful information. For example, an article in the first issue of *Philosophical Transactions* exacts information on the manufacture of saltpetre (used to make gunpowder) in Mughal India from Thévenot's collection of voyages.[25] Scholars and EIC officials tried to verify the information contained in natural histories and travel accounts by including particular points in their lists of inquiries or circulating the texts to other correspondents for corrections and additions. For example, Robert Hooke and Robert Hoskins recruited the Hanoi-born Samuel Baron to correct Jean-Baptiste Tavernier's account of Tonkin (northern Vietnam).[26]

Publishing a natural history in seventeenth century England could result in preferment for its author in the circles of both natural philosophers and merchants. Chardin, Knox, and Fryer were all elected to the Royal Society on the basis of their writings and Chardin became the ambassador of the East India Company to Holland. But natural histories and travel accounts were not guaranteed publication or financial success: the accounts of Thomas Bowrey and Samuel Baron remained unpublished during their authors' lifetimes. Notably, Moses Pitt's ambitious 'English Atlas' project – which was intended as the composite natural history that several members of the Royal Society imagined – not only remained unfinished, but bankrupted Pitt in the process.[27]

Many of the authors of natural histories or accounts of travel also collected objects; both natural and manmade. The tradition of *Wunderkammen* or 'cabinets of curiosity' had integrated commerce and scholarship since its inception. In the sixteenth century, the influential Fugger family of bankers not only assembled their own collections but helped put together those of the Wittelsbach Duke Albrecht V of Bavaria and the Habsburg Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II of Prague. As Meadows notes in his study of Hans Jacob Fugger's role in conceptualising the Wunderkammer, such collections served many practical and symbolic functions, 'being not only instruments of diplomacy and display, but also pragmatic tools of economic statecraft, repositories of ready funds for unexpected wars and disasters, sites for cultural and technological production, and active, functional, and practical laboratories

25   [Anon] 'Of the Way, Used in the Mogol's Dominions, to Make Saltpetre', *Philosophical Transactions*, vol. 1 (1665–1666), 103–104.

26   Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge*, Chapter 1.

27   Michael Harris, 'Pitt, Moses (bap. 1639, d. 1697)'. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography. Ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: OUP, 2004. Online ed. Ed. David Cannadine. Jan. 2008. Last accessed, 13 Nov. 2017.

for a variety of crafts and disciplines'.[28] By the seventeenth century, it was possible to buy whole cabinets of curiosity, although cabinets were more often assembled through a combination of gifts and individual purchases.[29]

Both the Royal Society and the East India Company in this period held repositories of objects, which served both to entertain visitors and to aid in their practical investigations into the natural and human worlds and how they might be turned to the profit of the English nation. The Royal Society's repository was begun in 1663 and was integrated into the British Museum in 1781, by which time it seems to have been a 'substantial and significant collection'.[30] It had been assembled through a combination of chance gifts and objects acquired through targeted requests or purchases. In 1664, the Royal Society offered to cover the costs of members of the EIC who collected and transported specimens.[31] Like written natural histories, the contents of the Society's repository reflected both the natural and human worlds, with animal, vegetable, and mineral specimens positioned alongside mummies and body parts, tools, clothing and ephemera. In a recent study of the East India Company's nineteenth century museum, Jessica Ratcliff described the institution as combining the functions of displaying curiosities and curating useful knowledge, also noting that objects often circulated through the museum before being passed on to other institutions.[32] Something similar was true in the earlier period: certain specimens were displayed for curious visitors and others lent out to scholars who could report back on their worth. Sometimes, the East India Company made deliberate enquiries about the worth of their collections, as was the case in 1680, when two representatives of the Company attended a meeting of the Royal Society to inquire about the uses and value of a bezoar stone that had been presented to their servants by the ruler of Bantam.[33] For Company servants, supplying curiosities could bring similar advantages to publishing natural histories, including potential preferment in the Company hierarchy.

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28 Mark A. Meadow, 'Hans Jacob Fugger and the Origins of the Wunderkammer', in Pamela H. Smith and Paula Findlen (eds.), *Merchants and Marvels: Commerce, Science, and Art in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 182–200, 182.

29 Paula Findlen, 'Commerce, Art, and Science in the Early Modern Cabinet of Curiosities', in Smith and Findlen (eds.), *Merchants and Marvels*, 297–323.

30 Jennifer Thomas, 'A 'Philosophical Storehouse': The life and afterlife of the Royal Society's repository' unpublished PhD thesis, Queen Mary, University of London, 2009.

31 Jennifer Thomas, 'Compiling 'god's Great Book [of] Universal Nature': the Royal Society's Collecting Strategies'. *Journal of the History of Collections*. 23.1 (2011): 1–13.

32 Jessica Ratcliff, 'The East India Company, the Company's Museum, and the Political Economy of Natural History in the Early Nineteenth Century', *Isis* (2016): 495–517.

33 Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge*, 28.

Private collectors rivalled institutional collections in this periods as sources of information and exchange and of patronage for those could supply exotic curiosities. Most notable in this period was Hans Sloane, whose collection came to form the basis for the British Museum and who provided both support for the Royal Society's repository and competition.[34]

Cabinets of curiosity also existed in the overseas settlements of the EIC. For example, Governor Stringer of St Helena during the 1660s had a cabinet of curiosity that he displayed to visitors containing the dried skin of a sea cow, ambergris, five pounds of civet, bags of cornelian, knife handles of agate, satin from China, Japan canes and a large number of unspecified goods from India.[35] An inventory of the possessions of another governor of St Helena, Blackmore, who died in 1690 lists his collections including a large amount of materials from Tonkin, China, and Bengal, precious stones including cornelian, diamond, as well as boxes made from silver, ivory and copper, 'turkey-work' chairs and a bezoar stone. This Governor also had a considerable library; along with several religious works this included several practical works like the 'Mirror for Magistrates', as well as 'Cooke upon planting', a work on salt marshes, histories of China and Persia, Bacon's 'Natural History' (*Silva Silvarum*), and a work by Grotius (probably *Annales et Historiae de Rebus Belgicis*).[36]

Asian rulers and scholars also made collections of exotic objects, animals, and even people and supplying these demands was in fact a key motivation for Company servants to collect. Jahangir described a north American turkey, and a zebra from Africa as having been imported by the 'Franks', in one of his infrequent references to European activities in India.[37] The mid-seventeenth century rulers King Narai of Siam (1656–1688) and King Rajasimha II of Kandy (r. 1634–1686) were also notable for their collections of exotic things and indeed people, both kings surrounding themselves with foreign advisors, ministers and guards.[38] As was the case within Europe, supplying objects for such collections could be way for merchants to establish a 'social nexus' with Asian

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34　Delbourgo, *Collecting the World*.

35　Simon de Renneford, *Histoire des Indes Orientales,* Paris, 1688, Vol. 8, Bk 2.

36　St Helena Archives, *Consultations,* Vol. 3, f. 280 02 December 1690.

37　Jahangir, *Jahangirnama*, respectively, 24 and 206, 133, depicted in a watercolour by Mansur dated 1612 and reproduced on this page, 360, also depicted by Mansur in a watercolour dated 1620–1621.

38　Ian Hodges, 'Western Science in Siam: A Tale of Two Kings', *Osiris*, 13 (1998): 80–95. Gananath Obeyesekere, 'Between the Portuguese and the Nāyakas: the many faces of the Kandyan Kingdom, 1591–1765', in Zoltán Biedermann and Alan Strathern (eds.) *Sri Lanka at the Crossroads of History* (London: University College London Press, 2017).

rulers.[39] The correspondence of the Company factory at Fort St George with the Nawab of Golconda and his representatives is largely concerned with the sort of gifts to be procured for the Nawab and others at court – including spectacles and sandalwood – and with protocols of behaviour towards him.[40] But as this example shows, supplying gifts of curiosities was also a means for Company representatives to subordinate themselves to local rulers. For the rulers involved, treating Company servants as the suppliers of curiosities in return for favours was intended to emphasise this subordinate position. As Sujit Sivasundaram notes in the case of the rulers of Kandy, Asian rulers were seeking to make Europeans in Asia their vassals, while Europeans held the same goal towards these rulers.[41] Thus, exchanges of objects in the context of the overseas factories of the EIC was more of a struggle for power as displayed through the control of people, things, and information than an equal exchange.

Botany, Zoology, and Medicine

While in the seventeenth century a 'natural history' was a miscellany of observations about the natural and human world, it later took on a more specific meaning associated with botany and zoology. William Roxburgh, who would become the EIC's first naturalist, was born in 1751. In the generations before him, while observations of flora and fauna appeared in natural histories and travel narratives, the professional pursuit of botany, and to some extent zoology, remained bound up with medicine. Nonetheless, the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were key in terms of the establishment of international networks through which large volumes of botanical collections were transmitted, the emergence of systems of classification, and the expansion of botanical gardens.

European accounts of Asian nature began with the work of Garcia de Orta, a 'new Christian' of Spanish descent who lived and worked in the Portuguese colony of Goa in the late sixteenth century.[42] de Orta's *Colóquios dos simples e drogas e cousas medicinais da Índia* (Goa, 1563) cross-referenced his

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39   Meadows, 'Hans Jacob Fugger and the Origins of the Wunderkammer', 184.

40   IOR G/19/26.

41   Sujit Sivasundaram, *Islanded: Britain, Sri Lanka, and the Bounds of an Indian Ocean Colony* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2013), 71.

42   For a useful recent compilation of studies of de Orta and his work, Palmira Fontes da Costa ed. *Medicine, Trade and Empire: Garcia de Orta's* Colloquies on the Simples and Drugs of India (*1563*) *in Context*, edited by. (Burlington, VT, USA, 2015).

own observations of Asian medicinal products, many conducted in his own gardens, with those of the ancients, Arabic medical authorities and his own humanist contemporaries. It was translated into Latin by Carolus Clusius, becoming a best-seller throughout early modern Europe.

Clusius' translation, along with his work in the Leiden botanical gardens, encouraged a close collaboration between botanists based in Holland, and particularly at the University of Leiden and servants of the VOC. Some botanists worked in the East Indies before taking up positions at the Leiden gardens, including Paul Hermann, who practiced as a physician in Dutch Ceylon before returning to Holland in the 1680s to head the Leiden botanical gardens. This generated both published works and an exchange of plants that were raised in the botanical gardens and animals, whose dried skins or skeletons were exhibited in the cabinets of curiosity that accompanied the gardens. Published accounts included Jacobus Bontius's accounts of the diseases prevalent in Java and the local plants used to treat them, composed in the 1620s and 1630s; Georgius Everhardus Rumphius' accounts of the nature of the Moluccas and Ambon, composed in the 1660s and 1670s and Willem ten Rhijne, whose work on Japan included descriptions of acupuncture and moxa.[43] Most famous is Hendrik Adriaan van Reede tot Drakenstein's *Hortus Malabaricus*, a twelve-volume work produced in modern Kerala with the assistance of numerous South Asian and European botanists, collectors, draftsmen and published in 1678–1693.[44]

Compared with the strength of the connections between the VOC and botanists at the University of Leiden and the wealth of published works on the flora and fauna of the Dutch colonial possessions in Asia, the contribution of the EIC settlements to the understanding of the Asian environment seems scanty at first. However, while EIC servants with an interest in nature lacked the patronage that was forthcoming from the Heren XVII, a network of private patrons, often associated with both the EIC and the Royal Society provided incentives for collecting information and specimens. No published works dedicated specifically to Asian flora and fauna emerged from the EIC settlements before the late eighteenth century work of William Roxburgh and Patrick Russell.[45] Nonetheless, by the mid-seventeenth century, descriptions of exotic plants and creatures made their way into general works of botany – like

43   Harold J. Cook, *Matters of Exchange: Commerce, Medicine, and Science in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven: Conn: Yale University Press, 2007).

44   J. Heniger, *Hendrik Adriaan Van Reede Tot Drakenstein (1636–1691) and Hortus Malabaricus: A Contribution to the History of Dutch Colonial Botany*. (Rotterdam: CRC Press, 1986).

45   Menon, Minakshi. Making Useful Knowledge: British Naturalists in Colonial India, 1784–1820. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of California, San Diego, 2013.

Parkinson's classic *Theatrum Botanicum*, which gives accounts of numerous trees, plants, and animal products from the East Indies alongside species from the West Indies and Africa.[46] Meanwhile plants appeared in physic and pleasure gardens and animals in menageries. Similarly, remedies from the East as well as the West Indies made their way into household remedies and apothecaries' shops.[47] Ironically, the incorporation of exotic remedies into the wares of apothecaries and the practice of physicians run alongside a growing sense of 'English' medicine during the seventeenth century, which attempted to exclude the influence of foreign authors, including the Arabic authors who had been influential in the medieval period.[48] The early tendency towards incorporating exotic remedies into what was considered 'English' medicine continued in later stages of imperialism. From an early stage, the *London Pharmacopoeia* and later the *British Pharmacopoeia*, incorporated numerous medical substances originating in India, while the first official *Indian Pharmacopoeia* was published only in the 1950s.[49]

Materia medica and live plants and animals were sometimes imported by the East India Company in an official capacity, but more often they were the result of private trade or exchange between Company servants and apothecaries, botanists, and those who made a living from curiosities, including exotic creatures. Between the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, the Madras surgeon Edward Bulkley cultivated numerous patrons and business partners in London, including the apothecaries James Petiver and Leonard Plukenet, the botanist John Ray, and the gardener and treasurer of the East India Company, Charles du Bois. Like his predecessor Samuel Browne, Bulkley supplied these contacts with specimens – including numerous volumes of dried plants annotated with their local medical uses – in return for books, specimens or seeds from elsewhere or preferment within the Company. Bulkley also supplied drugs directly to apothecaries, including his brother-in-law, who had a shop in London.[50] No less important in motivating investigations into nature in the Company settlements was the preferment that could be gained in Asian

46   John Parkinson, *Theatrum botanicum: the theater of plants: or, An herball of large extent* (London, 1640).

47   Patrick Wallis, 'Exotic Drugs and English Medicine: England's Drug Trade, c. 1550–c. 1800', *Social History of Medicine*, 25 (2012): 20–46.

48   Andrew Wear, 'English medical writers and their interest in classical Arabic medicine in the seventeenth century', in Russell (ed.), *'Arabick' Interest*, 266–277.

49   Nandini Bhattacharya, 'From Materia Medica to the Pharmacopoeia: Challenges of Writing the History of Drugs in India', *History Compass* 14, 4 (2016): 131–139, doi: 10.1111/hic3.12304.

50   MS Sloane 3321, fol. 18, Edward Bulkley to James Petiver, FSG 12 October 1699.

courtly settings by combining a successful cure with knowledge of local proto-
cols of treatment and diplomacy. Bulkley and Browne both received patronage
from the Nawabs of Arcot, including official posts within the Mughal empire,
in return for the treatments and services they provided. Networks of botanical
and zoological exchange also existed between European settlements in Asia.
Browne and Bulkley kept up an exchange with the Bohemian Jesuit pharma-
cist and collector Georg Joseph Kamel SJ (1661–1706) in the Philippines. Ship's
surgeons were often entrusted with specimens that were being transferred be-
tween settlements or remitted to London.[51]

Despite the lack of published works on Asian nature associated with the
early EIC, Company servants transmitted manuscript accounts and drawings
as well as specimens back to Europe. A notable example is the work of the
Scottish surgeon and naturalist James Cunningham (ca. 1665–1709). Cunning-
ham was the surgeon to the EIC at Amoy (Xiamen) in 1697–1699 and later Chu-
san (Zhoushan), 1699–1703 and in the short-lived settlement of Pulo Condore
where he was imprisoned from 1705–7.[52] Cunningham sent over 600 species of
Chinese plants to correspondents in London including James Petiver, Leonard
Plukenet, and Hans Sloane. Cunningham also collected animal specimens, in-
cluding a collection of shells that he sent to Petiver in 1697 and insects sent to
the same correspondent in 1701. His collections also encompassed the Canary
Islands, Batavia in Java, Malacca, St Helena and the Cape of Good Hope.[53] Cun-
ningham commissioned Chinese artists to make several volumes of drawings of
local plants including their names in Chinese script; in total, he collected 1,200
drawings of plants from Amoy.[54] His written descriptions of nature included a
letter to the Royal Society that was published in *Philosophical Transactions* in
1702 which includes a description of the various sorts of tea that were received
from China.[55] Joseph Banks referred back to this article of Cunningham's when

51   Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge*, Ch. 4.

52   Jane Kilpatrick, *Gifts from the Gardens of China: The Introduction of Traditional Chinese Garden Plants to Britain, 1698–1862* (London: Frances Lincoln, 2007).

53   For the Canary Island collections, Arnoldo Santos-Guerra, Charles E. Jarvis, Mark A. Car-
      ine, Michael Maunder, and Javier Francisco-Ortega, 'Late 17th century herbarium collec-
      tions from the Canary Islands: The plants collected by James Cuninghame in La Palma',
      TAXON 60, 6 (2011): 1734–1753. For the insects, British Library, Sloane MS 3321, f. 89, James
      Cunningham to James Petiver, Chusan, November 22 1701. Collections by Cunningham
      in the Sloane herbarium are: H.S. 59, from China made in 1698 and at the Cape of Good
      Hope in 1699; H.S. 252, collections from Amoy, Chusan and the Crocodile Isles; H.S. 253,
      plants from Batavia and Pulo Condore; H.S. 257 from the Cape; H.S. 289 from Batavia.

54   British Library Add MS 5292–4; Kilpatrick, *Gifts from the Gardens of China*, 37.

55   James Cunningham, 'Part of Two Letters to the Publisher from Mr James Cunningham,
      F. R. S. and Physician to the English at Chusan in China, Giving an Account of His Voyage

advising the East India Company about their project of importing tea growing into India in the late eighteenth century.[56] Like most of his contemporaries, Cunningham did not confine himself to botanical collecting, but also collected manuscripts and other curiosities. For example, in a letter to Hans Sloane from Chusan in 1703, he refers to sending Chinese works on religion, a description in Chinese of the island of Putuo Shan, and a map of the Ning-po (Nigbo) river by a French priest.[57] He also made meteorological observations in Amoy.[58] In other words, he aimed at the sort of total natural history described by Boyle.

James Cunningham sent seeds to be cultivated by gardening friends in England, including James Petiver and Robert Uvedale.[59] This was part of a long tradition of introducing exotics and techniques from the east. Medieval Britain borrowed from Islamic traditions of horticulture, via Andalusia, including adopting techniques selective breeding of plants as well as plants themselves.[60] By the sixteenth century, the Ottoman Empire had become a major centre for gardening. Networks of gardens were important from the beginning of European colonial expansion, both in the overseas settlements and in colonial capitals. They served both practical and spiritual purposes, providing experimental spaces for projects of acclimatisation and classification and speaking to the urge to return to Eden by reuniting the species scattered across the world.[61] The early Italian botanical gardens at Pisa and Padua, founded in 1544–5 received plants from travellers to the new and old worlds.[62] Diplomats and members of the trading companies sent or brought back specimens from the Ottoman empire. Edward Pococke, chaplain to the Turkey merchants in Aleppo in 1630–6 brought back a plane tree and fig tree, which still survive in Christ Church College in Oxford.[63] The trickle of seeds brought back to Europe in the sixteenth century became a flood in the seventeenth. During the 1690s the seeds sent back from the settlements apparently filled a barber's shop,

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Thither, of the Island of Chusan, of the Several Sorts of Tea, of the Fishing, Agriculture of the Chinese, Etc. with Several Observations Not Hitherto Taken Notice of'. *Philosophical Transactions*, 23 (1702): 1201–1209.

56   IOR private papers D993, 'BANKS, (Joseph), Sir Memorial dated 27 December 1788'.

57   British Library Sloane MS 4039, f. 85.

58   British Library Sloane MS 3323, ff. 81–84.

59   Kilpatrick, *Gifts from the Gardens of China*, 45.

60   John Harvey, 'Coronary Flowers and their "Arabick" Background', in Russell (ed.) *'Arabick' Interest*, 297–303.

61   Richard Drayton, *Nature's Government*.

62   Cristina Bellorini, *The World of Plants in Renaissance Tuscany* (Farnham, Surrey: Routledge, 2015).

63   Harvey, 'Coronary Flowers and their "Arabick" Background'.

which the Society turned over to the Royal Society to experiment with. The Society passed these seeds onto their network of gardeners with some impressive results.[64] By this stage, innovations like heated greenhouses were beginning to enable gardeners to grow plants that would not earlier have survived.

Gardening was a key part of the early East India Company settlements, each of which contained several 'Company' and private gardens. Again, these gardens served a number of functions, practical and symbolic. In Mughal India, similarly to Europe, gardens were symbolic of territorial claims and orderly government. The Company garden in Madras, the EICs most important Indian settlement during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries were redesigned at the beginning of the eighteenth century to include wide walk ways, fish ponds, and bowling green and a large space for the display of 'curiosities'. In 1708, the Company used the garden to receive an important grant from the Mughal rulers of nearby Arcot.[65] Governors of the settlements and the surgeons often requested plants from other settlements or from London to grow as food or export crops or for use in medicine in the Company gardens. The Company gardens were often tended by slaves, some of whom became experts, and were rewarded through payments or allowances.[66]

Astronomy, Physics, and Mathematics

In 1676, Edmond Halley (1656–1742) left Oxford to travel to the EIC settlement of St Helena in the South Atlantic. He was carrying a sextant with a radius of 5 ½ feet, quadrant of about 2-foot radius, a pendulum clock, a telescope of 24 metres, and some smaller telescopes, and two micrometres.[67] On a high point of the island, he built a small observatory with the aim of compiling a catalogue of the southern stars and observing the transit of Mercury. Accurately observing and timing this astronomical event could, as Halley later pointed out, help determine the parallax of the sun and hence the distance between the earth and the sun. Halley's own estimation was, however, only about one-fifth of the true distance. Despite poor weather conditions, Halley determined the position of 341 stars, which he published in his catalogue of 1678–9 and which were later incorporated into John Flamsteed's *Historia Coelestis Britannica* of 1725.[68]

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64   Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge,* Ch. 4, 133.

65   Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge,* Ch. 4, 126; Stern, *Company State*, 199.

66   Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge,* Ch. 6.

67   Eugene F. McPike (ed.), *Correspondence and Papers of Edmond Halley* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932). 'Memoir of Halley, by (?) Martin Folkes', 2.

68   Angus Armitage, *Edmond Halley* (London: Nelson, 1966), 29–36.

In practice, the value of Halley's own observations and of the transit of Venus that occurred in 1761 and was famously observed by Captain Cook were limited by weather conditions and the difficulty of keeping clocks telling the correct time aboard ship or in hot and humid conditions. It was the difficulties involved in using pendulum clocks to keep accurate time aboard ship that prompted the investigations of Robert Hooke and Christiaan Huygens into spring-wound watches.[69] Halley's make-shift observatory was the only one in the Company settlements until the founding of the Madras Observatory in the late eighteenth century and was not apparent maintained after his departure. Nonetheless, as Halley pointed out in his *Atlas Maritimus & Commercialis*, the Royal Society did succeed in collecting observations of latitude and, to some degree, longitude from locations across the world through their contacts with diplomats, travellers, and member of the trading companies.[70] Equipping a variety of people to make observations was aided by the development of a number of specialist workshops and shops in London by the mid-seventeenth century.[71] The task of determining longitude and the development of marine chronometers to enable more accurate measurements at sea were from 1714 onwards taken up by the Board of Longitude.[72] Members of the EIC provided both demand for instruments and data from their observations in the eighteenth century.[73]

In travelling to St Helena, Halley was following the example of other astronomers of his age including John Greaves (1602–1652), who under the patronage of Archbishop Laud, had travelled to Constantinople, Rhodes, Alexandria, and Cairo, where he carried out observations and surveyed the pyramids. As well as making his own observations, Greaves collected works on astronomy in Arabic and Persian during his travels. In making use of Arabic and Persian texts, Greaves was following the example of earlier European astronomers, including Copernicus, whose use of the Tusi couple developed by Nasir al-Din al-Tusi

69 A. R. Hall, 'Robert Hooke and Horology', *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London.* 8, 2 (Apr., 1951): 167–177 Huygens had also perfected the pendulum clock, beginning in 1657.

70 Edmond Halley, *Atlas Maritimus & Commercialis: Or, A General View of the World so far as Relates to Trade and Navigation* (London, 1728).

71 James A. Bennett, 'Shopping for instruments in London and Paris', in Smith and Findlen (eds.), *Merchants and Marvels*, 370–398.

72 Cambridge Digital Library, *Board of Longitude,* https//cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/collections/longitude. Last accessed 23 November 2017.

73 Alexi Baker, 'Commissioner of longitude', Katy Barret and Eoin Philipps, 'Chronometer' and Richard Dunn, 'Lunar distance method' in Cambridge Digital Library, *Board of Longitude.*

(1201–1274) was central to his explanation of the motion of heavenly bodies in *Commentariolus* and *De revolutionibus*. How Copernicus became aware of the Tusi couple remains uncertain, but it was probably via a later text referring to al-Tusi's work which had arrived in Italy as a result of diplomatic contacts and conflicts between parts of the Ottoman and Persian empires and parts of Italy, notably Venice and Padua.[74] The European astronomers who followed Copernicus became aware of the work that had been carried out in the fifteenth century observatory of Ulug Beg (Muhammad Turghay, 1393–1449) in Samarkand, in Central Asia, then part of the Timurid empire. Greaves' collection of manuscripts included Ulug Beg's work *Zij-I Jadid-i Sultani*.[75] Further copies of this work arrived in Oxford and Thomas Hyde used them for his translation of the work, commissioned by the Royal Society, in 1665.[76]

As well as containing mathematical innovations like the Tusi couple, Arabic and Persian astronomical texts, along with the ancient Greek and Roman texts, could be used to answer questions like whether the obliquity (axial tilt) of the earth and the moon's orbit had changed over time. For example, Halley correctly argued based on a comparison of measurements by Ptolemy, al-Battani, and contemporary observers for the secular acceleration of the moon over time. Making astronomical observations and consulting a range of astronomical texts also had practical implications: notably for navigation and mapping and for calendrical reform, which was an important question in the seventeenth century, which saw the transition from the Gregorian to the Julian calendars. Joseph Scalinger (1540–1609) who introduced the modern system of reckoning time, made a comprehensive survey of calendrical systems, including Japanese and Mexican.[77]

By the seventeenth century, natural philosophers had access to some data regarding Asian astronomical and calendrical traditions. The best positioned Europeans to acquire information about Chinese science were Jesuit missionaries. The Jesuit mission was associated with the mathematical and astronomical sciences from 1600, when Matteo Ricci took up residency in Beijing and

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74   Peter Barker and Tofigh Heidarzadeh, 'Copernicus, the Ṭūsī couple and the East-West Exchange in the Fifteenth Century', in Miguel A. Granada, Patrick Boner and Dario Tessicini, *Unifying Heaven and Earth: Essays in the History of Early Modern Cosmology* (Barcelona: Publicacions I Edicions De La Universitat De Barcelona, 2016), 19–57.

75   There are copies in the Bodleian, Greaves 5 and in St John's College. C.f. Raymond Mercier, 'English Orientalists and Mathematical Astronomy', in Russell (ed.) *Arabick Interest*, 158–214.

76   Thomas Hyde, *Gadāwil-i Mawāḍi'-I Tawābit Dar Ṭūl Wa-'araḍ Kih Bi-Raṣad Yāfta Ast Uluǵ Bīk Ibn-Šāhru_h Ibn-Tīmūr Sive Tabvlæ Long. Ac Lat. Stellarum Fixarvm* (Oxford, 1665).

77   Mercier, 'English Orientalists and Mathematical Astronomy'.

several Jesuits were appointed to the Imperial Astronomical Bureau. From mid-century, a group of French Jesuits became involved with the surveys carried out by the Qing emperor Kangxi (r. 1662–1723).[78] In India, the early eighteenth century ruler of Jaipur, Jai Singh (r. 1699–1743), built on the cosmopolitan exchanges between Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit astronomy that had taken place in the Mughal courts from Akbar onwards. Jai Singh also engaged with Ulug Beg's work. He built huge astronomical observatories in Jaipur, [Delhi and Ujjain] and gathered experts around him, including a group of Portuguese Jesuits and in collaboration with them, sent a delegation to Lisbon in 1728–30, returning with copies of the works of French astronomer Philippe de la Hire (1640–1718) and John Flamsteed (1646–1719). A similar exchange occurred between France and Siam, where King Narai requested telescopes, time pieces, terrestrial and celestial globes and astronomical tables from the Paris Observatory, which a delegation from the Siamese kingdom to Paris visited in 1685. During the 1680s, King Narai had observatories built in Siam and joined French astronomers in observing events like lunar eclipses.[79]

In contrast with French and Portuguese missionaries and diplomats in Asia, neither EIC servants nor scholars in Britain engaged directly with astronomy in Asia before the mid-eighteenth century. The reasons for this probably included the lack of direct contact in Protestant Britain with Jesuits, equipped as they were with an unusual level of training in both natural philosophy and languages. While some EIC servants did learn Persian in the settlements, Sanskrit was almost unknown to them and their scholarly contacts in Britain in this period and this ruled out access to the classics of *jyotisha* (astral sciences) as well as much of the newer work (and instruments) that had been produced as a result of dialogue with Persian astronomy in the Mughal period.[80] Chinese was also off limits to most British factors and scholars in this period. There are a few exceptions to this general lack of engagement. The EIC factor John Marshall who worked in the Bengal factories in the 1670s tried to relate his conversations about religious philosophy with a local Brahmin, Madhusudana Radha, to questions about time, astronomy, and metaphysics.[81] Thomas Hyde used his interactions with the Chinese convert to Christianity, Micheal Shen Fuzong to discuss questions including astronomy, and Shen annotated Hyde's translation

78   Steven J. Harris, 'Jesuit Scientific Activity in the Overseas Missions, 1540–1773', *Isis*, 96, 1 (2005): 71–79.

79   Hodges, 'Western Science in Siam'.

80   Dhruv Raina, 'Revisiting Social Theory and History of Science in Early Modern South Asia and Colonial India'. *Extrême-orient Extrême-Occident* 36 (2014): 191–210.

81   See Winterbottom, *Hybrid Knowledge*, Ch. 3.

of Ulug Beg's star catalogue.[82] Hyde also had access to the astronomical work of Ferdinand Verbiest, one of the Jesuits serving the Qing dynasty.[83] Members of the EIC settlements did not become aware of Jai Singh's observatories until the account of Robert Barker in the 1770's, who assumed them to be ancient monuments.[84] Direct engagement between Indian and British astronomy did not begin before the late eighteenth century and was by then hampered by the inequality of access to patronage and information involved in colonial rule.

Conclusion

Early modern natural philosophers and trading companies were connected through their knowledge practices. These included keeping detailed records of correspondence, meetings, and committees, soliciting information from a range of correspondents, recirculating this information for corrections and additions, and using the information as the basis of experiments and theories (whether about the potential products of a particular place, the best crops to introduce to a settlement, or what caused the variation of Earth's magnetic field). In this sense, the concept of 'transoceanic corporate sociology' could be applied as easily to savant institutions like the Royal Society as to trading companies. As Harold Cook has argued, the ways in which scientific and economic development unfolded from the scientific revolution to the nineteenth century were not inevitable; however, science and economy were co-produced.[85] Both science (or natural philosophy) and trade are highly specific to particular places as well as taking place on a global scale. For example, searching for useful plants was a global activity during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but was shaped not only by the environments of particular places but by local systems of value and classification. Similarly, the exchange of commodities was determined not only by the available commodities but also by local conventions governing investment and labour.

In collecting and compiling information, members of trading companies were heavily reliant on the collaboration of local informants and collaborators,

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82   Shen' annotations to the tables derived from Ulug̕ Beg are in British Library Reg. 16 B. XVIII (now classified as a British Library printed book 10055.ee.32), fol. 28.

83   Noël Golvers, *Ferninand Verbiest S.J. (1623–1688) and the Chinese heaven,* Leuven Chinese Studies, XII, (Louvrain, 2003).

84   Robert Barker, 'An Account of the Bramins Observatory at Benares', *Philosophical Transactions*, 67 (1777): 601.

85   Harold Cook, 'Moving About and Finding Things Out: Economies and Sciences in the Period of the Scientific Revolution', *Osiris*, 27, 1 (2012): 101–132.

willing or unwilling. The types of information they collected were also shaped by local realities and knowledge systems. Thus, the forms of knowledge produced in company settlements integrated global and local realities. The information that was imparted by informants must be assessed according to the priorities and aims of the informants themselves as well as the company servants that recorded it and passed it on, again with their own agendas shaping its form and contents. In this sense, natural and mechanical knowledge was the product of negotiation. Demonstrating European knowledge and command over the natural world by gifting curiosities was an important sense in which trading companies could make themselves useful, subordinate themselves, to local rulers; a process that was vital to obtaining the network of grants and charters that they required to maintain their position.

Natural and mechanical knowledge was useful and hence valuable knowledge, to trading companies, natural philosophers, and rulers. Therefore it was rarely freely exchanged, but was guarded and carefully dispersed to the best source of patronage in limited quantities. While the interests of these different parties overlapped, therefore, this did not lead to an open and free exchange of information, but to competition. The characterisation of the age as one of 'contained conflict' thus applies as much to the exchange of knowledge as of commodities and land.[86] In the early modern period and beyond, both trade and natural philosophy were ruled as much by secrecy and close circles as by circulation and open networks.[87] Therefore, the specific characteristics of national or colonial science that emerged from this period were formed by ignorance as well as by knowledge; by the failures to communicate information across cultures as much as the successes.[88]

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86 For contained conflict see Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Mughals and Franks: Explorations in Connected History* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005).

87 Koen Vermeir and Dániel Margócsy, 'States of Secrecy: An Introduction', *British Journal for the History of Science*, 45 (2) (2012): 153–164 and other papers in this special issue.

88 Robert N. Proctor and London Schiebinger (eds.) *Agnotology: The Making and Unmaking of Ignorance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008).

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Scholarship

Simon Mills

On 23 January 1696 the scholar, librarian, and high-church nonjuror Thomas Smith wrote to his friend in Oxford, Edward Bernard, the Savilian professor of astronomy. From his letter we learn of Smith's intention to set out from his lodgings in Dean Street, Soho and to walk the two miles, past Lincoln's Inn and Saint Paul's cathedral, to the Royal Exchange, where Edward Jarman's new baroque building graced the commercial centre of the city of London. There, he told Bernard, he hoped to find the English Levant Company's newly-appointed chaplain 'or any other merchant or Captaine' setting out in the next fleet for Iskenderun, the port for the Levant Company's operations in Syria. Through these, his 'Turkey acquaintance', he planned to convey letters from Bernard and their mutual friend, the archbishop of Dublin Narcissus Marsh—letters bound for the Syrian city of Aleppo.[1]

This vignette, the bookish divine weaving his way among 'the great concourse of merchants and commanders of ships', as one later writer described the scene between Threadneedle and Cornhill Street, provides us with a glimpse of two worlds rarely connected in the historiography of early modern England.[2] Smith and Bernard were habitués of darkened college libraries, practitioners of the arts of a recondite species of scholarship. Between them, they had delved into such nebulous topics as the Aramaic paraphrases of the Old Testament, antique weights and measures, the manuscript holdings of English libraries. This was the kind of thing easily ridiculed by the dawning age of Enlightenment; yet something of the intellectual vitality of their interests,

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1 T. Smith to E. Bernard, 23 Jan. 1696, Bodl. Oxf. MS Smith 57, fol. 539. Smith had referred to his 'Turkey acquaintance' in an earlier letter to Bernard (Bodl. Oxf. MS Smith 57, fol. 527), although had noted here that: 'I seldome or never go upon the Exchange or meet with any of my Turkey acquaintance …'.

2 'The Voyage of Don Manoel Gonzales, (Late Merchant) of the City of Lisbon in Portugal, to Great-Britain', in *A Collection of Voyages and Travels … from the Curious and Valuable Library of the Earl of Oxford* (London, 1745), vol. i the authorship of this text has been attributed to Daniel Defoe: see John Robert Moore, 'The Authorship of *The Voyage of Don Manoel Gonzales*', in John Robert Moore, *Defoe in the Pillory and Other Studies* (Bloomington: Literary Licensing, LLC, 1939), 74–103; however, also P. N. Furbank and W. R. Owens, *Defoe De-Attributions: A Critique of J. R. Moore's Checklist* (London: Bloomsbury 3PL, 1994), 150.

the culture of erudition and sociability in which they participated, has been captured by recent work which we might broadly label 'history of scholarship', in particular work concerned with recovering early modern 'antiquarian' and 'Orientalist' practices.[3] All of this was, at least on the surface, a far cry from the bustling commercial environment of the Royal Exchange—a social milieu carefully delineated in the work of Perry Gauci, Natasha Glaisyer, Ann Saunders, and others.[4]

However, this image of Smith seeking out a departing merchant points us to one way in which these two spheres might connect. Moreover, this connection might be illuminated by thinking of Smith's walk across London as, on a conceptual level, a movement between two early modern corporations: the Oxford college and the London trading company.[5] Smith's promise to seek out his 'Turkey acquaintance' to deliver the letters of an Oxford scholar and a Church of Ireland archbishop to Syria provides us with an illustration of the corporation in its guise—as set out above—of an agent of knowledge exchange, moving ideas and scholarship across continents and cultural boundaries. The role of the corporation in the production of scientific knowledge has been explored in an influential article by Steven J. Harris.[6] We might take as a starting point here the fact that several of Harris's claims about the corporation in its relationship to the 'big sciences'—its way of organising 'mobility', and its facilitation of 'corporate' or 'organized travel'—might apply equally when we turn

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3   Joseph M. Levine, *The Battle of the Books: History and Literature in the Augustan Age* (Ithaca, 1991); T. Harmsen, 'Letters of Learning: a Selection from the Correspondence of Thomas Hearne and Thomas Smith, 1703–1710', *Lias* 24 (1997): 37–66; Mordechai Feingold, 'Oriental Studies', in *The History of the University of Oxford*, 8 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984–2000), vol. iv, ed. N. Tyacke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 449–503; Dmitri Levitin, *Ancient Wisdom in the Age of the New Science: Histories of Philosophy in England, c. 1640–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 155; G. J. Toomer, *Eastern Wisedome and Learning: The Study of Arabic in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 243–8, 299–305.

4   Perry Gauci, *Emporium of the World: the Merchants of London 1660–1800* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007); idem, *The Politics of Trade: The Overseas Merchant in State and Society, 1660–1720* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Natasha Glaisyer, *The Culture of Commerce in England, 1660–1720* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006); Ann Saunders (ed.), *The Royal Exchange* (London: Guardian Royal Exchange, 1997).

5   Following the schema of William Shepheard, *Of Corporations, Fraternities, and Guilds* (London, 1659), 1–2, we might also consider the archbishop as a third kind of corporation: 'a Body Politick that indureth in perpetual succession ... And this politick body, is either of one person only, and so the King was, and the Lord Protector is, a Body politick. So the *Bishops*, *Deans*, *Prebends*, and *Canons* of Churches were ...'.

6   Steven J. Harris, 'Long-Distance Corporations, Big Sciences, and the Geography of Knowledge', *Configurations* 6.2 (1998): 269–303.

from the natural sciences to forms of humanistic enquiry.[7] Most substantially in terms of the themes of this volume, the case of Smith will provide us with a snapshot of the corporation in its integrative capacity, facilitating a connection between a series of national and global contexts. Examining more closely the circumstances which had led to Smith's setting out across London for the Exchange on a winter's day will enable us to glimpse one aspect of the corporation's global sociology.

Smith was already in his late fifties at the time this letter was written. Nearly thirty years earlier, he had travelled to the Levant himself. In 1668 he had taken leave from his fellowship at Magdalen College, Oxford to accompany the ambassador to the Ottoman Empire Sir Daniel Harvey to Istanbul, where he would serve as a chaplain to the embassy for the next three years. During this time, he would receive a salary of two-hundred dollars (around fifty pounds) per annum from the English Levant Company.[8] This was standard practice by the 1660s. From at least the first decade of the seventeenth century, the company supplied the funds to provide the ambassador with a chaplain, whom it clearly regarded as its own employee.[9] From the 1610s (the earliest period from which regular minutes of the Levant Company's General Court survive) the company had developed a formal procedure for vetting, electing, and appointing chaplains. In subsequent years, young clergymen were posted to what had emerged as the Levant Company's two most important trading centres: Izmir (Greek Smyrna) in western Turkey and Aleppo in Syria. Nor was the Levant Company the only one of early modern England's trading corporations to send chaplains to its overseas settlements. By the Restoration, young clergyman like Smith, undeterred by the countless perils of foreign travel, might find employment in a number of English overseas settlements—from the East India Company's factories in Java and on the west coast of India, to the colony in Virginia.[10]

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7   Harris, 'Long-Distance Corporations', 274–5.

8   TNA SP 105/152, fols 186ᵛ-189ᵛ.

9   This point was made explicit in the Levant Company's advice to the ambassador Thomas Glover consequent on Glover's attempt to expel William Biddulph from his household, Levant Company to Thomas Glover, 9 Jun. 1607, TNA SP 105/110, fol. 9ᵛ: 'And albeit your servant yet he was chosen our officer And ther[e]fore howsoever he hath failed soe farre as might deserve sequestration from his place, yet wee thinke it too hard to turne him out of your house in a strange country w[i]thout freinds or means untill our directions had bene knowne'.

10   For an overview, see Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 219–53. J. B. Pearson, *A Biographical Sketch of the Chaplains to the Levant Company, maintained at Constantinople, Aleppo and Smyrna, 1611–1706* (Cambridge: Deighton Bell, 1883); Daniel O'Connor, *The Chaplains of the East India Company, 1601–1858* (London, 2012).

At least some of the men who took up these positions must have been motivated by financial concerns. In 1624 the East India Company sent out a recruiting letter to encourage young clerics to consider employment in its factories in India, having previously noted that 'the University aboundeth with excellent men that want means'.[11] The Levant Company permitted serving chaplains to supplement their stipends by participating in trade, and was prepared to pay wages at home in sterling to be invested in commodities to be traded abroad. For men such as Smith, however, a sojourn in the Levant was desirable for other reasons. A posting to Istanbul would bring with it a range of opportunities to further various aspects of the research programme upon which he and his Oxford colleagues were engaged—in particular, the task of recovering the languages and religions of the ancient Near East as part of a broader project to reconstruct the world of the Hebrew and Greek scriptures.

We can gain some insight into this from Smith's correspondence. In the months preceding his departure, he was to receive from his Oxford friends a series of wish lists containing questions to enquire into or books and manuscripts to be sought out. In July 1668, for example, Samuel Clarke, the 'architypographus' of the university press, passed on a request from the Oxford Arabic professor Edward Pococke that Smith 'acquaint y[ou]rself' with the Karaite Jews he was likely to encounter in Istanbul; Clarke himself was 'for Historie and Geography', asking Smith to procure in particular the works of the well-known scholar-prince Abu'l-Fida.[12] A few weeks later, Bernard wrote to Smith that 'I have had a great Inclination to the Coptick Tongue, pray blesse mee if you are soe fortunate, with a Glossarye in th[a]t Tongue or th[a]t of the Bible'.[13] In June of the same year, Smith had already received requests from the Bodleian's librarian Thomas Hyde for 'any book that treateth of Plays and Games, as Chess and Tables, or the like' (this had stemmed from Hyde's own, rather idiosyncratic, interest in Oriental games, which would result in his 1689 book *De ludibus orientalibus*) and—more conventionally—for 'a catalogue of all such books as are extant about Constantinople in any of the Eastern languages, with the prices of each'. The next month, Hyde recommended that Smith 'enquire into the Religions of any other sorts of strange people, as you have occasion,

11   Quoted in O'Connor, *Chaplains of the East India Company* (London: Continnuum 3PL), 34; on the recruiting letter see 19.

12   S. Clarke to T. Smith, 14 Jul. 1668, Oxf. Bodl. MS Smith 48, fol. 11. On the term 'architypographus', see Peter H. Sutcliffe, *The Oxford University Press: An Informal History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), xvii-xviii.

13   E. Bernard to T. Smith, 28 Jul. 1668, Oxf. Bodl. MS Smith 47, fol. 33.

and especially if you can get the authentic books of their Religions written in their own language'.[14]

The hopes invested in Smith by his colleagues were grounded in an awareness of some of the work of the chaplains who had served in the Levant earlier in the seventeenth century. In fact, a significant proportion of the manuscripts which would make the Bodleian library renowned across Europe as a treasury of Oriental learning had been acquired by Edward Pococke, who had served the Levant Company, both in Aleppo and in Istanbul, in the 1630s and 40s. Smith's contemporary, Robert Huntington, would achieve a comparable feat in Aleppo in the 1670s. In comparison with the substantial libraries compiled by Pococke and Huntington, Smith's own procurements were modest.[15] Nevertheless, he was to furnish himself with materials for a programme of scholarly publishing which he would continue for the next two decades on topics such as contemporary Ottoman culture and the Greek Orthodox church.[16] This combined a prior knowledge of Islamic and Eastern Christian history and theology, derived in large part from Smith's patristic and Oriental studies at Oxford, with the kind of first-hand reportage characteristic of the extant writings of some of the earlier chaplains who had served in the Near East and Asia. William Biddulph, for example, had given some account of the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic communities of the Levant in his *Travels*, written during his years as chaplain to the English merchants at Aleppo at the turn of the seventeenth century. Edward Terry, who had accompanied Thomas Roe's embassy to India in the 1610s, recorded his impressions of Islam and Hinduism in his later *A Voyage to East India* (1655).[17]

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14 T. Hyde to T. Smith, 8 Jun. 1668, in Thomas Hyde, *Syntagma dissertationum quas olim auctor doctissimus Thomas Hyde S.T.P.* (Oxford, 1767), vol. ii, pp. 483–4; T. Hyde to T. Smith, 18 Jul. 1668, Hyde, *Syntagma dissertationum*, vol. ii, p. 484.

15 W. D. Macray *Annals of the Bodleian Library*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1890), 149 listed three manuscripts given to the library by Smith on his return from Istanbul.

16 Thomas Smith, *Remarks upon the Manners, Religion and Government of the Turks ... and a Brief Description of Constantinople, etc* (London, 1678); idem*, An Account of the Greek Church, as to its Doctrine and Rites of Worship ... To which is added, an Account of the State of the Greek Church under Cyrillus Lucaris, Patriarch of Constantinople, with a Relation of his Sufferings and Death* (London, 1680). The most detailed study of Smith's work in these fields is Andrei N. Pippidi's 'Knowledge of the Ottoman Empire in Late Seventeenth-Century England: Thomas Smith and some of his Friends', (unpublished D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 1985).

17 William Biddulph, *The Travels of Certaine Englishmen into Africa, Asia, Troy, Bythinia, Thracia, and to the Blacke Sea* (London, 1609). On the book, and the circumstances of its production, see Gerald M. MacLean, *The Rise of Oriental Travel: English Visitors to the Ottoman Empire, 1580–1720* (Basingstoke: Houndmills, 2004), 50–114. Edward Terry, *A Voyage to East-India* (London, 1655).

Nor were chaplains the only employees of the early modern trading compa-
nies who would undertake this kind of work on behalf of English scholarship.
Glancing through the accession registers of the Bodliean library, it is striking
to observe the number of items received from ambassadors, consuls, and mer-
chants. Some of these acquisitions were far from insubstantial. In 1611 Thomas
Bodley reported on the arrival in Oxford of 'twentie severall volumes' in 'the
Syriacke, Arabicke, Turkishe and Persian tongues' procured in Aleppo by the
Levant Company's consul Paul Pindar—books which, although they were
'valued in that place at a verie highe rate', had been bestowed freely by the
consul.[18] Twenty years later, the library received a further thirty manuscripts
from Sir Thomas Roe, the Levant Company's ambassador in Istanbul. By far
Roe's most significant acquisition during his years in the Ottoman capital was
the so-called Codex Alexandrinus, a Greek manuscript of the Old and New
Testaments which Roe would obtain from the Greek Orthodox patriarch Cyril
Lukaris—recognised immediately by English scholars as a gem among early
witnesses to the Greek text of the Bible.[19] More sporadic, no doubt procured
more haphazardly, but certainly no less exotic were many individual donations
sent in by merchants. During the course of the seventeenth century, the library
was to receive such rarities as a priest's vesture inscribed with the entire Qu'ran,
its first ever book written in Sanskrit, and a Chinese map of the heavens, all of
which had been sent in by East India Company merchants.[20] As cotton, silk,
and spices were shipped between London, Iskenderun, and Surat they were
occasionally accompanied by manuscript treasures such as these. Nor were

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18   T. Bodley to T, Singleton, 5 Nov. 1611, in G. W. Wheeler (ed.), *Letters of Sir Thomas Bodley to
      the University of Oxford, 1598–1611* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927), 21–2. For some
      account of the manuscripts, see Colin Wakefield, 'Arabic Manuscripts in the Bodleian Li-
      brary: The Seventeenth-Century Collections', in *The 'Arabick' Interest of the Natural Philos-
      ophers in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. G. A. Russell (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 128–146, 129.

19   Matthew Spinka, 'Acquisition of the Codex Alexandrinus by England', *Journal of Religion*
      16 (1936): 10–29; Scot McKendrick, 'The Codex Alexandrinus or the Dangers of being a
      Named Manuscript', in Scot McKendrick and Orlaith A. O'Sullivan (eds), *The Bible as
      Book: The Transmission of the Greek Text* (London: British Library Publishing Division,
      2003), 1–16; Scott Mandelbrote, 'English Scholarship and the Greek Text of the Old Tes-
      tament, 1620–1720: The Impact of Codex Alexandrinus', in Ariel Hessayon and Nicholas
      Keene (eds), *Scripture and Scholarship in Early Modern England* (Aldershot: Routledge,
      2006), 74–93.

20   Macray, *Annals*, 108, 133, 154. See Macray's comments at 133: 'It is noticeable what a real,
      although somewhat indiscriminating, interest the London merchants appear to have tak-
      en in the Library. Continual mention occurs not merely of books but of curiosities of all
      kinds, natural and artificial, which persons engaged in commerce, chiefly with the East
      Indies, sent as for a general repository'.

manuscripts the only items which might be found occasionally on the ships chartered by the early modern corporations. Via Aaron Goodyear, a Levant Company merchant stationed in Aleppo, the Ashmolean Museum, opened at Oxford in 1683, was to receive one of its first mummies—transported from Alexandria, 'inscribed and decorated with characters and several hieroglyphic figures' (if Dmitri Levitin is right, however, and this was the same mummy later seen by John Woodward, then it did not fare well in its new home: 'after it had been for some time in our more humid air', reported the latter, it 'began to corrupt and grow mouldy, emitted a foetid and cadaverous scent, and in conclusion putrified and fell to pieces').[21]

The kind of historical-ethnographical work which had occupied Smith would also be taken up by some of the men employed in secular roles by the overseas trading companies. One of the most successful examples of this was the private secretary to the ambassador, later consul at Izmir, Paul Rycaut.[22] Rycaut would mine the first-hand experience gleaned as a diplomat at the Porte in the 1660s in his *The Present State of the Ottoman Empire*, a well-received analysis of Ottoman state and society. His interests would overlap even more closely with those of Smith's in his *The Present State of the Greek and Armenian Churches, Anno Christi, 1678* (1679), based in part on expeditions undertaken from Izmir to discover the so-called 'seven churches of Asia' addressed in the Book of Revelation.[23]

Company employees—chaplains, but also ambassadors, consuls, and merchants—could, then, use their years abroad to pursue interests related to various fields of humanistic scholarship. Here, we have a clear example of the corporations bringing Englishmen into non-European contexts. The resulting movement of things (manuscripts, antiquities) and ideas would have important implications for English intellectual life, even if the intellectual impulse for

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21 Macray, *Annals*, 149, recording the note that 'Nine shillings were paid for the carriage of a mummy from London'. Ashmolean Museum, Benefactor's Book, fol. 6^r ('… ab Alexandria advectum; exterius characteribus, et figuris aliquot hieroglyphicis inscriptum et ornatum'). Levitin, *Ancient Wisdom*, 209.

22 On Rycaut, see Sonia P. Anderson, *An English Consul in Turkey: Paul Rycaut at Smyrna 1667–1678* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Colin Heywood, 'Sir Paul Rycaut, a Seventeenth-Century Observer of the Ottoman State: Notes for a Study', in *English and Continental Views of the Ottoman Empire, 1500–1800: Papers read at a Clark Library Seminar, January 24*, 1970 (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 1972), 33–59; repr. Colin Heywood, *Writing Ottoman History: Documents and Interpretations* (Aldershot: Routledge, 2002), ch. 4.

23 Paul Rycaut, *The Present State of the Greek and Armenian Churches, Anno Christi, 1678* (London, 1679), 30–80. P. Rycaut to T. Smith, 10 Dec. 1670, Oxf. Bodl. MS Smith 53, fol. 155.

these kinds of studies rarely came from within the trading companies them-
selves. However, we can also discern aspects of a more systematic connection
between scholarly institutions and the overseas trading companies by looking
at the ways in which scholars, or patrons of scholarship, attempted to utilise
the infrastructures put in place by the corporations.

A good example of this can be found in the career of William Laud, who as
chancellor of Oxford university in the 1630s, had played a foundational role in
institutionalising the programme of Oriental scholarship which would later be
taken up by Smith—augmenting the stipend of the Hebrew professor, endow-
ing a chair in Arabic, and building up the library's holdings of Near-Eastern
manuscripts.[24] As part of these endeavours, Laud would turn to the Levant
Company. In 1634, he was behind a plan demanding of the Company, under
order of the king, that:

> every Shippe of yours at every Voyage that th[a]t makes should bring
> home one Arab: or Persian Booke to be delyvered presently to the Master
> of your Company, and by him carryed or sent to the Lord ArchBishop of
> Cant[erbury] for time being, who shall dispose of them as Wee in our
> Wisedome shall think fitt.[25]

As G. J. Toomer has pointed out, Laud's endeavours bore little fruit.[26] Within
a year, Laud had been confined to the Tower of London, and the project had
effectively come to an end. Nevertheless, the scheme perhaps provides us with
an illustration of the way in which the corporation's subordinate position in
relation to the state could be exploited by an ambitious scholarly patron—
interestingly, a similar procedure would be followed a generation later in
France, when Jean-Baptiste Colbert would draw on the Catholic missions and
the French consuls in the Levant to procure manuscripts for the library of Lou-
is XIV.

Elsewhere, we can find attempts to place young men in the overseas chap-
laincies with the intention of their using their positions to further the cause
of English scholarship. In 1629 the Oxford astronomer John Bainbridge wrote

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24   Hugh Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud, 1573–1645*, 3rd edn (Basingstoke: Houndmills, 1988),
      271–94; Mordechai Feingold, 'Patrons and Professors: the Origins and Motives for the En-
      dowment of University Chairs—in particular the Laudian Professorship of Arabic', in *The
      'Arabick' Interest of the Natural Philosophers in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. G. A. Rus-
      sell (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 109–27.
25   TNA, SP 16/260, no. 16.
26   Toomer, *Eastern Wisedome*, 108.

to the archbishop of Armagh James Ussher recommending that the latter use his influence to procure the chaplaincy in Aleppo for a certain Samson Johnson. Johnson, Bainbridge reported, having 'spent some Years in the Oriental Languages, and being desirous to improve his Knowledg therein', was 'desirous to spend his time in perfecting his Languages, and making such other Observations as may tend to the advancement of Learning'.[27] Four decades later, Thomas Hyde would ask Robert Boyle, a director of the East India Company, to place chaplains in the Company's factories to facilitate his procuring books in ancient Persian and Sanskrit—a plan which appears to have occasioned some degree of success.[28]

Beyond this, there are many more cases of figures from the world of scholarship drawing more informally on the global networks brought into being by the trading companies to further their research agendas—using merchants to procure manuscripts, making use of the ships to transport books or antiquities, or simply exploiting the companies' postal networks to obtain news from North Africa, Syria, or India.[29] On the ground in the English overseas settlements, too, embassies, consulates, and merchants' houses, in addition to the legal protection secured as a precondition for commercial activity (the 'capitulations' in the case of trade within the Ottoman empire), were essential constituents of the experience of travellers with a scholarly agenda. It is this more informal type of connection between the world of scholarship and the world of commerce which is captured by our opening vignette of Smith. The letters from Marsh concerned instructions for the chaplain in Aleppo to procure Near-Eastern manuscripts, to further the archbishop's intention of building up an Oriental library in Dublin, just as Laud had done a generation earlier at Oxford.[30] The letters from Bernard concerned an ongoing project—one which

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27   Quoted in Toomer, *Eastern Wisedome*, 119.

28   T. Hyde to R. Boyle, 23 Oct. 1671, *The Correspondence of Robert Boyle*, ed. Michael Hunter, Antonio Clericuzio, and Lawrence M. Principe, 6 vols (London: Routledge, 2001), vol. iv, 221; T. Hyde to R. Boyle, 1 Feb. 1671, *Correspondence of Boyle*, vol. iv, 238–9; T. Hyde to R. Boyle, 29 Nov. 1677, *Correspondence of Boyle*, vol. iv, 469–70. Further contacts with chaplains serving in the East India Company's factories are recorded in Hyde's letters to Captain Thomas Bowrey, e.g. BL MSS EUR E192a J. 763, no. 5, fol. 2[r]. See also T. Hyde to R. Boyle, 5 Mar. 1691, *Correspondence of Boyle*, vol. iv, 330–2; O'Connor, *Chaplains of the East India Company*, 49–50.

29   For one example, see William O'Sullivan, 'Ussher as a Collector of Manuscripts', *Hermathena* 88 (1956): 34–58; John Gywnn, 'On a Syriac MS. belonging to the Collection of Archbishop Ussher', *The Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy* xxvii (1886): 269–316.

30   W. Halifax to T. Smith, 7 Dec. 1694, Bodl. Oxf. MS Smith 45 fol. 49. Colin Wakefield, 'Archbishop Marsh's Oriental Collections in the Bodleian Library', in *The Making of Marsh's Library: Learning, Politics and Religion in Ireland, 1650–1750*, ed. Muriel McCarthy and

would involve a collaboration between merchants, chaplains, an Arab sheik, and scholars in England, France, and the Netherlands—to rediscover the ruins of Palmyra and the (then little-known and still undeciphered) Palmyrene script.[31]

We have seen, then, some of the various means by which scholars such as Smith and Bernard, or patrons of scholarship such as William Laud or Narcissus Marsh, might draw on the resources and tap into some of the infrastructures of the overseas trading companies for their own ends. The spheres of the scholarly divine—university and church—might overlap with the trading corporation in its integrative capacity.[32] However, it is worth attempting, too, to consider this question from the other side; that is to ask whether there is any way in which the trading corporations themselves fostered or promoted the interests of learning, alongside their commercial activities. The Levant Company occasionally justified its privileges as a corporate entity on the grounds that its merchants' cumulative experience of the 'Laws and customs' of Ottoman society was the most effective means of maintaining its commerce.[33] If, as Harris has argued, long distance corporations integrated 'knowledge-gathering and knowledge-producing mechanisms into their social fabric' then what, if any, implications did this have for the development of humanistic enquiries?

Reading through the minute books of the General Court of the Levant Company we can find occasional instances of the Company directors investing in scholarly projects bearing some relevance to their more immediate concerns. Most of these related either to languages or to geography. The Italian linguist Giovanni Torriano, for example, received a gratuity from the Levant Company and dedicated his 1640 Italian grammar to England's Turkey merchants—being 'in a continuall commerce with most parts of *Italy*, as well as *Turkey*, where the

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Ann Simmons (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), 76–84. Wakefield found (78) that 'Only a handful of, mostly Arabic, manuscripts in the Marsh collection can be associated with the then Aleppo chaplain, William Halifax'. See also N. Marsh to T. Smith, 6 Jan. 1699, Oxf. Bodl. MS Smith 53, fol. 155.

31   For an overview, see Iain Browning, *Palmyra* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1979), 53–76; Peter T. Daniels, 'Shewing of Hard Sentences and Dissolving of Doubts: The First Decipherment', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 108.3 (1998): 419–36.

32   See Harris's suggestive comments ('Long-Distance Corporations', 303) on how the 'Republic of Letters' 'might be reexamined as an interorganizational network where "citizenship" in the republic depended in part upon formal ties among the elites of distinct corporations'.

33   William A. Pettigrew and Tristan Stein, 'The Public Rivalry between Regulated and Joint Stock Corporations and the Development of Seventeenth-Century Corporate Constitutions', in *Historical Research* 90.248 (2017): 341–62, 354.

Italian Tongue is all in all'.[34] Torriano evidently continued to be patronised by the Levant Company during subsequent decades, and would dedicate his 1659 Italian dictionary to the governor Sir Andrew Riccard.[35] When it was brought to the attention of the General Court in the winter of 1660 that the author had 'lost all his Bookes and papers by a fire in Swithen Alley', the Company granted him a further gratuity of ten pounds 'out of a desire to incourage ingenuous designes'.[36] When the cartographer Richard Blome presented the map of the Turkish empire from his *A Geographical Description of the Four Parts of the World* dedicated to the Levant Company to the Court in 1669 he was rewarded with the sum of six pounds.[37]

The Company also provided some limited financial support and free passage on its ships to a handful of Greek youths who came to study at the English universities during the seventeenth century. In 1634, for example, a certain Matthew Muto, a Greek student at Trinity College, Cambridge, was granted an annual stipend of three pounds.[38] When in the last years of the seventeenth century a plan was set in motion to establish a Greek college at Gloucester Hall in Oxford, the scheme's initiator, Benjamin Woodroffe, appeared before the General Court and was promised free passage for all future students on the Company's ships.[39] These benefactions were no doubt also underpinned by some commercial or diplomatic rationale: the hope that the future graduates might eventually serve the Company in some capacity abroad—even if these hopes rarely appear to have come to any fruition. Yet they would also have the effect, in a small way, of furthering scholarly work.

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34   Giovanni Torriano, *The Italian Tutor, or a New and Most Complete Italian Grammer* (London, 1640), sig. A2ʳ; TNA SP 105/149, fol. 201ᵛ.

35   Giovanni Torriano, *Vocabolario Italiano & Ingleso, A Dictionary Italian & English* (London, 1659), sig. A2ʳ⁻ᵛ.

36   TNA SP 105/152, fol. 4ᵛ (30 Nov. 1660).

37   TNA SP 105/153, fol. 18ʳ (3 Mar. 1669); Richard Blome, *A Geographical Description of the Four Parts of the World* (London, 1670), sigs MM3ᵛ-MM4ʳ.

38   TNA SP 105/149, fol. 80ᵛ; this was increased to six pounds per annum the following year (fol. 102ʳ).

39   TNA SP 105/155, fol. 113ʳ. On the college, see E. D. Tappe, 'The Greek College at Oxford, 1699–1705', *Oxoniensia* xix (1954), pp. 92–111 (repr. in *Anglicanism and Orthodoxy: 300 Years After the 'Greek College' in Oxford*), ed. Peter M. Doll (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2006), 153–74; E. D. Trappe, 'Alumni of the Greek College at Oxford, 1699–1705', *Notes and Queries* (March 1955): 110–4. See also, TNA SP 105/156, pp. 110, 123, 156–8, 171, 219. *A Model of a College to be Settled in the University, for the Education of Some Youths of the Greek Church* (1689) envisioned a limited role for the Levant Company, assigning the reception of students on their arrival in England to the governor or deputy governor.

Yet the most substantial investment on the part of the Levant Company in projects tending towards the advancement of learning can be discerned when we turn, once again, to the Company's dealings with its chaplains. In appointing clerics to serve in its overseas factories, the Company directors were concerned above all with two factors: first, that ministers in the Company's employment conformed to the doctrines of the Church of England; second, that they exhibited uprightness of moral character. The duties of the chaplain as defined by the Company were fairly limited: to 'preach the word of god & administor the sacrement to the English Nation according to the cannons & constitutions of the Church of England'.[40] However, from the very early days, it is clear that the Company also valued men with proven talents in learning.[41] Testimonials on behalf of candidates frequently contained reference to a potential chaplain's scholarly capacities.[42] When the most illustrious scholar to hold the chaplaincy at Aleppo, Edward Pococke, came before the Court in March 1630, his recommendations drew attention—among his other qualities—to his 'abilitie in learning' and 'soundness in the studdy of devinitie'.[43]

The most substantial manifestation of the Company's commitment to maintaining a learned clergy was the libraries it endowed in its overseas settlements. These libraries might well have grown out of the collections of books carried over to the Levant by Company chaplains. From the early seventeenth century, the Company began the practice of assigning a one-off payment to newly-appointed chaplains to furnish themselves with books deemed necessary to their ministerial functions. Chaplains continued to have books shipped out to them during their years abroad, and it is likely that some of these remained overseas. Yet during the course of the seventeenth century, the Company began to invest more substantially in furnishing its libraries with collections of scholarly books. When the esteemed preacher Robert Frampton was recruited to serve in Aleppo in 1655 the Court decreed that, in addition to the usual twenty pounds for his private allowance, a further fifty pounds 'be laid out in Bookes'; to Frampton was assigned the task of overseeing the selection of these, which would then be 'carried over with him & remain at Aleppo for the Companies account, and for the use of himselfe & such as may succeed him in that charge'.[44] The library would grow over the years, in part through

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40   TNA SP 105/149, fol. 203ᵛ.

41   TNA SP 105/148, fols 39ᵛ, 69ʳ.

42   Anna Lady Wake to Sec. Conway, 11 Nov. 1627, TNA SP 16/84, fol. 71ʳ; TNA SP 105/148, fol. 147ᵛ, 158ʳ; TNA SP 14/184, fols 19–20.

43   TNA SP 105/148, fol. 218ᵛ.

44   TNA NA SP 105/151, fol. 131ᵛ.

donations, and in part through further grants to subsequent chaplains.⁴⁵ At Izmir, the chaplain John Luke played a comparable role in augmenting the factory's scholarly resources. In 1676 the Court responded favourably to Luke's request that three volumes of Matthew Poole's *Synopsis criticorum aliorumque sacrae scripturae interpretum*—an important compilation of a vast amount of Renaissance biblical criticism—'bee bought & sent thether [to Izmir] to bee chained in the Comp[any] Library'.⁴⁶ Thomas Smith performed similar services in Istanbul. Following his return to England, Smith received a letter from Edward Brown, his successor as chaplain at the embassy, acknowledging that 'you have left a very great obligation to all scholars that shall ever come hither, to confess you a great benefactor to the library, w[hi]ch I at this time enjoy. S[i]r I find many excellent books here, of your consignation, which I do heartily thank you for'.⁴⁷ By the end of the century, the libraries in Aleppo, Izmir, and—we can assume—Istanbul each contained several hundred volumes.⁴⁸

It is no surprise, given the involvement of the chaplains in compiling these collections, that their scope reflected the humanistic intellectual culture of the universities. What is perhaps more striking is that some of the most technical and most expensive books were acquired as gifts from the governor, Sir Andrew Riccard, and his wife, Lady Susannah Riccard. In 1666 Riccard, at the request of John Luke, had given 'as a Gift to the Compa[ny] and as the foundation of a large Library at Smyrna' all six volumes of the London Polyglot Bible—to 'remayne at Smyrna for the use of the Company and be chained and made fast'.⁴⁹ Four years later, he was to present the same library with the first volume of Poole's *Synopsis* and Edmund Castell's *Lexicon heptaglotton* (a dictionary, designed in part as an aid to reading the Polyglot Bible).⁵⁰ Further donations included volume two of Poole's *Synopsis*, all six volumes of the Polyglot for Aleppo, and copies for both libraries of William Seaman's Turkish translation of the New Testament and Turkish grammar.⁵¹ In 1678 Lady Riccard gave notice

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45   TNA SP 105/154, fol. 213ᵛ; TNA SP 105/155, fol. 28ᵛ; TNA SP 105/155, fol. 176ᵛ.

46   TNA SP 105/154, fols 2ᵛ, 4ʳ.

47   E. Brown to T. Smith, 24 May 1677, Oxf. Bodl. MS Smith 48, fol. 11.

48   TNA SP 105/145, fols 157–164: 'A Catalogue of the Library belonging to the English Nation at Aleppo, taken in the yeare of o[u]r Lord 1688'; TNA SP 105/145, fols 301–2: 'A Catalogue of the Books in the Library belonging to the English Nation at Smyrna, taken in the year of our Lord 1702'. I have not found a record of the Istanbul library catalogue among the Levant Company papers.

49   TNA SP 105/152, fol. 159ʳ.

50   TNA SP 105/153, fol. 34ʳ.

51   TNA SP 105/153, fol. 94ᵛ. On Seaman and his Turkish Bible, see Alastair Hamilton, 'Seaman, William (1606/7–1680)', ODNB, online edn; Noel Malcolm, 'Comenius, Boyle, Oldenburg,

of her intention to furnish the library at Aleppo with the first three volumes of Pool's *Synopsis* (at which the company agreed to provide the other two).[52]

What was the purpose of these donations? Riccard's and Lady Riccard's benefactions most likely reflect a concern to promote religion in the overseas factories, rather than scholarship per se. This can be inferred from considering the parallel provision for libraries in the East India Company's overseas settlements. The two cases were similar: the East India Company directors were prepared to cover the expenses and the chaplains were involved in the selection of appropriate books. As Daniel O'Connor has noted, even small factories like that of Hirado in Japan acquired their own libraries; larger factories, like those at Bantam and Surat, built up more substantial collections.[53] As in the Levant, these included some important works of scholarship: the factory at Surat, for example, possessed the *Critici sacri* (1660; a compilation of biblical commentaries which formed the basis of Poole's later *Synopsis*) as well as the works of some of the Church Fathers.[54] In 1659 Thomas Rich, a former director, gave two sets of the Polyglot Bible for the factories at Surat and Fort St George. The minutes record the missionary hopes behind the donation; the books were given 'so that those may make good use of them in propagating the gospel among the people and instructing themselves in some of these languages'.[55] This reflects, too, the East India Company's openness to the schemes of figures such as Robert Boyle, Hyde, and the bishop of Oxford John Fell to propagate the Gospel in the East—constitutive of what has been referred to as an 'evangelical awakening'.[56]

As O'Connor has noted, there is little indication of what effect these books had in the propagation of the Gospel abroad.[57] Nevertheless, the libraries were to demarcate a place within the overseas communities where scholarly activities could flourish. We have seen already that in Izmir the books were chained to the shelves. The Court of the East India Company ordered that at Surat the books be stored 'in a room appointed purposely for the same and not at any time removed thence into any particular man's chamber, without a receipt first

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and the Translation of the Bible into Turkish', *Church History and Religious Culture* 87.3 (2007): 327–62; Toomer, *Eastern Wisedome*, 215–18.

52   TNA SP 105/154, fol. 57ʳ.

53   O'Connor, *Chaplains of the East India Company*, 51–2.

54   O'Connor, *Chaplains of the East India Company*, 52.

55   Quoted in O'Connor, *Chaplains of the East India Company*, 52.

56   Donald F. Lach and Edwin J. Van Kley, *Asia in the Making of Europe: Volume III, A Century of Advance. Book One: Trade, Missions, Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 288.

57   O'Connor, *Chaplains of the East India Company*, 52.

to be given to the minister for the same'.[58] By the eighteenth century, the library in Aleppo housed not only books but at least one stone with an engraved Greek inscription.[59] It might be useful to consider here the way in which intellectual historians increasingly have turned to thinking about the *spaces* of knowledge and knowledge production;[60] the libraries might be thought of as one of the '*lieux de savoir*' mapped in the ongoing work of Christian Jacob—sites for language learning, composition, and scholarly collaboration.[61] They could provide the backdrop to moments of intellectual exchange across confessional and linguistic boundaries. The letters of Smith, for example, record him sharing European books with various figures he was to meet in the Ottoman capital—Albert Bobowski, the Polish convert to Islam, and, through him, Arabic- and Turkish-speaking scholars.[62] In this respect, we might think of the role of scholarship within the Levant Company's and the East India Company's settlements abroad as constitutive of the corporations as processes of negotiation; the corporation's 'inclusive sociology' in a 'global field of view' provides a useful model for thinking about how the exchange and circulation of knowledge could be effected in specific overseas contexts.

It is beyond doubt that the companies' decisions to invest in the scholarly resources in their overseas settlements contributed to the realisation of some of the intellectual projects pursued by chaplains and consuls, some of whose activities we have sketched above. In Aleppo, for example, books written in situ, such as the chaplain Henry Maundrell's hugely-successful *A Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem* (1703), and the factor marine and future consul Alexander Drummond's *Travels through Different Cities of Germany, Italy, Greece, and Several Parts of Asia, as far as the Banks of the Euphrates* (1754) bear the traces of their reliance on the materials accumulated in the factory library.[63] We should

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58   Quoted in O'Connor, *Chaplains of the East India Company*, 52.

59   Alexander Drummond, *Travels through Different Cities of Germany, Italy, Greece, and Several Parts of Asia, as far as the Banks of the Euphrates* (London, 1754), 237.

60   See in particular the comments of David Armitage, 'The International Turn in Intellectual History', in Darrin M. McMahon and Samuel Moyn (eds), *Rethinking Modern European Intellectual History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 232–52, esp. 239–42.

61   Christian Jacob (ed.), *Lieux de savoir: Tome 1, Espaces et communautés* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2007); *Lieux de savoir: Tome 2, Les mains de l'intellect* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2011).

62   Some of these links are explored in Pippidi, 'Knowledge of the Ottoman Empire in Late Seventeenth-Century England'.

63   Henry Maundrell, *A Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem at Easter, A. D. 1697* (Oxford, 1703); Drummond, *Travels*. Examples include Maundrell's reference to Casaubon's notes on Strabo (Maundrell, *A Journey*, 42; citing the library's copy of Isaac Casaubon, *Commentarius et castigationes ad lib. Strabonis geograph. xvii* (Geneva, 1587), 213; TNA SP 105/145, fol. 163); and to the geography of the Flemish author Christian van Adrichem (Maundrell, *A*

be wary, however, of seeing in this any more direct connection between the political and commercial intentions of the companies and the work undertaken abroad by chaplains and other company employees.[64] The impetus for this kind of work came from elsewhere—even if the opportunities for undertaking it had been provided by the financial support and the infrastructures of the Levant Company.

This would no doubt change in the second half of the eighteenth century, concomitant with the East India Company's transformation from a commercial into a colonial institution. A 1768 proposal to found an Oxford chair in Persian—attributed to the future governor-general of Bengal Warren Hastings—is indicative of an increasingly close-knit relationship between scholarly interests and the more utilitarian concerns of the overseas corporation.[65] The Oxford Arabic professor Joseph White's collaboration with Hastings's Persian secretary William Davy on the 'Institutes' of the emperor Timur—the Persian text of which was printed on the press established in Calcutta in the 1780s by Daniel Stuart and Joseph Cooper—reflects something of the same intersection between scholarship and the infrastructures of the 'company state'.[66] William Jones's rise to fame as one of Europe's most eminent Orientalists—from promising young scholar at Oxford in the 1760s; to judge in Calcutta in the 1780s; to pioneer of the study of Sanskrit literature as the

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Journey, 23; citing the library's copy of Christian van Adrichem, *Theatrum terrae sanctae et biblicarum historiarum* (Cologne, 1593), 186; SP 105/145, fol. 157). Drummond's letters from Iskenderun to the chaplain John Hemming (BL Add MS 45932) frequently depict him asking the chaplain to supply him with references to books in the factory library.

64   I can see no evidence, for example, to support Nabil Matar's claim that Henry Maundrell 'went on his journey to gather information about the region that might prove useful in England's commercial and political goals'; Nabil I. Matar, 'The Sufi and the Chaplain: 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Nablūsī and Henry Maundrell', in *Through the Eyes of the Beholder: The Holy Land, 1517–1713*, ed. Judy A. Hayden and Nabil I. Matar (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 165–184, 166.

65   *Proposal for establishing a Professorship of the Persian Language in the University of Oxford* (Oxford, 1768); P. J. Marshall, 'Warren Hastings as Scholar and Patron', *Statesmen, Scholars and Merchants: Essays presented to Dame Lucy Sutherland*, ed. A. Whiteman, J. S. Bromley, and P. G. M. Dickson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 242–62.

66   Joseph White, *A Specimen of the Civil and Military Institutes of Timour, or Tamerlane* (Oxford, 1780); Joseph White and William Davy, *Institutes Political and Military, written originally in the Mogul [or rather, Jagatai-Turki] Language by the Great Timour, improperly called Tamerlane* (Oxford, 1783); Joseph White and William Davy, *Tuzūkāt-i Tīmūrī, Institutes, Political and Military, of the Emperor Timour* (Calcutta, 1785). On the press, see Abhijit Gupta, 'The History of the Book in the Indian Subcontinent', in *The Book: A Global History*, ed. Michael J. F. Suarez and H. R. Woudhuysen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 553–72, 560.

motivating force behind the Asiatick Society of Bengal—is exemplary of the same trend. Jones's indebtedness to the kind of studies undertaken in the seventeenth century by Pococke, Hyde, Smith, and others would reward further investigation; but background to his career—scholarly Orientalism fused with emergent British colonialism—was something new.[67]

Conclusion

We have seen, then, that tracing the ways in which scholarship overlapped with, and found a place to flourish within the early modern trading corporation might shed some light on the corporation's distinctive global sociology. The role of scholarship within the corporation might be viewed in relation to the corporation's integrative quality. As English scholars looked to the East in the seventeenth century, the emergent forms of Oriental scholarship (which in their origins had no connection to the motivations and concerns of the trading companies) might nevertheless overlap with the infrastructures—the practical mechanisms for moving people, goods, and information around the globe—brought about by the corporations. Here again, the comparison with Harris's account of the corporations' role in the development of the 'big sciences' is worth stressing. As for Harris, 'situating knowledge and its means of acquisition in the context of corporations allows knowledge production to be viewed both as "local" and as "distributed" without privileging the former over the latter', so the corporation might provide us with a way of linking Smith's interactions with Turkey merchants in the 1690s to his encounters with Islamic scholars in Ottoman Istanbul some thirty years earlier.

Yet two further aspects of the corporation in a global context might be illuminated by considering the role of scholarship within it. The subordinate quality of the corporation to the state might provide us with a way of thinking about how patrons of learning in positions of authority could exploit the corporation for scholarly ends. The corporation as a process of negotiation might prove useful for a better understanding of the mechanics of intellectual exchange. One of the various ways in which the trading corporations might

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67   Among the extensive body of work on Jones and early oriental scholarship in colonial India, see Rosane Rocher, 'British Orientalism in the Eighteenth Century: the Dialectics of Knowledge and Government', in *Orientalism and the Postcolonial Predicament: Perspectives on South Asia*, ed. Carol A. Breckenridge and Peter van der Veer (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1993), 215–49.

'provide means for historians to view cross-cultural interactions' could certainly be glimpsed by looking more closely at the place of scholarship within them—both in seventeenth-century England, and beyond.[68]

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68   William A. Pettigrew, 'Corporate Constitutionalism and the Dialogue between the Global and the Local in Seventeenth-Century English History', *Itinerario* 39.3 (2016): 487–525, 494.

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PART 2

European Perspectives

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Scandinavia

Lisa Hellman

To consider the overseas corporation as global protagonists is part of a much-needed turn in which global historians are not just discussing the potential of global history but are using its methodological approaches and insights to provide new answers, and new frameworks. It is now almost ten years since Peer Vries, after having discussed the state of the field of global history, stated that 'It is time to bother less about cooking books and focus on the actual cooking'.[1] However, different European corporations provide very different clues to a new, integrated, history of the corporation as such – that affects this volume's aim of exploring the corporation as a global actor, but is even more important for its endeavour to elucidate the formation of the corporation as a global process in and of itself.[2]

To include Scandinavian overseas corporations, such as their East India Companies, Levant Companies, African Companies and West India Companies, slightly changes the picture of European overseas ventures. These corporations were established in countries with much less successful colonial and imperial ventures than that of the British ones. As such, they add to the variety, and 'messiness' of early modern globalisation. The Swedish East India Company, for example, focused solely on trade with China; it was a chartered company, but acted as a small interloper in the trade with an expanding and powerful Asian empire. The crucial fact, however, is not only that the European corporations differed, they also affected each other, which is why they should not be studied separately. Rather, they show how the global history approach of going beyond the nation state offers a new view on an old story. Indeed, one could argue that the British corporations are difficult to understand without taking into account cooperation and competition with other actors, including local and regional actors and networks – as well as other European corporations.

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1   Peer Vries, ' "Editorial" ', *Österreichische Zeitschrift Für Geschichtswissenschaften* 20, no. 2 (2009): 5–22.

2   William A. Pettigrew & David Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as a Protagonist in Global History, 1500–1750*, 2.

British, European or Global?

As this volume argues, the early modern expansion of trade was not an exclusively European process. As non-European agency is crucial for understanding this historical development, the theoretical framework needs to reflect that insight, in particular concerning what types of institution are considered as corporations, and to what degree such a definition can be argued for supported by studies of only one country, region or empire. To apply this framework to any and all corporations in the early modern world would be methodologically and ontologically questionable. Even extending this to a sociology of *European* early modern corporations involved in the global trade – a large qualification indeed – is a tall order, considering the diversity of ambitions, institutional organization and evolution of the countries and corporations involved. Rather, this book suggests a sociology of *a* global corporations, in which the British makes for a conventional but interesting example.

   Being clear about the degree of generality this framework ascribes to is particularly important because of the current imbalance in the number and impact of studies of British overseas ventures – especially those in South Asia. Such studies have provided much of the basis for the frameworks of overseas companies and imperial expansion. However, the British conversion of a corporation into a company state, its regional reach, and vast colonial empire makes it an unusual, perhaps even exceptional, development, rather than a general blueprint for what an overseas venture, or a European early modern international corporation, looked like. The introduction gives pride of place to works on the two most well-researched corporations in early modern Europe, those of Britain and the Netherlands. Given that this volume aims to 'confront and adapt these traditional narratives' one must take care to qualify which statements can be generalised and which are actively misleading.[3] A framework based on the British in India would have much trouble explaining the experience of Scandinavians in China, despite being a European corporation in Asia.

Power, Agency and Governance

This volume offers a welcome reminder of the dangers of the problems of analysing corporations between 1550–1750 in the light of nineteenth-century

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3   Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as Protagonist,* 10.

imperial corporations. These corporations were subordinate to state authority not just at home, but also abroad.

This age has been seen as an 'equilibrium' during which European and non-European states and empires interacted on roughly equal terms. That recalls the classic paradigm developed by Holden Furber of an early modern 'age of partnership' between Asia and Europe, which was itself a revision of the idea of European dominion. It is this equilibrium that Sanjay Subrahmanyam challenged with his idea of the 'age of contained conflict', describing a world permeated by violence where 'conflict was never far from the surface'.[4] In this vein, works such as that of Linda Colley stress the fragility of Europeans in early modern contact, and François Gipouloux argues, 'we must abandon the dichotomy between dynamic – if not to say, aggressive – European powers and passive – even subordinate – Asian countries'. Historian Takeshi Hamashita has taken this one step further, stating that China was the economic centre and driving force of the early modern world.[5]

This book aims to 'recast Europe from the "knowing" subject to the object of Global History' and see 'how the seemingly European enterprises were re-shaped by their engagement with non- Europeans'.[6] To drive this point home, this needs to come through clearly in the rhetoric. In statements such as '[corporations] brought English people and cultures to non-European contexts and helped alter their character', it is easy to misread where the agency lies.[7] Rather than stating that 'Trading corporations codified constitutional practices at home [...] and *exported* these to non-European context', one could argue that these practices as shaped in the meeting with other contexts – at times even *imported*.[8] Not only did British corporations rely upon the agency and initiative of their non-European customers and suppliers, but also on their governance and the local institutions.

This inevitably leads to the theme of governance; power was wielded not just by the corporations over their employees, they were also being controlled.

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4 Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Political Economy of Commerce: Southern India 1500–1650* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Holden Furber, 'Asia and the West as Partners Before "Empire" and After', *The Journal of Asian Studies* 28, no. 4 (1969).

5 Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World 1600–1850* (New York: Random House, 2002); François Gipouloux, *The Asian Mediterranean: Port Cities and Trading Networks in China, Japan and South Asia, 13th–21st Century* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2011); Takeshi Hamashita, *China, East Asia and the Global Economy: Regional and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Mark Selden and Linda Grove (New York: Routledge, 2008).

6 Ibid., 28.

7 Ibid., 26.

8 Ibid., 24.

In Canton, the British obeyed the same rule as the smaller groups as the Swedish and the Danish East India Companies, when trying to change these rules they often cooperated with other European trade groups. At the same time, there were times when the European groups disagreed on the best policy in relation to the local institutions, and they were constantly struggling to keep their sailors from deserting and joining competing companies.[9] The various European groups consistently related to each other, as competitors as well as partners. Not only did the employees hail from various countries, there was also movements between companies. The Swedish East India Company is an example of this mutability. When first established, it was perceived as an illegal continuation of the Ostend Company, and many of its officers had previously been working in chartered companies of other companies.[10]

The governance of the corporations shifted from the formal to informal, and they were adaptable and overlapping organisations – but so were the corporations and institutions that the overseas corporations encountered. In short, to what degree were the corporations porous and flexible, and to what degree were they rather penetrated? It could be stressed more when these processes of negotiations were an effect of local institutional strength. Buildings, for example, could be a manner in which the corporations gradually established institutional consistency, but it also demonstrates adaptation to local institutions and non-European power. In China and Japan, the trade buildings were not forts, but prisons, and they were rented, never owned. Whether the houses were rebuilt into the European style, as in Canton, or kept in the Japanese style, as in Hirado and Deshima, the foreign quarters in the Pearl River and in the bay of Nagasaki were not controlled by the corporations. Also here should multiplicity of actors should be stressed. The Dutch and British were not alone in these foreign areas, but had to relate their adaptation, acquiescence as well as their ambitions to the other foreign groups there. In Nagasaki, this other group was primarily constituted of Chinese trades, who were restricted to a parallel foreign quarter.[11] In the case of Canton, the many foreign groups present at the same time, deeply affected how the space was governed – they were

9   Paul A. Van Dyke, 'Operational Efficiencies and the Decline of the Chinese Junk Trade in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries: The Connection', in *Shipping and Economic Growth 1350–1850*, ed. Richard W. Unger (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

10   Leos Müller, 'Scottish and Irish Entrepreneurs in Eighteenth-Century Sweden. East India Trade and Iron', in *Irish and Scottish Mercantile Networks in Europe and Overseas in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. David Dickson, Jan Parmentier and Jane H. Ohlmeyer (Gent: Academia Press, 2007).

11   Masashi Haneda, ed., *Asian Port Cities, 1600–1800: Local and Foreign Cultural Interactions* (Singapore and Kyoto: NUS Press in association with Kyoto University Press, 2009).

all governed by the same rules and the Swedes knew that they benefited from Chinese strength.

The frameworks of trade, both the local structure and the global institutions, could be as much about attempting to regulate and prevent flows of trade and of global contact as it could be about encouraging it. In addition, not only were the early modern trade corporation porous and flexible, they were also part of network where the unofficial and official institutions worked together – smuggling and official trade could work side by side, or even be carried out by the same agents. Neither Asian nor European power was absolute, and this was a well-known fact. For example, the profit of the Swedish East India Company relied on its place as an interloper: the majority of its import was tea, which was smuggled to the British Isles – most of it to Scotland, where the Gothenburg tea auctions were openly advertised.[12] Thereby, many corporate practices and spaces were something imposed upon them, rather than an effect of the corporation's actions, and the trade was carried out in relation to other corporations and with illicit and self-organised trade networks.[13]

The Importance of Networks, Social Relations and Gender

The classic conundrum of networks is to explain their impact, not just show their existence. Here, the particularity of these corporate British networks is argued for, as being both community, network and court. However, the same point can be argued for the guilds of Europe, as well as of East Asia. The question is that when 'Europeans and non- Europeans joined global networks, they adopted the group's norms and values'.[14] Now, did multi-ethnic and multi-confessional networks really have one joint norm, or is this rather a case when the British adapted and changed in the connections, like other groups before them? One essay shows that social permeability of the borders if the corporation constituted an advantage, as it made the company flexible, and that its

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12 Leos Müller, 'The Swedish East India Company – Strategies and Functions of an Inter-loper', in *Small Is Beautiful?: Interlopers and Smaller Trading Nations in the Pre-Industrial Period*, ed. Markus A. Denzel, Jan de Vries, and Philipp Robinson Rössner (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2011); *Derek Charles Janes, 'Fine Gottenburgh Teas: the import and distribution of smuggled tea in Scotland and the north of England c. 1750–1780', History of Retailing and Consumption* 3, vol. 2, (2016).

13 Cátia Antunes and Amélia Polónia, *Beyond Empires*: *Global, Self-Organizing, Cross-Imperial Networks, 1500–1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

14 Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as Protagonist*, 6

strength lay not in a strict framework but the durability of a changing one.[15] However, while the networks under that umbrella, such as family ties, friendship, trade diasporas or close partnership, could have supported the corporations – but these ties could have been stronger than the corporate umbrella itself. For example, British ships carried letters both for the Swedish and Danish East India companies, but not just in an official capacity, but also unofficially, through personal ties. Is it a given that the historical actors considered the corporation the main channel for information, and as encompassing other types of connections and networks? If there was a global community, as suggested here, and its networks were global and non-national, can their existence support a distinct British corporate sociology and governance?

Social relationships, such as families, could indeed 'support' the corporations' networks, but it could also have been the key constituent, shaping and transforming them to a larger degree than the corporate ties did. Here, it is stated that places with a very uneven sex ratio present a difficulty for gender analyses, but it is rather the other way around. In the case of the Swedish, as well as other European, trading ventures in China and Japan, the local norms for masculine behaviour was a constant and crucial aspect of the commercial and personal interaction, and one to which all needed to adapt. The masculinity discourse emerging during the seventeenth century in Europe, and which was gradually integrated with ideas of imperial and colonial masculinity during the eighteenth century, clashed with similar notions in the Qing empire.[16] In addition, local gender relations were also classed. One could see the prostitutes in the foreign quarters in Japan and China as a sign of corporate power, as done in one of the essays of this volume.[17] But it is equally possible that it was a sacrifice of a lower-class minority, and a sign of local hierarchy – it was an accepted price to pay to keep 'barbarian' sexuality at bay, and money coming in.[18] The restrictions on the interactions between European men and East Asian women provide a contrast to the European discussions on whether to encourage European men to marry non-European women and settle or not, because neither in Canton nor in Nagasaki were European men allowed to do so. This is another case where it is questionable if the corporate network was the most significant.

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15   Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as Protagonist*, 74.
16   Lisa Hellman, *Navigating the foreign quarters: everyday life of the Swedish East India Company employees in Canton and Macao 1730–1830* (Stockholm: Department of History, Stockholm University, 2015).
17   Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as Protagonist*, 207.
18   Paul A. Van Dyke, 'Floating Brothels and the Canton Flower Boats 1750–1930', *Review of Culture* 27 (2011).

First, such marriage patterns might be connected to corporate behaviour, or to international trade in general. Second, to argue that the corporation would always be strengthened by social, personal and gendered ties, is not to consider the non-European view. For example, if men converted, or married local women, that affected their identity in the eyes of the local authorities both in the Ottoman empire and Siam.

The Circulation of Knowledge

It is high time to integrate the histories of trade with those of knowledge circulation, as many ideas of empire and the exotic was created in multiple conversations both within and outside Europe. If an aim is to question and reshape the idea of European agency in relation to corporations, a good example is the Swedish Levantine Company. It was never a commercial success, but the discussions preceding its establishment in 1738 made use of the century-long diplomatic contacts with the Ottoman empire, and the resulting circulations of knowledge. That gave rise to a lot of similarities. As argued in chapter one, 'Europeans and non-Europeans sized one another up in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries with profound mutual suspicion expressed in remarkably similar language'.[19] However, these circulations of knowledge were not only carried out in encounters with non-Europeans, but also among various groups of Europeans.[20] Presentations of non-Europeans, as well as of European traders, were translated, copied and exchanged throughout Europe. Plays and pamphlets depicting Chinese or Ottomans which circulated in Scandinavia, for example, could be influenced by, or even copied from, French texts. Such discussions were not only reflecting English liberal thinking, but formed part of a broader European movement.[21] While the corporation may have facilitated the exchange of knowledge, it did so alongside multiple other personal or academic networks.

This is particularly clear in the case of religion. While corporations changed from the mid sixteenth to the mid eighteenth century, it is possible to question whether they really 'provided the main institutional framework to organise and police the commercial, political and religious lives of their members'.[22]

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19   Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as Protagonist*, 43.

20   For examples of the diverse views of India, see Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Europe's India Words, People, Empires, 1500–1800*, Harvard University Press: 2017.

21   Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Entzauberung Asiens: Europa und die asiatischen Reiche im 18. Jahrhundert* (München: C.H. Beck, 1998)

22   Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as Protagonist*, 137.

Nevertheless, that religion was an integrated part of governance is a welcome development in the history of trade and global history. That role could be particularly interesting to follow in corporate behaviours in places where Christianity was either banned, or restricted, by local authorities. This could result in ecumenical practices, such as the sharing of graveyards by Catholics and Protestants in eighteenth-century China, or joint sermons by different East India company chaplains as they lay at anchor in different parts of the world, as well as how the religious rhetoric was used to presenting oneself. As religious policies and practices clearly demonstrate the porous nature of the corporations' social structure, and how both practices of – and knowledge on – religion and trade were circulation by multiple European and multiple local actors, it highlights the limitations of discussing corporations within a national framework.

Conclusion

This is a book detailing the sociology of global corporations, rather than a global sociology. Several chapters drive home the point of the shared social norms at work in these trade connections, and their importance.[23] Indeed, one can discuss what the key driving force of these connections, and the process of globalisation really is – the social norms and practices or the corporations enabling and encompassing them? Rather than arguing for a sociology of the corporation that is distinctive, in the sense of being distinguishable from trade overseas, of within the country, what made the sociology of these corporations global was the great degree to which their norms were shared with other groups. Cultural and linguistic hybridity, intermarriage, the controlling use of religion, information flows and the circulation of knowledge are present in other European and non-European ventures. In all of these aspects, the British were affected by the fact that they acted in relation to non-European networks, the diaspora trade networks, and other European corporations.[24]

   This volume argues that the corporations helped structure a system that included foreign as well as local actors.[25] However, if there were any particular European trade norms at this time, it is likely that the key to these norms were adaptation. Leonard Blussé and Femme S. Gaastra suggested many years ago that, for several companies, 'Local conditions eventually dictated the point at which the relations between the Europeans and non-Europeans settled on

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23   Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as Protagonist*, 165–166.
24   Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as Protagonist*, 56.
25   Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as Protagonist*, 28.

the scale between dominance and servitude'. They argued that adaptation to Asian circumstances is not a point of weakness, but the very basis of success.[26] This point has also been raised in research on the Dutch company in Japan.[27] A key phrase in this volume that the corporations were 'uniquely predisposed to subordinating themselves to foreign states'.[28] That is most certainly true for the Swedes in most of their overseas ventures during the seventeenth and eighteenth century. In China, both the Swedish and the Danish company relied on Chinese power to get access to the Canton trade, and were the most profitable during the era when the local government was the strongest. Indeed, discussions on the *doux commerce* might even have been a way of circulating knowledge of foreign trade norms to other traders, the own government or board of directors. Arguments for the untrustworthiness traders from other cultures can be found around the world, but they coexisted with functional trade. Thus, the combination of these seemingly contradictory notions was a global phenomenon. From the 1680s and onwards, for example, the Qing government encouraged foreign trade while there was a national debate on trade in relation to the public good.[29] There are multiple cases when Chinese merchants complained of the behaviour of foreign merchants. Chinese traders who, just as their European partners, acted under a state monopoly. In Sweden, there was even a notion that the Chinese concepts of 'virtuous trade' could curtail imperial ambitions of the Dutch and the British, and give 'pure and commercial' ventures like that of the Swedes their proper place. The eulogy over the company director Nicholas Sahlgren states how virtuous he was to be a trader, rather than a colonialist or explorer.[30] To explicitly state the strength of non-European rulers was to argue for the necessity of adaptation. As argued in this book, overseas governance was intentionally left weak in order to keep the agents on the ground flexible. Because those who decided if an adaptation was successful were not the Europeans, but those evaluating their efforts. Therefore, the ideas and practices that made overseas corporations successful

26 Leonard Blussé and Femme S. Gaastra, eds., *Companies and Trade: Essays on Overseas Trading Companies during the Ancien Régime* (The Hague: Leiden University Press, 1981).

27 Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun: The Dutch Encounter with Tokugawa Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

28 Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as Protagonist*, 24

29 Manhoung Lin, *China Upside Down: Currency, Society, and Ideologies, 1808–1856* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006).

30 Joachim W. Liliestråle, 'Åminnelse-Tal ... öfver Directeuren Af Svenska Ost-Indiska Compagniet ... : Nicol.Sahlgren Hållit För Kongl. Vetenskaps- Academien Den 25 Februarii 1777' (Stockholm, 1777); Lisa Hellman, 'Using China at Home: Knowledge Production and Gender in the Swedish East India Company, 1730–1800', *Itinerario* 38, no. 1 (2014).

might not have differed that much from those that helped Chinese overseas traders succeed in the Indian Ocean trade.

This volume demonstrates how British corporations were global actors, as well as agents in the process of early modern globalisation. As the Swedish example highlights, however, the power dynamics in the corporations varied not only over time, but also between the various European actors. Indeed, the overseas companies must be considered in relation to other endeavours, such as the self-organised networks, as these consistently cooperated as well as competed. This approach underlines how the history of European expansion and trade is difficult to write from a nation-based perspective, not only because it includes non-European actors, but also because of the multiplicity and variety of the European ones. The next step, to elucidate the role of the corporations in early modern trade, is thus to introduce solid comparisons, as well as to highlight cooperation as well as conflict with various European and non-European actors.

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France

Leonard Hodges

Early modern chartered trading companies were a means for transporting state sovereignty abroad, yet to paraphrase George Orwell, some companies were more sovereign than others. Historians have traditionally arranged Dutch, British, and French East India Companies on a sliding scale between private and state control.[1] The Dutch are typically seen as running first and foremost a business organisation, while the French Company (1664–1769) barely ranks above the Portuguese as an appendix of state. The often-unspoken assumption is that the British Company sits serendipitously somewhere in the Goldilocks zone between these extremes. Insofar as the metropolitan context is concerned, it is impossible to overlook the long shadow of the state in the organisation of the French Company.[2] Its creation in 1664 owed little to independent initiative from merchants, but was rather the project of the state minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert who sought to emulate Dutch success. In spite, or perhaps because, of a state-orchestrated propaganda campaign, investors were wary of subscribing, forcing Colbert to brandish carrot and stick in the form of royal favour or wrath.[3] The Company struggled financially and was reorganised a number of times, perhaps most notoriously in 1719, as the financier John Law merged a number of colonial corporations into a tottering financial 'System' intended to help pay off state debt.[4] While the collapse of the Mississippi bubble ended a number of Law's innovations, the Company survived, with the crown

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1   Janice E Thomson, *Mercenaries, Pirates, and Sovereigns: State-Building and Extraterritorial Violence in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1996), 33; Julia Adams, *The Familial State: Ruling Families and Merchant Capitalism in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005), 17, 20–1; Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600–1800* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976), 186, 202.

2   E.g., Danièle Bègue, *L'Organisation Juridique de la Compagnie des Indes.* (Paris, 1936); Louis Dermigny, 'East India Company et Compagnie des Indes', in *Sociétés et Compagnies de Commerce en Orient et dans L'Océan Indien*, ed. Michel Mollat (Paris: SEVPEN, 1970), 465–466; Reza Dibadj, 'Compagnie des Indes: Governance and Bailout', in *Origins of Shareholder Advocacy*, ed. Jonathan G.S. Koppell (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 168–186.

3   Glenn Joseph Ames, *Colbert, Mercantilism, and the French Quest for Asian Trade* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1996), 23–7.

4   Albert Girard, 'La Réorganisation de La Compagnie Des Indes (1719–1723)', *Revue D'histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* 11:1 (1908): 5–34; and 11:3 (1908):177–87

exercising control through royal commissioners and inspectors. Shareholders were assured were assured regular dividends from the revenue of the tobacco and coffee farms, independent of commercial profitability.[5] Although some historians have echoed Enlightenment *philosophes* in attacking the state's 'despotism' over shareholders and directors, this picture does not hold up for the entire period.[6] Following a substantial loan made to the Company the shareholders gained the right to hold regular meetings in 1745 (which had been abandoned since 1728), and won much more significant powers in 1764 following the disastrous outcome of the Seven Years War.[7] In fact, the last years of the debt-ridden French Company were marked by significant political struggle between a self-proclaimed 'republic' of shareholders and the representatives of the King.[8]

Yet rather than limiting ourselves to metropolitan perspectives, it is crucial to set the French East India Company more firmly in its Indian context. One of the most enduring puzzles of the French Company is how, under its aegis, the French engaged in a dress rehearsal for empire-building in the Carnatic and the Deccan, setting the stage for the eventually more successful British intervention in Bengal. In return for military support provided to Indian rulers, for a brief period the French gained the right to raise revenue across large swathes of territory and wielded the trappings of Mughal sovereignty, with many individuals making significant personal fortunes. In this respect, the idea of the corporation as a protagonist in global history is to be especially welcomed in offering the chance to reframe a largely outdated historiography on the French East India Company's role in imperial expansion. With a few exceptions, this literature has remained rooted in the Third Republic 'great man' school of history, overshadowed by the contentious figure of Joseph-François Dupleix, Governor of French India from 1742 to 1754.[9] Instead, the many thoughtful chapters

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5   For a helpful overview in English, see Pierre H. Boulle, 'French Mercantilism, Commercial Companies and Colonial Profitability', in *Companies and Trade: Essays on Overseas Trading Companies during the* Ancien Régime, eds. L. Blussé and F. Gaastra (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1981), 91–117.

6   S.P. Sen, *The French in India, 1763–1816* (Kolkata: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1958), 41.

7   On the varying influence and composition of the shareholders, represented by syndics, see Philippe Haudrère, *La Compagnie Française des Indes au XVIIIe siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris: Les Indes savantes, 2005), 1:115–129.

8   Kenneth Margerison, 'The Shareholders' Revolt at the Compagnie des Indes: Commerce and Political Culture in Old Regime France', *French History* 20:1 (2006): 25–51.

9   For the classic French study, see Alfred Martineau, *Dupleix et l'Inde française*, 4 vols. (Paris: Champion, 1920–1928). For recent exceptions, see Catherine Manning, *Fortunes a Faire: The French in Asian Trade, 1719–48* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1996), 195–218; Haudrère, *La Compagnie Française des Indes*, 2:717–744.

in this volume suggest a number of starting points for recalibrating our understanding of the French East India Company, and the important role it played during this crucial period.

In order to better probe the corporate sociology of the French Company, and to think about what might constitute its distinguishing features, I will draw upon my research into the religious governance of the Company in India. This will respond directly to the five features of global corporations that William Pettigrew and David Veevers identify, and offer implicit comparisons with the other chapters. Zealous missionary activity and religious persecution initially stymied the development of Pondicherry, the Company's headquarters in India, as Hindu weavers and traders simply threatened to abandon the town. However, the appointment of an Ecclesiastical Director in 1724 permitted a greater degree of leeway in religious policies, while still ensuring that the Company did not lose sight of missionary objectives. Needless to say, this eventual 'toleration' of the visible signs of Hindu religiosity did not represent a far-sighted mutual acceptance, but rather a tense equilibrium between Company authorities, missionaries, and the local population.[10] Looking at the Company's religious policies, therefore, provides the ideal ground to test the relationship between a given corporation and its home state, its relative 'autonomy' or 'subordination'. Lest this seem too specific a focus, this example should give us the further opportunity to test the concepts themselves, and how far they are able to encapsulate the French experience.

In the early years of French establishment at Pondicherry, located south of Madras on the Coromandel coast, religious struggles dominated the small colony, overshadowing its meagre commercial activities.[11] In this respect, it should be remembered that missionary activity was in fact a prescribed aim of the Company in its 1664 founding charter.[12] This was elaborated further in the official literature that followed the charter, according to which 'God, whose ways are innumerable, has awakened in our days the means of commerce, in order to introduce Christianity among the infidel

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10   For contemporaries' understanding of toleration see, Benjamin J Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe.* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 8–9.

11   On the early operations of the Company, see Marie Ménard-Jacob, *La Première Compagnie des Indes: 1664–1704 : Apprentissages, Échecs et Héritage* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2016).

12   France (Louis XIV), *Déclarations du Roy: l'une, portant établissement d'une Compagnie pour le commerce des Indes Orientales; l'autre en faveur des officiers de son Conseil et Cours Souveraines intéressées, en ladite Compagnie et en celle des Indes Occidentales* (Paris, 1664), 17.

Nations'.[13] In fact, religious motivations had long underpinned the creation of monopoly companies in France, such as the Company of One Hundred Associates (1627–1663), which attempted to undertake the colonisation of New France.[14] Fusing religion and trade, however, was in practice a much trickier business than such declarations suggested. A succession of indebted and embattled Governors found themselves trapped by a seemingly intractable dilemma: the impossibility of pursuing the aims of trade at the same time as pursuing evangelism and Catholic supremacy in an overwhelmingly Hindu town.[15] The participation in a commercial world dominated by non-Christians, as well as the need to attract indigenous weavers and merchants, thus had to be balanced against a competing arithmetic of converted souls.[16] Importantly, this calculation was not something decided upon by Company authorities alone, as missionary networks meant that complaints could draw unwelcome attention at home about public displays of Hindu religiosity.

The most vociferous in their denunciations were the Jesuits, that other transnational 'Company' who settled in Pondicherry after having been expelled from Siam in the palace revolution of 1688.[17] However, it was not until 1699, after Pondicherry was returned to the French by the Dutch under the treaty of Ryswick, that religious matters really came to the fore. On 14 September, the Superior Council led by Governor François Martin (1681–1706) wrote to

13   François Charpentier, *Relation de l'établissement de la Compagnie françoise pour le commerce des Indes orientales*, (Paris, 1666), 'Epistre'.

14   Lucien Campeau, *Les Cent-Associés et le peuplement de la Nouvelle-France (1633–1663)* (Montreal: Les Éditions Bellarmin, 1974), 10. For an excellent article that treats the Company of One Hundred Associates as a global protagonist in French state formation, see Helen Dewar, 'Souveraineté dans les colonies, souveraineté en métropole : le rôle de la Nouvelle-France dans la consolidation de l'autorité maritime en France, 1620–1628', *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* 64:3–4 (2011): 63–92. See also Edward Cavanagh, 'Possession and Dispossession in Corporate New France, 1600–1663: Debunking a "Juridical History" and Revisiting *Terra Nullius*', *Law and History Review* 32:1 (2014): 97–125.

15   For modern estimations of 50,000–60,000 inhabitants in 1710, with perhaps 200 Europeans, see Gérard Le Bouëdec et al., 'Les Compagnies des Indes et les ports-comptoirs (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles)', in *Les Européens dans les ports en situation coloniale, XVIe-XXe siècle*, ed. Jean-François Klein et Bruno Marnot (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2014), 30–1. The Muslim population of Pondicherry was small and not perceived as a target population by missionaries.

16   For trading conditions on the Coromandel, see Sinnappah Arasaratnam, *Merchants, Companies, and Commerce on the Coromandel Coast, 1650–1740* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986).

17   On the Jesuits in India and Siam, Ines G Županov, *Disputed Mission Jesuit Experiments and Brahmanical Knowledge in Seventeenth-Century India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999); Raphaël Vongsuravatana, *Un Jésuite à la Cour de Siam* (Paris: France-Empire, 1992).

the Directors in Paris to ask for advice on what to do about the town's mosque and three Hindu temples. It is not surprising that the French were uncertain in their religious policies. Although it may have been widely perceived among their employees in India that it was necessary to follow other Europeans in permitting freedom of religion in order to attract trade and inhabitants to their colonies, this was not so obvious in France.[18] His Most Christian Majesty was an enthusiastic proponent of 'temple' destruction in the metropole, as Protestant places of worship had been systematically eradicated under the rule of Louis XIV (1643–1715). While scholars have estimated around 700 temples existed in France in the middle of the seventeenth century, by 1685 with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, there were no more than fifteen.[19] The importance of eradicating non-Catholic religious space was signalled by the very first article in the Edict of revocation, which ordered the immediate destruction of any remaining temples.[20] Aware of this metropolitan precedent, and perhaps emboldened by recent letters patent permitting them to establish themselves in any Company town in India, local Jesuit missionaries began to agitate for religious reform.

Although if Governor Martin may have initially attempted to eradicate public displays of Hinduism, it quickly became clear that the Hindu population of Pondicherry would not take such restrictions lying down. When in August 1701 he demanded an end to public ceremonies and the closure of a temple, he was faced with a 'kind of uprising'. He claimed that 12,000 to 15,000 people assembled in the streets, demanding the gates of the town be opened to let them leave. While the Governor may have presented himself as heroically riding out to reprimand the crowd, reminding them of their obligations to the Company and condemning their 'sedition', there can be little doubt that in the French administration had been cowed. Following this showdown, he wrote to the Company that, 'in regard to destroying the Pagodas [temples] and entirely abolishing paganism, we can only do this by depopulating Pondicherry [of] the majority of its inhabitants'.[21] Depopulation went completely against the grain of the established logic of economic thought, according to which a large

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18   Aix-en-Provence, Archives Nationales d'outre-mer, (hereafter ANOM), COL C² 65, 31.

19   Daniel Ligou, 'Un vandalisme oublié: la destruction des temples réformés par l'autorité royale au XVIIe siècle', in *Révolution française et « vandalisme révolutionnaire »*, eds. Simone Bernard-Griffiths et al. (Paris: Universitas, 1992), 336–7.

20   Bernard Dompnier, 'La Logique d'une destruction: L'Eglise catholique, la royauté et les temples protestants (1680–1685)', in *Ibid.*, 343.

21   ANOM, COL C² 66, 164r-164v, 180v.

population was key to a colony's wealth.[22] The danger of mass desertion, therefore, was an important bargaining chip held by Pondicherry's Hindu population, and Danna Agmon has shown how on further occasions it could be used to force the Governor's hand.[23]

Facing indigenous resistance on the one hand, the French administration faced pressure from the Jesuits on the other, in ways that might be just as direct. In December 1701, the Jesuit Father La Breuille gave a special sermon on the saint day of François Xavier, in front of the Governor and Council, during which he exhorted them to 'destroy these temples and entirely abolish paganism in Pondicherry following the example of our great King who has destroyed heresy in France'. Skilfully exploiting the gap between religious governance at home and in Pondicherry, La Breuille was able to publicly shame the administration, claiming that they cared only to 'fill the coffers of [their] masters'.[24] While the subversive nature of such a sermon was certainly not lost on Company authorities, it seems there was little they could do to stop such dissidence. In fact, this was only the prelude for a much more inflammatory episode, as in 1708 a Hindu named Nayiniyappa was appointed to the position of indigenous broker in Pondicherry. This choice proved completely unacceptable to the Jesuits, who claimed the position should only be held by an indigenous Christian. As the 'Nayiniyappa Affair' unravelled over the following decade, the French colony was rocked by turbulence and unrest, with a rapid turnover of Governors who proved unable to chart a course between the demands of commerce and missionary activity.[25]

These struggles over the French Company's religious policies on the ground underscore the ways in which its particular 'corporate sociology' limited its flexibility in matters of governance. Due to the Company's greater degree of imbrication with its home state compared to its English and Dutch rivals, missionary networks and hierarchies wielded an effective counterbalance to local Governors. For instance, in 1705 the Jesuits took matters into their own hands and raided the main Hindu temple. While this led to four days of rioting among the Hindu population, Company authorities in Pondicherry felt unable

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22   Philip J Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011)., 37.

23   Danna Agmon, 'Striking Pondichéry: Religious Disputes and French Authority in an Indian Colony of the Ancien Régime', *French Historical Studies* 37, no. 3 (2014): 437–67.

24   ANOM, COL C² 66, 180v.

25   The forthcoming publication of Danna Agmon's book on the Nayiniyappa affair will doubtless shed much new light on this important event. Until then the principal published work on the affair remains, Paul Olagnier, *Les Jésuites à Pondichéry et l'affaire Naniapa, 1705 à 1720* (Paris: Leroux, 1932).

to punish any of the French Jesuit offenders, although their Indian catechists were apparently fair game.[26] One source even claimed that the Company could only be assured that the Jesuits would no longer enter Hindu temples through the intervention of François d'Aix de La Chaise, the King's Jesuit confessor. Missionary networks and connections further restricted the Company's freedom to mint coins with Hindu iconography. Initially the Directors wrote to Pondicherry in 1706 to dismiss complaints from local religious figures, claiming 'it is not a fact of religion'. These instructions were retracted the very next year, however, as the directors had been informed by a missionary that the Portuguese did not mint coins with idols.[27] This was a familiar pattern, and the Company spent a considerable amount of energy and effort contesting claims made by the Jesuits, as can be seen in a *mémoire* sent to the King in 1711.[28] This fascinating document attests to a lengthy tripartite negotiation between the Company, Crown and Jesuits over the course of three years. At the crux of these negotiations was disputed knowledge about India and what this entailed for adopting a feasible religious policy in Pondicherry. To give a flavour of this, one article proposed by the Jesuits demanded that the Company forbid Pariahs (untouchables or Dalits), whether Christian or Hindu, from wearing European clothes.[29] In contesting this article, the Company directors pointed out that 'the great majority of Topass soldiers of the garrison are of the Pariah Caste', and so it would be necessary to exempt them from any such regulation, adding that 'everywhere else the Pariahs have the freedom to dress how they choose'.[30] In this way, missionary hierarchies and networks forced the Company to engage with and justify their policies on a home stage, a performance that more juridically evasive companies might be better able to avoid altogether.

The Company and its Governors were ultimately ill-equipped to engage with missionaries' arguments about how Pondicherry should be run, since in doing

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26   Agmon, 'Striking Pondichéry', 459.

27   For these examples see, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, (hereafter BNF), Français 6231, *Mémoire sur la Compagnie des Indes Orientales (1642–1720)*, 40r-41r.

28   ANOM, COL F5A 38, 'Mémoire des demandes faites par les R. pères Jésuites, missionaires des Indes établis à Pontichéry, touchant la religion', 14 February 1711.

29   On the Jesuit practice of engaging with caste distinctions, see Paolo Aranha, 'The Social and Physical Spaces of the Malabar Rites Controversy', in *Space and Conversion in Global Perspective*, eds. Giuseppe Marcocci et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 214–232.

30   For the Company's responses, see ANOM, F5A 38, 'Responses aux Decisions Touchant la Religion', 1 October 1714. Topasses were Christians who claimed some measure of Portuguese descent. On the difference between *Métis* and *Topas* in French India, see Adrian Carton, *Mixed-Race and Modernity in Colonial India: Changing Concepts of Hybridity Across Empires* (London: Routledge, 2012), 89.

so they could be dragged into a mire of theological controversy. For this reason, the appointment of an Ecclesiastical Director in 1724 was an important step in insulating the Pondicherry Governor and Council from the often-fractious disputes between the different missionary groups, and the perceived meddling of the Jesuits. As outlined in the memorandum justifying the creation of the post, it was stated that the large number of clergymen, chaplains and missionaries maintained by the Company required 'an attention that is unbefitting to laymen'. The Company's religious obligations, therefore, 'lawfully [fell] under the competence of a man of the Church'.[31] The new Director's role also reflected the burgeoning scientific spirit infusing the French colonial project, as he was also responsible for gathering information about new discoveries, curiosities and books.[32] Abbé Gilles-Bernard Raguet (1724–1731) was the first and only holder of this position. He might be thought of as something of a religious consultant, who could respond to the knotty theological problems brought up by Pondicherry-based missionaries, with an expertise and authority beyond what the Company could otherwise provide.[33] This is not to suggest that Raguet was half-hearted in his religious convictions. He was a staunch defender of missionary activity, who supported the Jesuits on numerous occasions.[34] Instead, he sought a means of reconciling the aims of commerce and Catholicism and in this sense his appointment was a very belated afterthought to realising the religious article of the Company's 1664 charter.

In Raguet's correspondence, we can see that from his Paris office he worked hard to ensure that relations were harmonious between the different missionary orders, as well as with Company authorities. For instance, he exhorted the Jesuit superior of Pondicherry to make sure his native neophytes did not stir up trouble, a longstanding complaint of the town's Governors.[35] When a Capuchin missionary cited theological texts to question the practice of minting of coins with idols, Raguet ably brushed away any complaints: 'the idol being nothing but a distinctive mark, it would be the same as a snail if it pleased

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31   Paris, Archives Nationales, M 1027, 'Mémoire pour l'Établissement d'un Directeur Eclesiastique [sic] dans la Compagnie des Indes'.

32   See James Edward McClellan and François Regourd, *The Colonial Machine: French Science and Overseas Expansion in the Old Regime* (Turhout: Brepols, 2011).

33   Raguet was also an important figure in the Company's administration of Louisiana, see Charles Edwards O'Neill, *Church and State in French Colonial Louisiana: Policy and Politics to 1732* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 155–6; Marcel Giraud, *Histoire de la Louisiane française: La Louisiane après le système de Law, 1721–1723*, vol. 4 (Paris: Presses Universtaires de France, 1974), 35–9.

34   He was himself a Sulpician.

35   ANOM, COL F⁵A 37/4, Letter from Raguet to Jean-Venant Bouchet, 24 September 1726.

the Prince'.[36] Yet neither did Raguet abandon the pursuit of missionary goals, and he was ready to put pressure on Governor Pierre-Christophe Lenoir (1721–23, 1726–34) to take action against Hindu processions and celebrations when he felt the latter was not doing enough. Raguet nonetheless emphasised that this should be done 'wisely', suggesting to Lenoir a policy of attrition, such as gradually restricting the number of religious holidays celebrated by Hindus in Pondicherry.[37] Perhaps most important of all, however, were the recommendations made by Raguet to his patron, the powerful minister of state Cardinal André-Hercule de Fleury, about the Company's religious governance.[38] In several memoranda and letters to the Cardinal, Raguet drew on information from his Jesuit informants and reports from Company servants, weighing up both commercial and religious considerations.[39] Perhaps what the figure of Raguet best illustrates, therefore, is how difficult it becomes to separate state and corporate interests. In this sense, a corporate sociology pertinent to our French example might require a slightly different vocabulary to that of relative 'autonomy' or 'subordination', one which could better capture the more interventionist, not to say creative, role of the state within its corporate guise.

Conclusion

It is perhaps too easy a cliché to conclude a discussion of the distinctive qualities of French trading corporations with the invocation of French *dirigisme*. Nonetheless, even though often characterised as an appendix of the state, the French Company was able to integrate and respond to non-European interests in its own particular way. Changing metropolitan governments, as well as French Catholicism are certainly complicating factors, yet what is striking is how this response can itself be conceived as an act of state-building, the appointment of a Director integrated into the ministerial patronage system which characterised the *Ancien Régime*.[40] Phillip Stern may have taught us to see how companies could be states, but the French case shows that states could be companies.

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36   ANOM, COL F⁵A 39/2, Letter from Raguet to Antoine de La Châtre, 16 December 1729.

37   ANOM, COL F⁵A 39/4, Letter from Raguet to Pierre-Christophe Lenoir, 15 December 1729 and 20 November 1730.

38   On Fleury, see Peter Robert Campbell, *Power and Politics in Old Regime France, 1720–1745* (London: Routledge, 1996).

39   See ANOM, COL F⁵A 37/4, 'Mémoire sur les Mosquées et Pagodes de Pondichéry', c. 1726; ANOM, COL F⁵A 49/1, Letter from Raguet to Fleury, 3 November 1726.

40   Sharon Kettering, *Patrons, Brokers, and Clients in Seventeenth-Century France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

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Iberia

Edgar Pereira

The Corporation as a Protagonist in Global History makes a strong case for a reappraisal of the role of trading corporations in the global arena between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Historians are familiar with the "global" credentials of these corporations. By the end of the seventeenth century, European charted companies could be found operating in virtually every continent and their ships sailed all major sea lanes, transporting individuals, information and commodities across oceans. In the process these corporations contributed to integrate production outlets with staple and consumption markets from different corners of the globe. At the same time, trading corporations also precluded the colonial grip of European States in Africa, America Asia and the Pacific, and they were directly involved in the forced displacement of individuals from Africa across the Atlantic "middle passage" and along the Indian Ocean rim. Although the degree of integration between far apart markets varied considerably both in time and space, in the course of those two centuries, there is little doubt that the trading corporations were drivers of global interdependence.

The volume uses the commercial corporations charted in the British islands as a test pilot for an innovative research agenda centered on a "Global Sociology of the corporation". This presupposes a major departure from previous studies on the corporate forms.

Traditional studies of the corporate form were often a mere juridical x-raying of the company charter and its provisions, usually seen in isolation. A much more sophisticated variant of this very relevant, but ultimately static view, is the comparative institutional analysis of the companies.[1] One of the volume's most welcome contributions is its insistence to move past the analysis of those "posturings in print", as the editors call them. Instead, the volume takes a piercing look into the inner-making of the company, revealing

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1 Cátia Antunes, Elisabeth Heijmans and Julie Mo Svalastog, 'Comparer les Compagnies de commerce européennes: Les compagnies néerlandaise, anglaise et française sur la côte occidentale d'Afrique au court du XVIIe siècle' in Roulet, E., (ed.) *Le monde des compagnies. Les premières compagnies dans l'Atlantique 1600–1650. I. Structures et mode de fonctionnement* (forthcoming).

the ingenuity of shareholders, directors and employed personnel, and showing how these actors responded to interests that laid both inside and outside the "corporate space".

Amongst these interests one could cite the domestic authorities, the public sphere, and even rival merchants which opposed the trading corporation without quarter. However, although the structure and goals of the corporation cannot be explained without the domestic context in the background, the volume advocates that the non-European theatres of operation and the corporation's ability to adapt to them as the determining factor behind its success and longevity. Non-European polities, the social systems and economic constraints of the areas of corporate inception shaped the company operations and structures in ways that often strayed away considerably from what directors and authorities in the mother land would have envisioned. In this attention to "local outcomes", that the volumes embraces not only a trans-national perspective, but also a non-Eurocentric agenda.

The question that the reader who is not a specialist in the history of the British form is immediately faced with, is how much room is there to expand this concept, and the agenda it sets, beyond the case of Britain and her empire. Can the premises and the analytical framework of the volume be extended to the inquiry into other empires? For instance the Iberians? And, if the answer is yes, how and to what extent?

Taking these questions as the point of departure, the purpose of this contribution is twofold. On the one hand, it critically assess the volume's central concept and its main hypothesis from the vantage point of the early modern empires of Spain and Portugal, while on the other, it looks into the commonalities and overlaps, but also the points of departure, between the English corporate experience, as viewed by the contributors to this volume, and that of the Iberian world. Given the complexity of the topic, and the sheer geographic and chronological scope of two cases, it is nearly impossible to do justice to the all the nuances and specificities of the Portuguese and Spanish cases in just a few thousand words. This will therefore be, a succinct and general overview.[2]

The present contribution is structured in the following manner. First an etymological analysis on the concept of "corporation", which is necessary to bring some conceptual nuance and calibrate it to the specific context of the

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2 For an exercise on a connected history of the Iberian empires of the early modern period, Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Holding the World in Balance: The Connected Histories of the Iberian Overseas Empires, 1500–1640", *American Historical Review,* vol. 112, no. 5, December 2007: 1359–1385.

Early-modern Iberian world. Stemming from this semantic comments, a brief comment on the enfranchisement of corporations will ensue. This will be followed by a brief overview on the regulated companies charted in Portugal and Spain, and how they fared in comparison to their counterparts across both the Pyrenees and the Cantabrian Sea. Last but not least, the range of aspects and implications of the concept will be tested by looking at alternative corporate forms) of organizing, funding, exploiting and reaping the benefits, be them financial, economic, social or political of long distant trade.

Semantics of the "Corporation" Concept

If the agenda set by this volume is to be adopted in future inquiries on Portuguese and Spanish oceanic expansion, the specific connotations that the term "corporation" acquired, both in early modern Iberia and in present day scholarship on that field, must necessarily be take into account. Failing to do so, seriously limits the applicability of the arguments and conceptual tools put forward by the volume beyond the specific context that its proponents had in mind when they first thought it about, in this case Britain and its overseas endeavors. It would ultimately render it unsuitable as a lenses to look at Spain and Portugal.

When an historian of the early modern Iberian and its overseas expansion, particularly the non-native English speaker, comes across the term "corporation", a charted trading company is not, in all likelihood, the first thing that springs to mind. Instead, historians of the Hispanic world and, I suspect, also those of France and the French overseas expansion, will most likely associate the term "corporation" to craft guilds and other livery companies, confraternities, or even to entities like the universities, the church, municipalities or aristocracies.[3]

In Iberia, but not only, corporations were the building blocks from which the Western European political community was built. The term was used to label any nuclear constituting groups of society that were enshrined in Law. Any legal bodies that grouped together individuals who shared a similar socio-political status. A litany of statuses ensured the corporation's internal cohesion, elaborating on the codes of conduct between members themselves and between them and those outside the body. In addition, corporations were

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3 Roland Mousnier, *Les institutions de la France sous la monarchie absolue, 1598–1789*, vol. 1, Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1980: 335.

privileged interlocutors with the sovereign, who endowed, confirmed and promised to uphold their longstanding statuses and privileges.[4]

Over the past decades, and thanks to the advent of new political and institutional scholarship in Southern Europe since the 1980s, "corporations" (albeit loosing much of its ideologically charged content they attained in the 1920s and 30s) have (re)entered the standard lexicon of historians of early modern Iberia and become an operative concept to analyze the political dynamics of these societies.

The Corporation as a Protagonist in Global History acknowledges the many shapes that corporations could take on aside from their better known commercial and overseas incarnations. For instance, as the editors remind us, British legal historians have been drawing attention the connections between "the trading corporations and their municipal forbearers", highlighting how the trading companies sprung from the constitutional and political womb that had also given birth to a myriad of other legal, self-governing bodies.

As a result of this conceptual widening, the historiography on charted companies of trade and colonization now sees them as something more than efficiency boosting institutions, devised to finance, defend and financially profit from maritime commerce across long distances and with foreign constituencies. These corporations mirrored the ways in which society and politics in the motherland were organized, and upon which the socio-political aspirations and the vested interests of those involved in their launching and running rested.

With this constitutional turn, there seems to be some room for conceptual convergence, therefore making it possible to look at the distinctive corporative cultures and practices in both the British and the Iberian worlds.

The Enfranchisement of the Corporate Form and Political Economy

Another point that is central to the volume's notion of a "sociology of the corporation" concerns the ability of these corporations to strike a balance between, on the one hand, the hard-rules of company charters and the domestic legal template, and, on the other, the different "local outcomes" they faced.

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4   Ângela Barreto Xavier and António Manuel Hespanha, "A representação da sociedade e do poder", *História de Portugal,* vol. 4, "O Antigo Regime", dir., António Manuel Hespanha, Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1993: 113–132; António Manuel Hespanha, *História de Portugal Moderno. Político e Institucional*, Lisbon: Universidade Aberta, 1995: 29, 30.

Corporations, according to the editors and contributors to the volume, were extremely responsive to a myriad of different contexts and to ever changing circumstances. It was this adaptability that allowed the company to bridge the gap between the interests of their home constituency and those of the Asian and African polities from whom they sought to extract commercial and diplomatic concessions. The same could be said about the merchant networks that operated alongside the company in several markets. We are told, that whenever it was beneficial to the corporation, she was able to co-opt these networks into their operations, rather than to encroach on them under the guise of being interlopers. Furthermore, this *de facto* policy of pragmatism was also applied to people within the company structure.

But was institutional flexibility and strategic adaptability/pragmatism the apanage of regulated charted companies, namely the East India ones, or do we see this same feature being exhibited elsewhere, in other corporate forms?

This assumption is certainly tenable for the Hispanic world, although perhaps commercial companies do not provide the most obvious of examples of these attributes. Unlike what the conventional literature has posited, the Iberians empires were extremely responsive to local outcomes. Beyond metropolis initiatives, local and regional stakeholders, such as the Church, the colonial bureaucracy, municipalities, local elites and economic interests were instrumental in shaping policy making. All these different collective interests took on a corporate form to better articulate the aspirations of its members in the back and forth political bargaining with the monarchy. At the same time, these corporate bodies worked for the convenience of the central apparatus when it came to negotiate collection of revenue, implement policies, and mobilize people for war. This is not to say that all parties involved always saw eye to eye, but corporations were the constitutional arenas where different interests could calibrated.[5] This polycentric system, was thus defined by its remarkable flexibility.

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5   Francisco Bethencourt, «Configurações Políticas e Poderes Locais», Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto (dir.), *A Expansão Marítima Portuguesa, 1400–1800,* Lisbon: Edições 70, 2010;, James Amelang, "The Peculiarities of the Spaniards: Historical Approaches to Early Modern State", James Amelang and Siegfried Beer (ed.), *Public Power in Europe: Studies in Historical transformations,* Pisa: Pisa University Press, 2006; Alejandra Irigoin and Regina Grafe, "A Stakeholder empire: the political economy of Spanish imperial rule in America"*, The Economic History Review, 65,* 2 (2012): 609–651; Pedro Cardim, Tamar Herzog, José Javier Ruiz Ibáñez and Gaetano Sabatini, *Polycentric Monarchies. How did Early Modern Spain and Portugal achieve and Maintain a Global Hegemony,* Eastbourne: Sussex Academic Press, 2012.

Take the *Estado da Índia*, the Portuguese overseas enterprise east of the Cape of Good into consideration. This example of direct state intercession offers a remarkable example of a malleable and highly fluid system.

There is nowadays a consensus amongst historians that the *Estado da Índia* should be seen a patchwork of costal footholds and territorial hinterlands, trading stations and fiscal-military agencies, rather than jurisdictionally coherent political formation. Each of these circumscriptions exhibited their own juridical status, depending on how they had originally entered the Portuguese orbit, whether by conquest or diplomatic treaty. These legal tittles determined the nature of the Portuguese presence and activities in the area, and bounded the latitude of authority (if any) that the vice regal government could impose.[6]

To further complicate this picture, a maximalist interpretation of the Portuguese empire in Asia went as far to juxtapose a "formal" empire, comprising the Cape Route monopoly of the Portuguese crown and her official dependencies east of the Cape of Good Hope, to a "shadow empire". This "shadow empire", stretching from the Cape Comorin eastwards towards the South China Sea and the Pacific, was made of loose and non-bureaucratized pockets of Portuguese presence and influence. This phenomenon of cultural and linguistic creolization was spearhead by Luso-Asian diasporas, footloose merchants and catholic missionaries, whose links to the Portuguese authorities were tenuous. What bound them to Goa or Lisbon, the centers of imperial authority, was but a linguistic, religious and cultural influence. The relation of the "informal empire" with the Portuguese formal authorities was deeply ambivalent, as they were often co-opted by the corporate structures of other empires and resisted the directives of the Portuguese seats of government, but maintained ties with the Portuguese, if not for anything else, through the ecclesiastical patronage, and a loose sense of pride in an ancestry. In the end, these disenfranchised networks did help prolong the Portuguese influence in Asian waters beyond the heydays of the *Estado da Índia.*[7]

But even if we take a look at the corners of the empire where the authority of the State was more fully enforced (though not necessarily always observed), there is a significant degree of pragmatic lenience when it came to enforce the governmental regulations. For instance, even the monopoly that the State imposed on the trade of certain goods could be lifted to remunerate

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6   Luis Filipe Thomaz, "A Estrutura Política e Administrativa do Estado da Índia no Século xvi". *De Ceuta a Timor,* Lisbon: Dífel: 207–243.

7   Leonard Andaya, "The Informal Portuguese empire and the Topasses in the Solor archipelago and Timor in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies,* vol. 41–3 (2010): 391–420.

royal servants, whose wages were at best paid few and far between. In the same vein, posts in the royal administration and fiscal exemptions were granted to individuals in exchange for financial assistance and zealous military service. This distributive logic and the enmeshment between private and public interests provided a much need lubricant to what could be otherwise an overly rigid system.[8]

In certain regions of Africa and the India Ocean rim, despite the vexation of the of the official authorities and a certain inclination to resort to military action by commanders and ecclesiastic figures, the Portuguese authorities had no other option but to acquiesce to the terms dictated by the host authorities. This does not disprove that a trading corporation like the EIC were less constrained to bow down to the authority of African or Asian authorities to secure the commercial advantages they sought than the Portuguese crown was. But still, the malleability and the pragmatism of the Iberian enterprises in Asia and Africa, where ambitions of sovereignty and colonial rule were but a mirage, should not be underestimated. This leads one to question whether or not pragmatism lies in the DNA of the corporation, or if it was simply a sine qua non condition of any European enterprise who wanted to trade and endure in Asian waters. An inquiry into to coercive and bellicose nature of the company operations in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean (a topic neglected in this volume) would help clarify these matters.

The Usual Suspects: Charted Commercial and Colonizing Companies in Iberia

Amongst a constellation of corporations, pertaining or not to long distance and overseas trade, the Iberian charted trading companies have not attracted much scholarly attention, neither by scholars of the Iberian world, nor by economic or political-institutional historians. To a certain extent, this disciplinary apathy towards the topic explains the lack of immediate association of the term with charted companies in field of Iberian historian.

The lack of scholarly studies is, and there are no two ways about it, predicated on the historical fact that regulated trading companies simply never gained the kind of traction in early Spain and Portugal that they their English, Dutch, and even French counterparts did. It must be remembered that by the time

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8 Susana Munch Miranda, "Fiscal System and Private Interests in Portugeuse Asia under the Habsburgs, 1580–1640", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient,* 60 (2017): 210–216.

the first overseas corporations were launched, Iberian polities were almost two centuries into their oceanic expansion and they had devised their own organizational culture. Did this organizational culture lead to a distinctive corporate sociology? The ancillary role of trading companies helps explain why the scholarship on these corporations is incommensurably smaller than that on their Northern European counterparts. Aside from a few monographic studies (which are old enough as to justify revisiting the topic) and for mentions in more general works on political reform during the age of enlightenment, the knowledge on these companies is rather scanty.[9]

In the rare instances when these trading corporations faced historiographical scrutiny, they were by default depicted as a "poor man's version" of the Dutch and English join-stock companies that had inspired them, even if such assertions are often not based on a comparative analysis of the respective charters, nor in a prosopography of its main shareholders and its directorate.[10] Their quick demise or, as in the few cases those which lingered on for longer periods, as well as the lack of glaring contribution to the commercial grandeur of the metropolis seemed to dismiss the need for a deeper inquiry.

Amongst the most commonly cited reasons behind their disappointing performance was, for instance, their quasi-endemic undercapitalization due to the corporations' inability attract investment beyond a clique of politically connected merchant interests. In turn, the companies' unattractiveness as an investment prospect, allegedly stemmed from the asphyxiating involvement of the crown and her incapacity to delegate control. According to traditional

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9   For a (rare) overview on the Portuguese early modern business corporation, Jorge Borges de Macedo, "Companhias comerciais", Joel Serrão ed., *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, Lisbon: Iniciativas editoriais, vol. 1, 1963: 636–644; For the monographs on individual corporations see the footnotes bellow. On the late seventeenth and eighteen century reforms that involved company charting, Gabriel Paquette, *Imperial Portugal in the Age of Atlantic Revolutions. The Luso-Brazilian World, c. 1770–1850*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013: 17–73; Kenneth Maxwell, *Pombal. Paradox of the Enlightenment,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995; Jose Delgado Ribas, *Dinámicas Imperiales (1650–1796). España, América y Europa en el cambio institucional del sistema colonisl español,* Barcelona: Edicions Bellaterra, 2007: 146–156.

10   For a comparative overview on the Portuguese East India company of 1628–1633, George D. Winius, "Two Lusitanian Variations on a Dutch theme: Portuguese Companies in Times of Crisis, 1628–1662", Leonard Blussé and Femme Gaastra, ed. *Companies and Trade. Essays on Overseas Trading Companies.* James Boyajian goes even further by comparing the two institutionalized structures for the commerce with and in Asia with the private trade conducted by both Portuguese and Dutch (prior to the merger into the VOC). James Boyajian, *Portuguese Trade in Asia under the Habsburgs, 1580–1640,* Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1993: 106–127.

scholarship, the king was often the sole biggest investor by a landslide, and even when he refrained from owning shares, he would constantly meddle in the affairs (and with the assets) of the corporation. Another stream of literature saw these corporations, in turn, as another incarnation of a deeply entrenched, and ultimately nefarious, embrace between the crown and merchant-elites. It was not so much the case that these corporations were unprofitable per se, but rather that their profits were captured the main-shareholders, the directors and their entourage (with the complacency of the government), while small and middle-tier investors, and ultimately, the economy at large, did not reap any major benefits.[11]

According to these narratives, it was therefore no surprise, that company charting in the 17th century was defined by aborted projects or short-lived attempts. For instance, as part of his grand design of beating the monarchy's enemies both in the battle field and in the trading arena, the Count-Duke of Olivares, the *privado* of Phillip IV, cherished the prospect of charting multiple commercial companies.[12] However, amongst the myriad of prospects, only the short-lived Portuguese East India Company actually came into being.[13] After Portugal parted ways with the Spanish Monarchy, in December 1640, the best know example is the charting of the Brazilian company, which functioned from 1649 until 1664 and helped the Portuguese in their war effort involving Northeast Brazil against the WIC.[14] Still in the 1660s, there were the poorly commercial corporations involving the trade with the Western African coast, the companies Palmira and Cacheu. The later happened to secure the infamous Spanish slave *asiento* at the turn of the century.[15]

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11   This now dated interpretation can be found in Jorge Borges de Macedo, *A Situacão Económica no tempo de Pombal. Alguns aspectos,* Lisbon: Moraes Editora, 1982.

12   On the grand strategy of Olivares, with special reference to company charting, Jonathan Israel, "The Politics of International Trade Rivalry during the Thirty Years War: Gabriel de Roy and Olivares' Mercantilist Projects, 1621–1645", Jonathan Israel, ed., *Empires and Entrepots. The Dutch, the Spanish Monarchy and the Jews, 1585–1713,* London and Ronceverte: The Hambledon Press, 1990: 217–219

13   Chandra Richard da Silva, "The Portuguese East India Company 1628–1633", *Luso-Brazilian Review,* vol. 11, no. 2 (Winter, 1974): 152–205, Anthony Disney, "The First Portuguese India Company, 1628–33", *Economic History Review,* May 1977, vol. 30 (2): 242–258.

14   Leonor Freire Costa, *O Transporte no Atlântico e a Co*mpanhia Geral do Comércio do Brasil (1580–1663), vol. 1, Lisbon: Comissão Nacional para as Comemoração dos Descobrimentos, 2002: 477–599.

15   Ilídio Baleno, "Reconversão do comércio externo em tempo de crise e o impacto da companhia do Grão-Pará e Maranhão", Luís de Albuquerque, Maria Emília Madeira Santos ed., *História Geral de Cabo Verde,* vol. 3, Lisbon and Praia: Centro de Estudos de História e Cartografia Antiga, Instituto Nacional da Cultura de Cabo Verde, 1991: 206–216; Cândido

The eighteenth century, on the other hand, was a watershed moment, at least as far as the charting of such corporations was concerned. From absentee or "flash in the pan" solutions, they became a more conventional instrument for the exploitation of the trading, agricultural and fiscal prospects offered by the overseas dependencies. As part of the comprehensive package of reforms put in place by the Bourbon monarchs[16] a series of companies were charted in Spain, such as the Company of Guipúzcoa to whom were endowed trading privileges between Biscayan ports and Venezuela, the royal Company of Havana or the Company of Barcelona.[17] In the second half of the century, several companies also came into being in Portugal with the South Atlantic trade in mind (their charted covered both Brazilian markets and the West African coast), as well as a handful for the trade with the establishments eastwards of the Cape of Good Hope.[18] However, the best known company charted during the Pombaline consulate pertained not to overseas trade but to domestic wine production and marketing, the *Companhia Geral das Vinhas do Alto Douro*.[19]

Aside from being charted in greater numbers and their longer life-span, and undoubtedly improving upon their 17th century predecessors, it is however

Silva Teixeira, "Companhia de Cacheu, Rios e Comércio da Guiné. Documentos para a sua História", Boletim do Arquivo Histórico Colonial, vol. 1, 1950.

16   Stanley Stein and Barbara Stein, *Silver, Trade, and War: Spain and America in the Making of Early Modern Europe,* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2000: 202.

17   Monserrat Gárate Ojanguren, *Comercio ultramarino e Ilustración. La Real Compañía de la Habana,* San Sebastián: Departamento de Cultura del País Vasco, 1993; ibid., *La rel compañia guipuzcoana de caracas,* San Sebastián: Sociedad Guipuzcoana de Ediciones y Publicaciones, 1990; J. M. Oliva Melgar, *Cataluña y el comercio privilegiado con America en el siglo XVIII. La Real Compañía de Comercio de Barcelona a Indias,* Barcelona: Publicaciones de la Universitat de Barcelona, 1987; Monserrat Gárate Ojanguren and Juan Luis Blanco Mozos, "Financiación de las compañias priviligiadas de comercio en la España del siglo XVIII", *Capitalismo mercantil en la España del siglo XVIII,* ed. Rafael Torres Sánchez, Pamplona: EUNSA, 2000: 173–200.

18   Lúcia Lima Rodrigues, Alan Sangster, "Public-private partnerships": The Portuguese General Company of Pernambuco and Paraíba (1759), *Business History,* vol. 54, no. 7, December 2012: 1142–1165; Lúcia Lima Rodrigues, Álvaro Ricardino, Sofie Martins, "Corporate governance regulations": A new term for an ancient concern? The case of Grão Pará and Maranhão General Trading Company in Portugal (1754), Accounting History, vol. 14 (94), Nov. 2009: 405–35. A few references on the rather obscure companies assembled for the trade with the *Estado da Índia* in Maria de Jesus dos Mártires Lopes, ed., *Nova História da Expansão Portuguesa, vol. V, O Império Oriental,* Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 2006. The classic work on the eighteenth century companies for the Portuguese transatlantic trade are still António Carreira; *As Companhias Pombalinas do Grão Pará e Maranhão e de Pernambuco e Paraíba,* 2nd ed., Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1982.

19   Susan Schneider, *O Marques de Pombal e o Vinho do Porto. Dependencia e Subdesenvolvimento em Portugal no Século XVIII,* Lisbon: Regra do jogo, 1980.

unclear what balance to make of them. Did they bolster the fortunes of the State, the common wealth and investors alike? Were they growth inducing factors for the metropolitan economy? Did they push for a greater integration between markets and were the vehicle for the spread commodities, goods and people in a growing scale? The answer to these question cannot be given here. Only through further studies on these corporative iterations could these matters be clarified.

Conclusion

It seems clear from the overview above that, unlike the British case, trade corporations were not "the default means for European States to integrate their commercial interests in this period", even though they became a more conventional tool in the armory of the imperial metropolis. Can, therefore, the framework be used to analyze empires that were not, at least in their main commercial circuits and most vibrant productive regions, run through charted commercial and colonizing companies? As far as the Iberian empires are concerned, the two pioneering players of the European overseas expansion, this statement seems apparently untenable. But is it truly?

Charted companies might not have set deep roots in the early modern Iberian world, nor their rise and fall has figured as prominently in historiographical accounts, but that does not mean that Spain, Portugal and their respective overseas empires were devoid of a corporative sociology.

A way out of the impasse, takes us back to the issue of what historians have in mind when they talk about early modern "corporations which was addressed in the second section. The corporation, as it is posited in this volume, was an institutional shape shifter that could take on many different forms, ranging from regulated trading companies, joint stock corporations, colonizing corporations, to municipal corporations. If the concept of "trading corporation" is applied with a broad latitude than that case could definitely be made.

One of the most obvious suspects of corporations that deal with long distant, oceanic exchanges were trading guilds. The *Consulados,* as trading guilds were known in Portugal and Spain, were by design self-governing bodies with their own juridical personality. The consummate example of a trading guild is the famous *consulado de cargadores* of Seville, founded in 1543 and relocated to Cádiz in 1717.

With regards to its constituents, their main purpose was to cushion the interests of a core nucleus of merchants (by virtue of a tightly scrutinized recruitment of members and monitoring of their activities), while keeping the

upper hand over the competition posed by outsiders. In addition to that, they assumed the role of commercial courts and they enforce commercial regulations amongst their members, although not always successfully. They were also responsible for several task of public utility, such the building and maintenance of communal infrastructures, the collection of taxes, and even the provision of credit and extraordinary subsidies to the royal treasuries. But as far as the delegation of public prerogatives was concerned, the *consulados* were the constitutional body towards whom the crown turned to for the licensing of private vessels sailing in the *Carrera da Indias*, for the planning and logistics of the transatlantic trade, levying taxes and the inspection of cargoes.[20]

In their geographical span and in the scope of their operations these corporations could be defined along "global" parameters. The answer is in the affirmative. Designed to offer a solution to the problems of risk and uncertainty in the Spanish transatlantic trade, they could be found on both sides of the Ocean, such as in the main urban centers of New Spain and Peru. But they did not limit themselves to the Iberian-Atlantic, as the mercantile corporations of Lima and Mexico city maintained vested interests in the Pacific trade. Their constituents were involved in the shuffling of Latin American silver to the Philippines and in the import of Asian commodities.[21]

Up until recently these guild-like corporations enjoyed a bad reputation in literature on Spanish transatlantic trade, but nowadays, thanks to a recent stream of scholarship, it has become clear that the trading *consulados* were in fact worlds apart from their stereotypical portrayal as a monopolistic cartel and monolith-like structure. Instead, they ought to be seen as corporate spaces where internal strife and factionalism was endemic and competition fierce. The ability of the guild to exclude members and maintain concord was challenged by the sheer numbers of their members. The pool of constituents was, in fact, simply to vast to ensure that everyone was on the same page and that corporate regulations were respected by all.[22]

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20   Graciela Marquez, "Commercial Monopolies and External Trade", Victor Bulmer-Thomas, John Coatsworth, ed., *The Cambridge economic history of Latin America,* vol. 1 "The colonial era and the short nineteenth century", Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008: 401, 402; Carla Rahn Phillips, "The Growth and Composition of Trade in the Iberian empires, 1415–1750", TRACY, James D. (ed.), *The Rise of the Merchant Empires. Long-distance trade in the early modern world 1350–1750,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990: 34–101.

21   Arturo Giráldez, *The Age of Trade. The Manila galleons and the Dawn of the Global Economy,* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littefield, 2015: 154–157.

22   Regina Grafe, "On the spatial nature of institutions and the institutional nature of personal networks in the Spanish Atlantic", *Culture & History Digital Journal,* 3 (1), June 2014; Xabier Lamikiz, "Transatlantic Networks and Merchant Guild Rivalry in Colonial Trade with Peru, 1729–1780", *Hispanic American Historical Review,* 2011 (vol. 91, issue 2): 299–331;

In Portugal, with the exception of a very brief period following the introduction of the *consulado* tariff in the 1590s (a three per cent import-export duty introduced which was strikingly named after a trading corporation), there was not, unlike in the Spanish empire, a trading guild.[23] Collective organization was achieved in this and other case, not through a class/professional-oriented corporation, but, for instance, through confraternities. These self-constituting, self-organized bodies, aside from federating individuals from the same racial background and with the same status vis a vis the law, also served as local interlocutors with colonial governorships and the metropolitan apparatus. Both in the metropolitan and overseas dependencies of Portugal and Spain, brotherhoods or houses of mercy served as benefactors of the common good, financing public works and attending to the poor and weak (both amongst and beyond their own constituents), performing welfare tasks that the State was in no position to provide for.[24]

Speaking of confraternities, they serve as reminder that the commercial guilds were not the only iterations of the corporate form to be found the Iberian kingdoms and their overseas dependencies. Two further examples are provided by the municipal corporations and by proprietary ventures. Both were linchpin institutions within the power infrastructure of the Portuguese and Spanish pluricontinental monarchies, and bought were spread throughout the globe encompassing corners of the Iberian empires. Examples of both can be found both in Africa, the Americas, the Indian Ocean Rim, and in the Pacific settlements of the Iberian crowns.

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23   David Grant Smith, *The Portuguese Mercantile Class of Portugal and Brazil in the Seventeenth Century: a socio-economic study of the merchants of Lisbon and Bahia, 1620–1690,* PhD Dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 1975: 161–162

24   Isabel dos Guimarães Sá, "Managing Social Inequality: Confraternal Charity in Portugal and its Overseas Colonies", *Social Science History*, 2017, vol. 41 (91): 121–135; Patricia A. Mulvey, "Black Brothers and Sisters: Membership in Black Lay Brotherhoods of Colonial Brazil", *Luso-Brasilian Review,* 17–2 (1980): 253–279; A J. R. Russel-Wood, *Fidalgos and Philanthropists: The Santa Casa da Misericórdia of Bahia, 1550–1755,* Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968.

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Dutch

Chris Nierstrasz

As the editors claim in the introduction of this edited volume, recent literature has shed light on the 'considerable agency exercised by corporations in certain global theaters' and has noticed the need to 'proscribe corporations a global role'.[1] This chapter will primarily focus on the East India companies and especially on the Dutch East India company (VOC). It will ask how these East India companies managed to organize its activities that spanned the globe and if the editors of this volume are right in presenting them as protagonists in global history. Although they are the clearest example of corporations with 'a global role', historians have until now not necessarily considered them part of Global History. The study of East India companies more often than not has a strong national bias that stands in the way of more abstract conceptualization of their essential form. National historians have a hard time jumping over their own shadow and acknowledging that even East India companies are part of similar institutional developments elsewhere. For example, in an attempt to accentuate the peculiar history and 'national' identity of their East India Company, comparisons and connections with the histories of other East India companies are often simply not made, while East India companies are in general not considered similar to other corporations of their times.

As this volume shows, a more general conception of corporations helps us understand that East India companies were not that different from other corporations when we consider their constitutional form. The question that remains, however, is if a general conception based solely on English cases is also applicable to foreign corporations. This chapter of the book will focus on such a non-English case study, namely on the VOC. Does the 'distinctive Global Sociology of the Corporation' as brought forward in this edited volume also apply to the VOC? In order to answer this question, this chapter will first delve into the position of East India Companies within the field of Global History and will then try to relate the distinctive Global Sociology of the Corporation to the Dutch East India Company. In the last part of this chapter it will be argued

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1 William A. Pettigrew & David Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as a Protagonist in Global History, 1550–1750*, 13.

that, although a more general conceptualization of corporations is necessary, similar global constitutional frameworks often had different local outcomes. This argument will be based on a more general comparison of the monopolies of the Dutch and English East India companies.

Global History and the Distinctive Global Sociology of the Corporation

The first question of this chapter is if it is possible to integrate East India companies into the field of Global History. Until today, historians have mainly told the histories of East India companies from a national perspective. Historians have in general focused on one company, often simply ignoring the histories of other ones. When comparisons were made between different national companies, historians wanted to understand which one was most successful or which country had the first 'multinational company' or which one served as 'the early modern inspiration for modern joint stock corporations'.[2] As the editors of this volume mention in the introduction, it is the task of Global historians (or of New Global History as they called it in the introduction) to 'confront and adapt the traditional narratives [local, regional or national histories of other fields], especially those of a national perspective'.[3]

In theory at least, the history of East India companies, even more so than histories of other corporations, seems to tick all the boxes of the three 'methodies of analysis' of Global History: 'comparativeness, connectedness and globalisation'.[4] However, most global historians seem hesitant to include the study of East India companies as a topic of Global History. This is mainly due to the manner in which studies on this topic are often considered part of 'Western-centric analysis'.[5] Due to the archival material of the companies,

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2   For the debate on rivalry between East India companies see: Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600–1800* (Minneapolis: UMP, 1976). For the debate on the first modern company see: Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as a Protagonist,* 12–13; Nick Robins, *The corporation that Changed the World: How the East India Company Shaped the Modern Mulitnational* (London: Pluto Press, second Ed., 2012) or for similar Dutch versions of such stories: Henk den Heijer, *De VOC en de beurs: de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie als grondlegger van de eerste aandelenbeurs = The VOC and the exchange: how the VOC laid the foundations for the world's first stock exchange* (Amsterdam: Stichting Vereniging voor de Effectenhandel, 2002) and Heijer H.J. den, *De geoctrooieerde compagnie. De VOC en de WIC als voorlopers van de naamloze vennootschap* (Deventer: Kluwer, 2002).

3   Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as a Protagonist,* 10

4   Ibidem, 2.

5   Ibidem, 9.

it is difficult to write more than Asian history through European eyes. In recent years, however, the study of the VOC has clearly tried to move beyond this point.[6]

There is also a constant inherent danger in presenting the corporation (and their constitutions) as having its origins in Europe and being projected from Europe on Asia. Such projections of European institutions on Asia are Eurocentric and problematic. For example, Wallerstein's theory of how capitalism found its origins in Europe and was projected outwards in the era of European expansion has been strongly refuted.[7] The question is then if defining a 'Global Sociology of the Corporation' helps historians to avoid these traps. Maybe even better, how such a theory be defined without falling into these traps that have already made so many victims.

Although the Dutch East India company has mainly been studied from a national perspectives and methodologies, its story has also been situated 'within a wider, interconnected geographical context'.[8] To a large extent, the 'processes of negotiation with external constituencies: foreign merchants, interlopers, European rivals, and foreign states' have been well studied in the Dutch case, albeit predominantly from the company's perspective.[9] The VOC had trading posts flung out over Asia both to suit its European trade and its quite extensive network of trade within Asia. As historians have rightfully concluded: we should not overestimate the European trade compared to the trade conducted by Asian traders. Neither were Europeans always the party imposing their will on trade and other traders. In actual fact, as argued by the 'Global Sociology of the Corporation', this far-flung network of trade meant that the VOC took many different shapes and forms to suit its trading interests. This is also where I personally find the sociology most suitable for the analysis of East India companies as it leaves room for these more hidden stories of commercial, cultural and political interaction.

The goal of this edited volume is to 'uncover a transoceanic corporate sociology which integrated a common global framework in the years 1550–1750'.[10] Again, the most inspiring proposition of the theory is the idea that corporations

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6   Especially see the publications in the TANAP-monographs on the History of Asian-European Interaction of Brill.
7   Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974).
8   Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as a Protagonist,* 8.
9   Els Jacobs, *Merchant in Asia: The Trade of the Dutch East India Company During the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: CNWS Publications, 2010).
10   Pettigrew and Veevers (eds.), *The Corporation as a Protagonist,* 3.

were intermediaries between the East and West. East India companies helped avoid a confrontation at the level of the state and helped avoid that institutional traditions would collide in order for trade to thrive. They allowed for a smoother transition to Asian contexts as they could ignore questions both institutional differences and of sovereignty. The history of the VOC illustrates this point even stronger than the history of the EIC as the VOC constantly tried to play the right cords in relation to Asian states. It should not be forgotten that in order for this game to work, Asian also needed to play along at some level. This also raises the question if the constitutional form of European companies was unique and special or if it mattered as much as claimed in this book.

The VOC went to great lengths to submit and adapt itself to Asian rulers in order to safeguard trade. The most famous example of such behaviour was the fact that it fully submitted to Asian sovereignty of Tokugawa Japan.[11] Its submission to Japanese sovereignty saved it from expulsion from Japan, which meant it was the only western power still allowed access to the island after 1639. The acknowledgment of Japanese power was symbolized by the yearly VOC-embassy with precious gifts to the court in Edo.[12] The case of the King of Kandy on the island of Ceylon (present day Sri Lanka) proofs that the VOC was opportunistic in measuring if it should apply its military weight or pursue a more submissive course of action. Although the VOC was militarily stronger and held the King of Kandy in a commercial maritime stranglehold, for its trading interest it accepted to acknowledge him as sovereign through a yearly embassy accompanied by lavish gifts. The instruction of the High Government in Batavia to the yearly embassy to the King of Kandy in order to obtain permission to cut cinnamon bark on his land says it all: 'You have learned by experience that you will find the court [of Kandy] no better disposed than by flattering its grandeur and excellence, because without this, however distasteful in itself, we think it is almost impossible to obtain a satisfactory consummation of affaires, and since this is not expensive, it can be acquiesced in on all occasions'.[13] Such behaviour underlines the conclusion that corporations helped to deal with the sensibilities of sovereignty and trade in Asia.

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11   For the most recent publication on this remarkable episode: Adam Clulow, *The Company and the Shogun: The Dutch Encounter with Tokugawa Japan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014).

12   Cynthia Viallé, ' "To Capture their Favour": on Gift-giving by the VOC', in: T. DaCosta Kauffman and M. North (eds.), *Mediating Nederlandish Art and Material Culture in Asia* (Amsterdam: AUP, 2014), 291–319.

13   Chris Nierstrasz, *In the Shadow of the Company. The Dutch East India Company and its Servants in the Period of its Decline, 1740–1796* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 51.

The VOC constantly calculated the least costly solution in their search for profits by either searching for military conflict or subordinating itself to foreign states.[14] As a consequence, the VOC has been typified as 'a company of commerce but also of state', which aimed at 'internalizing protection costs'.[15] In practice, this meant that the VOC waged continual war between 1602 and 1684 without letting costs run out of hand. This policy initially came at a cost for those who had invested with the VOC as it only started paying dividend to its shareholders after 1622.[16] In conclusion, in the case of the VOC, war and imposition of power on Asians and other European powers were very much part of its repertoire even before 1750, while in the 'Transoceanic Corporate Sociology' based on English corporation subordination avoidance of conflict is stressed as only after the period under studied in this edited volume English military power started imposing itself on Asia.

The VOC also was quite independent in its choices of policy, which 'allowed corporations to be jurisdictionally evasive'.[17] The example mentioned in the introduction of the 'Royal African Company and its alliance with the French Senegal Company in Africa at a time when the English and French states were at war in Europe', was replicated in Asia too in the period leading up to the War of Austrian Succession (1740–1748). The French and English EIC had simply agreed not to wage war on each other during the War of Spanish Succession (1702–1715), and when tensions rose again afterwards decided to do so again in the event of war in Europe. After war broke out in 1740, the English and French crowns started sending their own fleets and armies to Asia in order to break the deadlock. With intrusion of state sponsored military support, it became impossible for European EICs to stay out of European conflicts. The VOC, who managed to keep state inference out, it only received minor military support from its home-state after 1780, still played according to the old rules. It was able to stick to a policy of neutrality during the War of Austrian Succession, despite the fact that its home state was involved in this war.[18]

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14   Gerrit Knaap (ed.), *De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie: Tussen oorlog en diplomatie* [The United East India Company between War and Diplomacy] (Leiden: KITLV, 2002).

15   Femme Gaastra, *The Dutch East India Company. Expansion and Decline* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2003), 56; Niels Steensgaard, *The Asian Trade Revolution of the Seventeenth Century. The East India Companies and the Decline of the Caravan Trade* (Chicago: UPC, 1974) and Niels Steensgaard, *Carracks, Caravans and Companies* (Copenhagen: Studentlitteratur, 1973).

16   Gaastra, *Dutch East India Company*, 37 and 23–27.

17   Pettigrew and Veevers, *The Corporation as a Protagonist*, 25.

18   Nierstrasz, *In the Shadow of the Company*, 31–34.

Surely, East India Companies were quite 'autonomous in Asia from the over-sight of their domicile state' in far-away Europe, but could also easily loose this autonomy without a change to the official constitutional privileges it held. The freedom and flexibiliy of the EIC to decide on policy dwindled when the home state side-stepped the company and directly imposed its own military power in Asia. When the EIC started receiving military assistance from its home state, who started sending out naval forces and troops to help out against the French, this meant that although the military power of the EIC was thus enhanced, it lost its capacity to decide on the level of military conflict in Asia. In the process, it also lost its ability to subordinate itself to Asian states, while the VOC was still able to continue a more hybrid policy.[19]

Monopoly

In contrast to conventional wisdom, the editors of this study claim that the East India companies 'in their global operations [...] were not monopolies'. This somewhat cryptic message contains a high level of truth, but also leads to the question: if East India companies were not monopolies what where they then? What does such an imperfect form of monopoly mean for a story that puts the constitutional form of corporations at its center?

Although different East India companies all shared similar constitution-al privileges, in fact the outcome of these monopolies took different shapes and forms. A comparison between the monopolies of the Dutch and English East India companies will even provide proof that the 'sociology of the Global Corporation' makes sense, but that local outcomes of monopolies were more elusive than a general theory makes us believe. Even stronger, East India com-panies were quite pragmatic in applying their constitutional privileges. Other East India companies fit less into the sociology of the Global Corporation than the EIC, but even when they do fit, their particular context could lead to dra-matically opposed outcomes. What happens to the story when we compare the constitutional form of East India companies and the institutional context in which they functioned? What consequences did differences in the institution-al context have on the interaction between the Dutch and English East India companies?[20]

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19   Ibidem, 14–17.

20   This part is mainly based on: Chris Nierstrasz, *Rivalry for Trade in Tea and Textiles. The En-glish and Dutch East India Companies (1700–1800)* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), especially on chapter 1.

East India companies were subordinate to state authority home and abroad. As we have seen, they were subordinate to the home state, but through their constitutional privileges in their home state, they were even capable of undermining state authority in other European countries. This was especially true for the fiscal arrangements on trade that states had set for themselves. For example, the trade of EIC was mainly aimed at its home-market, consisting of Great Britain and its Atlantic colonies. After the Navigation Acts after 1651, the market for Asian goods in this area was theoretically sealed off from European competitors. Both the state and the EIC profited from this constellation as the EIC had an assured market for its import against monopoly prices, while the English states taxed the import of Asian goods accordingly. In contrast, the VOC had a very limited home-market and competed on the international market. This meant taxation on import and re-export of Asian goods was low in order to meet competition head-on. At the same time, the VOC had the monopoly on direct import of Asian goods from Asia, but the import of Asian goods from other European countries was allowed. The direct consequence of these differences was that the especially tea (not only from the VOC, but also from the other continental companies) was smuggled into England and sold at a much lower price than the tea from the EIC. In turn, this meant that the imports of continental East India companies indirectly undermined the constitutional privilege of the EIC and taxation by the English state.

The different constellations under which the monopolies of both companies operated in their home-countries become clear when we look at the exports of silver. A strange paradox existed in the attitudes towards trade with Asia as mercantilist theory prescribed silver should not leave the country, but trade with Asia was mainly conducted through export of this precious metal. While discussion existed on this issue in England, in the Dutch Republic the exports of silver by the VOC was never challenged or even put up for discussion. This difference was mainly due to the fact that the EIC imported goods for its own market (so in fact silver was really being exported), while the VOC exported most of the goods from Asia to other European countries with a profit (leading to the influx of silver to the Dutch Republic despite exports of silver to Asia). As such, trade with Asia was a drain (at least until empire in India was established) on English silver, while it was not in the case of the Dutch Republic. The lack of discussion on the issue in the Dutch Republic was not born out an unawareness of economic reality or an inability of understanding economic theory (as often implicitly argued by English scholars), but rather due to a different institutional set-up which made exports of silver acceptable.

The different context of trade also meant that competition between companies played out beyond what constitutional rules make us believe. Monopoly

was more often than not an illusion and could even be suspended for competitive reasons. This is true in the intra-Asian trade where servants of East India companies were allowed to conduct private trade as long as they did not interfere with trade that their employer considered part of its monopoly. Logically, the VOC had a wider range of goods it considered its monopoly than the EIC. On the ships of the companies to Europe, the situation was not much different: servants had private trade privileges, which they were allowed to use for private trade in certain items. For instance, the VOC allowed it servants the right to conduct substantial private trade to Europe in tea and Indian textiles, in order to hamper the trade of other East India companies. In turn, the EIC allowed it servants private trade to Europe in almost everything but Indian textiles, tea and pepper in order to hamper the trade of the VOC. In short, although East India companies have often depicted as strong monopolies, rules were in fact imposed pragmatically.

Conclusion

So to conclude, corporations, and especially East India companies, have the potential for being studied as protagonists in global history. Doing so from the perspective from English corporations is methodologically sound, but a comparison with corporations from outside England is potentially even more promising. Otherwise, there is a danger that the theory will fit for English corporations, but not for other corporations in Europe or beyond Europe. In many ways the theory proposed in this edited volume also fits well with the Dutch East India company. It was very similar to English corporations in its institutional form, but also followed its own trajectory. At the same time, we have seen how these companies were very much early-modern entities which meant they were very imperfect. This means that human capital and the way it organized itself, was just as important as its institutional form. As the activities of these corporations spanned the globe, they had to be very flexible and adapt to local situations. The strong point of the theory proposed in this book is that it acknowledges this flexibility, despite the apparent rigidity of constitutional forms. This flexibility helped conduct business as usual even when business reached unchartered waters.

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