



‘A Just Government’—Empire, Religion, Chaplains and the Corporation

On 15 September 1622, the poet, onetime MP, lawyer and cleric John Donne delivered a sermon in the grounds of the old cathedral at St Paul’s Cross, in which he argued the importance of religion to the governmental success of the Virginia Company (VC). Donne demonstrated, in his inimitable style, that structured religious governance would lead to the company successfully establishing control over English and non-English peoples in its colony. It would also ensure the advancement of Protestantism and English authority abroad, thus providing an ‘example of a just Government to other Companies’.¹ Donne compared the VC to an unseen celestial being, whose religious mission was the corporation’s conscience, its moral backbone, of which the temporal ‘*Seals*, and *Patents*, and *Commissions*’ were the company’s ‘wings’. By merging a religious mission with the constitutional authority of a corporation, Donne believed the VC could ‘fly the faster’ towards both commercial and spiritual success.² The company would act as an evangelical body spreading both Protestantism and English authority across the world and through its

¹ John Donne, ‘A sermon Preached at St. Pauls Cross’, September 15, 1622, in Donne, *Five sermons upon special occasions (Viz.) 1. A sermon preached at Pauls Crosse. 2. To the Honorable the Virginia Company 3. At the consecration of Lincolnes Inne Chappell. 4. The first sermon preached to K. Charles at St. James, 1625. 5. A sermon preached to his Majestie at White-hall, 24. Febr. 1625* (London: 1626), p. 35.

² *Ibid.*, p. 28.

emerging colonial empire. According to Donne, by establishing a godly, 'just government', the VC and its members would be 'bearing witness in Jerusalem' and 'Judea', or the city of London and country.³ Donne went further, declaring in the language of the Church that, like the 'apostles' whose 'dioceses' were 'enlarged, farther than Jerusalem, farther than Judea', the company would perform 'miracles' in Virginia.⁴

Some years earlier, Daniel Price had quoted Donne's friend Thomas Morton, the Dean of Gloucester, who had used similar language when describing the Virginia enterprise.⁵ Morton declared that 'it is a Voyage, wherein every Christian ought to set to his helping hand, seeing the Angel of Virginia cryeth out to this land, as the Angel of Macedonia did to Paul, O come and help us'.⁶ Quoting from the book of Acts 16:9, both Morton and Price presented the conversion of the Native Americans of Virginia in the same manner that Paul claimed to be called by God to convert the Macedonians.⁷ Just as the apostle Paul had been responsible for converting the Greeks, so too had the VC and English been called to proselytise to Native Americans in Virginia. Twenty years later, in 1629, the seal of the Massachusetts Bay Company (MBC) used the same example as in Morton's sermon to justify their presence in New England, presenting a Native American declaring 'Come over and help us'.⁸ In the eyes of Morton, Price, Donne and later the leaders of the MBC, trade and commerce were 'God's own invention', and trade would not obstruct the company's religious obligation to both establish and spread Protestant government abroad.⁹ In fact it would actually ensure it. As a result of clear religious governance over their English personnel and the peoples over whom they claimed jurisdiction, overseas companies

³ Ibid., p. 35.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Stanley Johnson, 'John Donne and the Virginia Company', *English Literary History*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (1947), p. 128.

⁶ Quoted in Daniel Price, *Sauls Prohibition Staide... with a reproofe of those that traduce the Honourable Plantation of Virginia* (London: 1609), sig. F3r.

⁷ 'Where a vision appeared to Paul in the night. There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us', Acts 16:9.

⁸ Cathy Rex, 'Indians and Images: The Massachusetts Bay Colony Seal, James Printer, and the Anxiety of Colonial Identity', *American Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 1 (2011), pp. 61–93.

⁹ Ibid., p. 34.

would not only ensure the spread of Protestantism and English authority, but also, succeed in their commercial mission, and according to Donne, provide an 'example of a just Government to other Companies'.¹⁰ Donne saw the interactions of England's overseas companies with non-Christians across the globe as an opportunity to advance and combine the Protestant faith and English authority abroad in its emerging colonial empire. Such calls to evangelise the 'natives' became the bedrock of early colonial settlements, encouraging political, religious and financial support for organisations that coordinated English expansion abroad.

Donne joined the likes of Morton, Samuel Purchas, Edward Huntington, Robert Frampton, Edward Reynolds and many other influential clergymen, all of whom promoted the expansionist activities of English overseas companies. However, the clergy were not the only advocates of using religion to advance English expansion abroad. Courtiers, politicians, imperial agents and scientists all engaged with religion to highlight the spiritual and temporal benefits of expansion, seeing it as a tool to secure and develop English governmental control abroad. Furthermore, as English companies continued to advance English territorial designs, the prism of religion became an increasingly important means to frame diplomatic, commercial, political and religious interactions with peoples across its emerging colonial empire.

One month after his September 1622 sermon, Donne gave another, this time to the members of the VC. Preaching from the book of Acts, Donne again discussed the importance of religion and religious governance for the success of the corporation.¹¹ Donne sought to further reinforce the biblical justification of commerce by ordering the VC's members to be, through their activities, 'a Light to the Gentiles, that sit in darkness'.¹² Like Richard Hakluyt, who had advocated that by 'planting of religion among those infidels', English overseas expansion was to the

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

¹¹ Donne, *Five sermons*, pp. 1–65.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 2; for Edward Coke's description of corporations, see Steve Sheppard, ed., *Selected Writings of Sir Edward Coke*, Vol. I (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2003), pp. 120–196, particularly p. 181.

‘glory of God’, Donne also resolutely promoted the evangelical possibilities that overseas trading companies offered English Protestants.¹³ For Donne and his contemporary clergymen such as Hakluyt, as well as numerous Church leaders including the Archbishop of Canterbury George Abbot, Bishops of London John King and George Montaigne, Bishop of Durham William James and Bishop of Bath and Wells Arthur Lake, evangelism was a profitable double-edged sword.¹⁴ England’s global expansion was strengthened when the ‘principal end is not gain, nor glory, but to gain Souls to the glory of God’ and consequently the success of this spiritually enhanced expansion was not only measured in souls gained, but also financial profit.¹⁵ Financial success not only benefited the nation, but also those clergy who touted the spiritual ‘end’ of the company’s mission. Gaining souls was a lucrative business for all investors, including the likes of Donne, Hakluyt and Abbot, and it was in their interest to encourage their congregations to support these companies.

Donne advocated the responsibility of the English to evangelise in the new commercial and territorial regions into which English companies were expanding. In the case of the VC, Donne himself had expressed an active interest in being involved in the administration of the company, requesting ‘to be secretary of Virginia’.¹⁶ In his first publication, the polemical tract *Pseudo-Martyr*, Donne explained to his readers why this mission was important and how it would succeed. According to him, the English were to be ‘instructors’, who would gently encourage peoples across the globe to incorporate together forming ‘a company of Savages’.¹⁷ In doing so, he believed, they would naturally ‘consent

¹³ Richard Hakluyt (elder), *Pamphlet for the Virginia Enterprise* (1585), in E. G. R. Taylor, ed., *The Original Writings and Correspondence of the Two Richard Hakluyts*, 2 vols. (London: Hakluyt Society, 1935), II: p. 327.

¹⁴ All these bishops were involved in one or more of the following companies: the Virginia, East India, Muscovy, Guinea, Spanish, Northwest Passage Companies and the Irish Society. George Montaigne would also go on to become the Archbishop of York.

¹⁵ Donne, ‘To the Honourable the Virginia Company’, in *Five Sermons*, p. 28.

¹⁶ John Chamberlain to Dudley Carelton, February 14, 1609, in Norman Egbert McClure, ed., *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, PA: The American Philosophical Society, 1939), I: p. 284; Johnson, ‘Donne and the Virginia’, p. 127.

¹⁷ John Donne, *Pseudo-martyr. Wherein out of certaine propositions and gradations, this conclusion is evicted. That those which are of the Romane religion in this kingdome, may and ought to take the Oath of allegiance* (London: 1610), pp. 84, 172.

and concur to a civil manner of living'.¹⁸ For Donne and his contemporaries, civilising was wrapped up in ideas of establishing and imposing godly order and control over communities.¹⁹ One of the most effective ways to establish civility was through the incorporation of people into the membership of a corporate body that would then govern their daily lives. The VC and other overseas companies functioned as both regulators and active exemplars of English control either by encouraging through example or by coercing peoples into incorporating themselves into Protestant civility. Developing out of the religious politics of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Protestant civility tied 'religious or moral rather than courtly ideals' to ideas of expansion and Englishness, offering a justification to counter Catholic expansion and providing an alternative example.²⁰

Colonial promoters formulated a means through such civility to both theoretically and practically regulate the personal lives (both religious and secular) of individuals and groups that were incorporated into the emerging empire.²¹ Donne concluded that 'instructors' would encourage non-English peoples to adopt English forms of governance by incorporating themselves into a 'Company', or companies, thereby forming 'a Commonwealth'.²² To Donne's early modern audience, the Protestant faith was intrinsically linked to governmental civility, and the action of a group incorporating themselves into one governmental and religious body was also a clear sign that they either already had or were willing to adopt the 'saving knowledge, and Faith in our blessed Saviours Passion'.²³ Overseas companies, whether the VC, MBC, Levant (LC) or East India (EIC), were more than merely commercial actors, they were

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

¹⁹ Michael Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Steve Hindle, *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England, 1550–1640* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000).

²⁰ Dilwyn Knox, 'Erasmus' *De Civilitate* and the Religious Origins of Civility in Protestant Europe', *Archive for Reformation History*, Vol. 86 (1995), p. 10.

²¹ John Darwin, 'Civility and Empire', in Peter Burke, Brian Harrison, and Paul Slack, eds., *Civil Histories: Essays Presented to Sir Keith Thomas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 321.

²² Donne, *Pseudo-martyr*, p. 83.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

agents and examples of English civil governance abroad.²⁴ They were the institutional ‘instructors’ tasked with advancing and establishing English governance in its emerging colonial empire, and a defining feature of this governance was its evangelical, Protestant agenda.

DEFINING GOVERNANCE

For various companies and their members in the early modern period, governance meant different things at different times, as they sought to deal with the commercial, legal, cultural and social pressures in England’s emerging colonial empire. In the simplest terms, B. Guy Peters has described the main aim of governance today as to provide ‘direction and control for society and the economy’.²⁵ In the early modern period, this was complicated by the delegation of sovereignty, and thus governance, to organisations that operated in geographies ‘beyond the state’—most notably the corporation.²⁶ Governance, therefore, was a mechanism of social control that functioned irrespective of the fragmented and disparate modes of authority that made up the early modern state. Governance, in this context, represented strategies for imposing ‘direction and control’ on the part of corporations over their members, employees and wider constituencies. This was not limited to social or economic activity, and Edmond Smith has shown how ‘corporations used governance to refer to many aspects of their activities’, including the religious lives of their members and employees.²⁷

Religious governance was used by many companies to assert and advance company authority through various direct and indirect means.

²⁴ Andrew Phillips and J. C. Sharman, *Outsourcing Empire: How Company States Made the Modern World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020), pp. 1–22.

²⁵ B. Guy Peters, ‘Governance as Political Theory’, in David Levi-Faur, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Governance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 19.

²⁶ Levi-Faur, ‘From “Big Government” to “Big Governance”?’, in Levi-Faur, ed., *Governance*, p. 3; Philip J. Stern, *The Company-State: Corporate Sovereignty and the Early Modern Foundations of the British Empire in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Lauren Benton, *A Search for Sovereignty: Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

²⁷ Edmond Smith, ‘Governance’, in William Pettigrew and David Veevers, eds., *Corporations as Protagonists in Global History* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), p. 166; These ideas are expanded further in Edmond Smith, *Merchants: The Community That Shaped England’s Trade and Empire, 1550–1650* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2021).

Building upon Smith's definition of corporate 'political governance' that illustrates the role of the corporation in developing laws and political structures in order to 'hold power over people who were not members of the organisation', this book introduces the important role of religion in shaping these laws and structures.²⁸ It goes further still, by demonstrating that the pervasive role of religion in the development of England's overseas empire requires a distinct interpretation and analysis that presents and examines religious governance as a distinctive structure of government. In doing so, this work highlights one of the ways in which the disparate and divergent forms of authority in England's emerging colonial empire can be connected and offers a means to use entangled imperial and religious practices to reassess the evolution of English colonial authority.

Seventeenth-century overseas religious governance can be divided into three models: pastoral, theocratic and ecumenical. Emerging from the dual desire to secure corporate authority abroad and to evangelise to expand the corporations' spiritual and territorial jurisdiction, these models trace the development of religious governance across England's overseas companies. These models served both to police the behaviour of those who came within its ambit and to advance their jurisdiction over those who would traditionally be considered beyond their authority. The models that each company established show how its members believed their mission to make profit would be achieved.

In the context of England's overseas companies, pastoral governance was a means of controlling and policing the lives and interactions of the companies' flock overseas. Pastoral governance was founded in the extensive authority given by companies to chaplains to govern over the spiritual lives of members of the company, as well as the day-to-day activities and interactions of those who went abroad. Obsessed in these early years with securing their commercial mission, company leaders sought, through the chaplain, to minimise the prospect of harmful behaviour. In doing so, officials hoped to mitigate the risks of apostasy, drunkenness, prostitution, gambling and all manner of perceived vices, thereby securing their good reputation amongst the local peoples. Furthermore, through pastoral governance, the chaplain would police diplomatic, intellectual and religious interactions; meanwhile, securing the good behaviour of company personnel would begin to develop passive evangelism. This

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

was a process that involved what one EIC agent described as a ‘pious fraud’ as the company attempted to convert local Indians to Protestantism by ‘allowable guile’.²⁹

Theocratic governance in overseas companies recognised God as its supreme leader and religious law as being absolute. Companies that adopted theocratic governance sought to secure and perpetuate control by aggressively enforcing a policy of exclusivity, defining the boundaries of a distinctively English polity. Thus, would-be members were required to confess to sharing the theological beliefs espoused by the company leadership. Participation in corporate life was restricted to those who claimed to follow the same religious ideology. Those in the company’s jurisdiction who did not conform to or follow its members’ religious governance often faced persecution, forced conversion, banishment and even execution.

Amongst England’s overseas corporations, theocratic governance in its most extreme form emerged in the MBC. One event that illustrates the company’s theocratic governance occurred between 1659 and 1661, when the legislature of the MBC executed three Quakers, also known as the Boston martyrs, for their religious beliefs.³⁰ In one of the first acts against Quakers, a General Court held in Boston in 1656 declared them to be ‘a cursed sect of heretics’ and ordered that any Quaker found in the colony be fined and imprisoned, concluding that if this did not change their views they were to be ‘sentenced by the Court of Assistants to banishment’.³¹ This was followed by a series of acts in 1657 and 1658, as well as the ‘Cart and Whip Act’ in 1661, all of which imposed further draconian punishments on the ‘Vagabond Quaker’, including their ‘apprehending, whipping and conveying’.³² Moreover, the final act also allowed for the execution of Quakers who continued to remain in or

²⁹ British Library (BL) India Office Records (IOR) G/36/105 Letter from Bombay to the Council at Surat October 21, 1668.

³⁰ Carla Gardina Pestana, *Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), p. 133.

³¹ John Fox, *Fox’s Book of Martyrs: Or, The Acts and Monuments of the Christian Church; Being a Complete History of the Lives, Sufferings, and Deaths of the Christian Martyrs; from the Commencement of Christianity to the Present Period*, 2 vols., ed., T. Pratt (New York, NY: William Borradaile, 1829), II: p. 544.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 545–546; Nathaniel Shurtleff, ed., *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England* (Boston, MA; William White, 1854), IV, part II: p. 3 (hereafter *RCM*).

return to the colony.³³ As Quakers, Mary Dyer, Marmaduke Stephenson and William Robinson were perceived to be a threat to the MBC's authority, and were all subsequently sentenced to banishment, imprisonment and eventually execution for their beliefs. In this formulation, religious governance was remained narrowly focused on a specific form of Protestant civility that forcefully promoted as the governing norm of corporate life in a given geography.

Ecumenical governance represented a merged response, in which company officials begrudgingly accepted diversity and worked with it. For England's overseas companies in the seventeenth century, the variety of peoples and faiths they encountered and governed meant that, for some, ecumenical governance was the only way they could secure their commercial positions. William Bulman has illustrated in relation to the imperial project Tangier that a 'variety of economic, military, diplomatic and political considerations' resulted in the formation of a 'de facto toleration'; the same can be said for England's commercial enterprise in India.³⁴ Ecumenical governance was a response to ensuring stability in its emerging colonial empire following the Restoration. Although religious conformity was to be striven for, in reality it was to be put aside in favour of stability. In Bombay, the English faced the same problems as in Tangier, forcing the adoption of sufferance as an 'economic, diplomatic, political and military necessity' that would ensure 'non-Anglican populations remained quiescent'.³⁵ However, unlike Tangier, which remained a crown colony until it was abandoned in 1684, Bombay, as with all other English territories in India, fell under the control of the EIC in 1668. Subsequently, the EIC had to absorb previous arrangements made under the Crown whilst preserving its own governmental autonomy and agenda. Like the Crown governors, the EIC leadership had to balance religious aspirations with reality. For the company, commercial and political stability were paramount. Ecumenical governance arose as a means to preserve these two pillars whilst appeasing the religious sentiments of all involved. Whether in the freedom to practise religion or engage in commerce, or in including these religious groups in the government

³³ Ibid., IV, part II: p. 4.

³⁴ William J. Bulman, *Anglican Enlightenment: Orientalism, Religion and Politics in England and Its Empire, 1648–1715* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 212.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 215.

of the corporations, ecumenical governance offered the closest representation of a corporate religious government that included multiple faiths.

By using these models, it becomes possible to assess the differing roles of religious governance in several of England's seventeenth-century overseas companies and to assess the distinct agendas regarding governance connecting these companies across the globe. These discrete models of governance illustrate how, through similar yet adaptable foundations, companies developed administrative frameworks to control the religious behaviour and practices of those under their authority.

During the seventeenth century, England's overseas companies developed ideas of a 'just government' that involved using religion as a mechanism to regulate the behaviour of their personnel overseas. Moreover, it was also a means to incorporate non-English people into adapted forms of English governance in the Mediterranean as well as across the Atlantic and Indian oceans. To understand the development of ideas surrounding imperial authority in early modern English colonies, it is necessary to recognise both the interconnectedness and integration of concepts surrounding the movement of goods, peoples and knowledge across various national and transnational boundaries in the seventeenth century. Sebastian Conrad has developed this view in global history: situating the field as part of the 'spatial turn', he has argued that a 'unit' or a location is related to a variety of 'scales', which can be regional, national, transnational or global, thereby moving beyond a discussion of connection, and into an examination of the 'large-scale structural integration' of ideas and practices.³⁶ One way to do this is to move across traditional geographic and cultural boundaries, to investigate and integrate the connected historical experiences of various English and non-English actors and authorities, and study how they instructed each other and shaped the development of government in England's early empire. As institutional bodies that were connected by the same legal origins and shared similar governmental privileges, England's overseas companies offer insight into the global development of English imperial governance in the early modern period.

This period saw rapid commercial and territorial expansion, putting English into contact with other cultures and faiths in India, the Levant,

³⁶ Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), pp. 15, 67, 136.

America, Japan, Africa and Persia. As Andrew Phillips and J. C. Sharman have pointed out companies such as the EIC, LC and MBC became 'primary mediators' that connected England or Europe 'with the rest of the world'.³⁷ Whilst this was most directly the case for those men and women who travelled abroad in the service of companies, English people in their domestic settings—through the food they ate, the fabric they wore and the books they read—were all indirectly exposed to the world beyond Europe. Through a detailed investigation of the place of religion in framing the encounters and government of English overseas companies, this book investigates the development of English authority in its emerging factories, cities, lands and colonies in the period between 1601 and 1698: specifically, by undertaking a comparative study of five corporations that were integral to the foundation of overseas corporate behaviour in the seventeenth century.³⁸ As an in-depth study of five overseas companies (the VC, LC, EIC, MBC and Plymouth Company [PC]), this book examines one structural element (religious governance) of the eclectic character of English governmental expansion overseas in the seventeenth century, which also included proprietary grants, royal colonies and urban corporations.³⁹ In doing so, it offers a detailed comparative analysis of the global development of governance in England's early empire that is at once both chronologically and geographically broad based.

All of England's overseas trading companies, whether they operated in the Mediterranean or the Indian, Atlantic or Pacific oceans, were

³⁷ Phillips and Sharman, *Outsourcing Empire*, p. 2.

³⁸ Companies chartered following the Restoration such as the Newfoundland, Royal African and Hudson's Bay companies, whose presence in overseas corporate governance does not map onto the whole century, are not included. Likewise, the Muscovy Company does not feature in the monograph as its records, both before and after the great fire (1666), are incomplete and so in relation to the other companies can only provide a fragmented comparison.

³⁹ For more information on the role of proprietary grants, royal colonies and urban corporations in the development of English governmental expansion see Vicki Hsueh, *Hybrid Constitutions: Challenging Legacies of Law, Privilege, and Culture in Colonial America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); Mary Sarah Bilder, 'English Settlement and Local Governance', in Michael Grossberg and Christopher L. Tomlins, eds., *The Cambridge History of Law in America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 63–103; Tomlins, 'Legal Cartography of Colonization, the Legal Polyphony of Settlement: English Intrusions on the American Mainland in the Seventeenth Century', *Law and Social Inquiry*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2001), pp. 315–372.

of ‘the same ilk’.⁴⁰ They shared the same legal and political origin through their charters, although there were clear differences between the settlements and colonies they established. Whether joint stock, regulated or both, all these companies owed their commercial and governmental rights to their charters. These charters established analogous commercial, religious, political and diplomatic missions, whilst also defining levels of autonomy and sovereignty that leaders and members could enjoy. However, despite sharing similar governmental and legislative capabilities, companies utilised their charter privileges differently, leading to the establishment of radically different forms of English governance abroad. Through overseas companies, the different parts of England’s emerging empire shared more than just structural or legal similarities with each other. It was also the companies’ imperative to regulate the behaviour of the populations they governed over that strongly connected them. The means they used to achieve this both distinguished each company’s governmental character from the others and linked them together. Religion became an important component in each company’s governmental apparatus, highlighting the comparable development of governance in England’s early empire.

Just as in England, religious governance in England’s companies could both divide and connect those it sought to bring together. In various geographies, it was used to unite diverse religious communities. These charters established analogous commercial, religious, political and diplomatic missions, whilst also defining levels of autonomy and sovereignty that leaders and members could enjoy. However, whilst it could encourage the development of an inclusive government, religious governance could also lead to the creation of exclusionary regimes that ostracised certain religious and cultural groups in order to ensure the dominance of another. In company jurisdictions in different environments, religious governance at times broke down, highlighting the fractious nature of religious life in the seventeenth century. The companies developed the pastoral, theocratic and ecumenical models to manage the sending of ministers, writing of laws, spreading of evangelism and administration of churches. These models helped to form the character and identity of corporate governments with religious underpinnings both in England and abroad.

⁴⁰ Philip J. Stern, ‘British Asia and British Atlantic: Comparison and Connections’, *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 4 (2006), p. 700.

Whilst assessing the development of corporations through the practice of religious governance, we can ask three central questions: first, how did corporate flexibility facilitate the establishment of overseas companies as distinguishable bodies that operated as extensions of English authority abroad? Second, how did companies develop distinct ways of controlling the religious behaviour of the English settlers as well as the peoples who came under their jurisdiction—including Animists, Muslims, Hindus, Catholics, Orthodox Armenians and Jews? Thirdly, was the control and regulation of religious behaviour via a 'Protestant civility' crucial to the success of their emerging colonial enterprises?

EMERGING EMPIRE: INTERNAL IMPERIAL AND IBERIAN INSPIRATION

Imperialism, in particular 'the language and symbolism of empire', has had a long history in the British Isles.⁴¹ During the sixteenth century, medieval texts such as Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* received renewed popularity as various monarchs wished to convey imperialism as an internal process of unification within the British Isles. John Dee used this language when discussing 'the lawfull British and English jurisdiction over Scotland', describing 'this incomparable Brytish Empire' in which all the inhabitants across the island were the 'true and natural born subjects of this Brytish Empire'.⁴² However, the development of global trade and commerce in the sixteenth and seventeenth century changed the conception of empire from an insular process of unification to a maritime-commercial ideology that could be global in scope. This ideology was not only formulated to counter papal domination and Catholic global expansion, but also to legitimise English colonialism and commerce.⁴³ The Spanish and Portuguese, according to English colonial thinkers, had no right to monopolise overseas expansion and trade, as the seas were 'natures commons'.⁴⁴ Samuel Purchas argued

⁴¹ David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 34.

⁴² John Dee, *General and Rare Memorial Pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Navigation* (London: 1577), pp. 8, 14.

⁴³ Armitage, *Ideological Origins*, pp. 107–109.

⁴⁴ Samuel Purchas, *Hakluyt Posthumus, or Purchas His Pilgrimes*, 5 vols. (London: 1625), I: p. 5.

that, according to the law of nature, the seas belonged to everyone, and as such commerce upon them was ‘to be enjoyed by all’.⁴⁵ In principle, this common right gave the English as much a claim to New World trade and expansion as their Iberian counterparts.

Although Catholic overseas expansion had been taking place since the medieval period, 1492 marked a turning point in not only Iberian and Catholic, but also European, overseas expansion. Five years after the Spanish began to settle America, Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese explorer, sailed around the Cape of Good Hope and in 1498 reached India, landing in Calicut. These two moments marked the genesis of Catholic overseas expansion that would lead to both Spain and Portugal laying claim to territory in the Atlantic, Indian and Pacific oceans and dominating commerce into Europe, to the envy of their counterparts and acting as the inspiration for future English expansion.⁴⁶ By the time English Protestants were attempting to govern over territory in the Indian, Atlantic and Pacific oceans in the seventeenth century, the Iberian nations had long-established centres of Catholic governmental authority in these regions. The conquest of Goa in 1510, followed by Malacca (1511) and Ormuz (1515), led to the establishment of permanent Portuguese settlements in the Indian Ocean, which became centres of political, commercial and religious power. By 1530, Goa had become the ‘centre of the vast networks of the *Estado da Índia*’ and marked the ‘remarkably rapid rise to power of the Portuguese’ in the Indian Ocean.⁴⁷ As Ângela Barreto Xavier and Ines Županov have illustrated, Goa became an important centre for Catholic religious, political and cultural power as well as learning.⁴⁸ The Portuguese in 1534 established the bishopric of Goa, confirming Portugal’s religious and political power and aspirations in the Indian Ocean. Goa was to act as a base of operations for the *Estado da Índia*, to ‘impose a religious monopoly’ not only on Goa but

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560–1660* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 11; Phillips and Sharman *Outsourcing Empire*, pp. 29–32.

⁴⁷ Ananya Chakravarti, *The Empire of Apostles: Religion, Accommodatio, and the Imagination of Empire in Early Modern Brazil and India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 45, 48; Phillips and Sharman, *Outsourcing Empire*, pp. 30–31, 35–36.

⁴⁸ Ângela Barreto Xavier and Ines G. Županov, *Catholic Orientalism: Portuguese Empire, Indian Knowledge (16th–18th Centuries)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

also on India as a whole.⁴⁹ Alongside the establishment of a centre of the Catholic Church, Portuguese expansion also involved the expansion of other Catholic orders that, although operating outside of the Portuguese state, worked for them. This included Carmelites, Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians and Jesuits, all of whom went to India 'as part of the Portuguese ecclesiastical system of *'Padroado'*.⁵⁰ The latter of which became the primary focus of the antagonism of the English, 'who feared the Jesuits above all other religious orders'.⁵¹ In particular, the English upon their arrival in India envied the Jesuits' religious successes, which they said were 'poisoning [India] with the Coloquintida of Popery', as well as their commercial and diplomatic accomplishments at the Mughal Court.⁵² The long-established presence at the Mughal Court was first established by Akbar, who invited them to court to both learn about their faith as well as a means for 'realising commercial rapport with the Portuguese'.⁵³ Although they were not to be successful in converting Akbar, they did make some impression, the *Ain-i-Akbari* noting the 'learned monks' who came from Europe and who 'have an infallible head, called Papa' and that Akbar ordered Prince Murad to 'take a few lessons in Christianity'.⁵⁴ By the time that the English arrived in India, the Jesuits' position was embedded at Akbar's court and through them the Portuguese had obtained 'access to the wide variety of commodity streams coming from Mughal territory' that the English also wanted access to.

Over the sixteenth century, the Portuguese in India merged both religious and commercial aspirations in order to secure their territorial expansions abroad. To the English, their Iberian counterparts were both an inspiration and an adversary. The religious governance on which the Portuguese success was established was something that the English

⁴⁹ Chakravarti, *Empire of Apostles*, p. 47.

⁵⁰ Pius Melekandathil, *The Mughals, The Portuguese and the Indian Ocean: Changing Imageries of Maritime India* (New Delhi: Primus, 2013), p. 15.

⁵¹ Games, *Web of Empire*, p. 224.

⁵² Patrick Copland and Peter Pope, *Virginia's God Be Thanked, or a Sermon of Thanksgiving for the Happie Successe of the Affayres in Virginia This Last Yeare, Hereunto Are Adjoynd Some Epistles, Written First in Latine, and Now Englished, By Peter Pope, an Indian Youth, Who Was, Baptized, In London, December 22, 1616* (London: 1622), p. 30.

⁵³ Melekandathil, *The Mughals, The Portuguese*, p. 27.

⁵⁴ Abūl Fazl Allāmi, *The Ain-i-Akbari*, trans. H. Blochmann and H. S. Jarret, Vol. 1 (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1873), p. 182.

wanted to both mirror and oppose, presenting themselves as the Protestant alternative. England's emerging colonial empire of the seventeenth century arose out of this combining of traditional ideas of internal imperialism (that had been taking place since the medieval period in the British Isles) and the growth of international commerce and Iberian expansion in the sixteenth century.

CORPORATE FORMATION AND THE ORIGINS OF CORPORATE RELIGIOUS GOVERNANCE

Although companies had been used to regulate governance and advance English commercial interests since the medieval period, between 1601 and 1698 both the Crown and Parliament used corporations to advance English commercial and territorial objectives globally. They established commercial relationships with communities across the globe, shaping English colonialism throughout this period.⁵⁵ From the commercial relationships with the Mughal and Ottoman courts to the establishment of permanent settlements on the east coast of America, the structure of the corporation was used to legitimise English commercial and territorial expansion.

Corporate structures provided both the legal space and protection to establish diverse but connected forms of autonomous governance across the globe. The government of early modern England was an 'incorporation of local communities into a national society and state', structured and regulated by the corporations.⁵⁶ Various forms of corporations administered towns and cities, such as the livery companies, urban corporations and guilds, whilst other forms of trading companies were pervasive throughout England's developing urban centres. Yet a commercial company's administration was defined by its unsettled and flexible position, being both autonomous and subordinated to the Crown.⁵⁷ This

⁵⁵ William Pettigrew, 'Corporate Constitutionalism and the Dialogue Between the Global and Local in Seventeenth-Century English History', *Itinerario*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (2015), p. 488.

⁵⁶ Phil Withington, *Society in Early Modern England: The Vernacular Origins of Some Powerful Ideas* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010), p. 4.

⁵⁷ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan, or The Matter, Forme, and Power of a Common Wealth, Ecclesiastical and Civil* (London: 1651), pt. 2, ch. 29, p. 174; Pettigrew, 'Corporate Constitutionalism', p. 489.

unclear position allowed for corporate government to develop almost independently of the state. This line was further blurred with overseas companies, whose charter privileges and distance from the metropole allowed them to develop government independently from the state, but also in some respects to subject themselves to the authority of another Crown or state.⁵⁸

Those who supported corporate spaces (towns and boroughs) had an 'expansive, ambitious and essentially civic humanist conception' of them.⁵⁹ Offered by the monarch, the act of incorporation presented town inhabitants with greater autonomy over civic finances and social and educational institutions.⁶⁰ Moreover, according to Henry Manship, a town clerk in Great Yarmouth, incorporation allowed people to 'live the more commodiously together and frame themselves a Commonwealth'.⁶¹ Another commentator saw corporate spaces as a 'state of citizens', whose autonomous government provided citizens with parliamentary representation and privileges, the right to sue in law, as well as economic rights to establish markets and craft guilds.⁶² They unified groups of people into commonwealths or societies, whereby they could better police and govern the behaviour of their members. In the 7th edition of Edward Phillips famous dictionary *The New World of Words*, the terms 'community' and 'society' were described as 'a Corporation' or 'a Company of several persons' were people had 'in common, partnership... united in civil society for their mutual advantage' as well as being 'several persons joined together for some common interest'.⁶³ Similarly, William Shepard highlighted how corporations 'fram'd' together men into a 'Body

⁵⁸ 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 (2012), pp. 263–267, 283.

⁵⁹ Phil Withington, *The Politics of Commonwealth: Citizens and Freemen in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 10.

⁶⁰ Robert Tittler, *The Reformation and Towns in England: Politics and Political Culture, c. 1540–1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 153.

⁶¹ Thomas Wilson, *The State of England anno. dom. 1600*, ed. F. J. Fisher (London: Camden Misc, XVI, 1936), p. 20; Henry Manship, *The History of Great Yarmouth*, ed., Charles J. Palmer, (Great Yarmouth: L.A. Meall, 1854), p. 23.

⁶² Withington, *Politics of Commonwealth*, p. 8.

⁶³ Edward Phillips, *New world of words* ed. John Kersey (1720), 'community', 'society'.

Politic’.⁶⁴ To early moderns, corporations were ‘the best of Polities’, as they ensured good government by policing the religious, political, commercial and social behaviour of their members.⁶⁵ Alongside their civil characteristics, urbanised corporations were increasingly associated with the expansion of commerce, as economic independence allowed incorporated communities to regulate trade. The proliferation of corporations in this manner in the early modern period can be seen as a response by communities, as well as local and national authorities in England, to organise and govern over different aspects of society.

A HISTORY OF CORPORATE RELIGIOUS GOVERNANCE

Religion had long been an important history in the development of corporate life in overseas trading companies, having evolved out of a governmental tradition established by monastic corporations in the medieval period.⁶⁶ The medieval Church has been described as being made up of a ‘network of corporate entities’, which included dioceses, monasteries and cathedral chapters, all of which were defined by their members, and the ‘web of individual rights’ that had been granted to them and various ecclesiastical authorities by the papacy and crown.⁶⁷ These rights were not dissimilar to those granted to seventeenth-century urban and trading corporations by the crown and parliament.⁶⁸ These connections were noted by many seventeenth-century political, legal and religious commentators. The famous jurist Edward Coke pointed out

⁶⁴ William Sheppard, *Of corporations, fraternities, and guilds. Or, a discourse, wherein the learning of the law touching bodies-politique is unfolded, shewing the use and necessity of that invention, that antiquity, various kinds, order and government of the same. Necessary to be known not only of all members and dependants of such bodies; but of all the professors of our common law. With forms and presidents, of charters of corporation* (London: 1659), p. 1.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 1–3.

⁶⁶ For a more in-depth discussion of the work in this section, see Haig Smith, ‘Religion’; Pettigrew and Veevers, *Corporations as Protagonists*, pp. 137–162.

⁶⁷ Charles Reid, ‘*Rights in Thirteenth-Century Canon Law: A Historical Investigation*’ (unpublished PhD diss., Cornell University, 1995), p. 6; Bruce P. Frohnen, ‘Individual and Group Rights: Self-Government and Claims of Right in Historical Practice’, in Bruce P. Frohnen and Kenneth L. Grasso, eds., *Rethinking Rights: Historical, Political, and Philosophical Perspectives* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri, 2009), p. 111.

⁶⁸ Frohnen, ‘Individual and Group Rights’, pp. 112–115.

the connections between the corporation and '*Collegium* or *Universitas*', whilst others noted that Protestant—in particular Puritan—congregations were 'Distinct Corporations or Churches of *Christ*'.⁶⁹ Even the EIC's agent in Madras, Streyنشam Master, drew on this parallel, writing in 1668 that the government of the EIC factory should be 'more like unto the Colledge, Monasteries or a house of Religion'.⁷⁰ The ideas and structures of seventeenth-century overseas company governance developed within the merging language of religious and secular corporate structures. Their members joined together 'covenanting' and establishing bodies that were commercial congregations not dissimilar to those in a church. Whether merchants joined together in a trading company, or Puritans whose churches had 'Covenanted to be a Church Body', both formed social entities connected by the shared language of corporations and commerce. For example, one commentator described a church as a 'Company of Christians', whilst another explained the protestant community as sharing 'Joint-Stock of religion', in which all would 'bear a great adventure', both financial and spiritual.⁷¹

By understanding religious governance as a mechanism through which authorities directed and governed over peoples and overseas territories, we can better understand the eclectic but connected governmental characters, identities and styles that allowed a company to govern over 'its own employees and corporators'.⁷² Religious governance was not simply eclectic and innocuous but was carefully constructed as a means to establish, expand, enforce and regulate English authority across the globe. Through an assessment of how religious governance regulated interactions between religious communities under company control, we can recognise the role of numerous faiths in the development of English authority abroad, as well as attempts 'to incorporate... into their

⁶⁹ 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 false ministrie. With a briefe description of a true Church of Christ* (Amsterdam: 1641); Stern, *Company-State*, p. 6.

⁷⁰ BL IOR EUR Mss E/210 Unsent letter by Streyنشam Master.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*; 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* (London: 1647), p. 11.

⁷² Stern, *Company-State*, p. 6; 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. 61, No. 1 (2011), pp. 25–50.

own system' both English and indigenous peoples or 'corporators'.⁷³ However, to understand the importance of the incorporation of various peoples into, and exclusion from, England's emerging colonial empire, emphasis needs to be placed on the 'corporate' identity and character of this expansion. The character of overseas government was formed through a dual process that involved various religious groups navigating the 'delicate balance of a strict hierarchy and consultative government' in companies that might facilitate or halt English expansion.⁷⁴ At the same time, all English companies in the Mediterranean, as well as the Atlantic and Indian oceans, tried to regulate cross-cultural dialogues that could both enhance and damage their regional authority.

RELIGION IN ENGLAND

An important factor in the development of the authority in England's overseas companies was the religious identity of its members. The early Stuart Church in England was formed out of dispute and discussion in an 'arena of lay activism and, at least potentially heterodox, doctrinal debate'.⁷⁵ Just as in England, religious heterogeneity, dispute and denominational difference were commonplace characteristics of the English corporate communities abroad. Furthermore, the clergy in England 'were themselves deeply fragmented, and so could provide no uniformity to overseas ventures' and the 'English state' was also 'unable to express, impose or sustain any single religious settlement' abroad.⁷⁶ This meant that although religion was 'consistently transported' abroad as a means to regulate the lives and behaviour of English and non-English peoples across the globe, its implementation was varied and diverse. It allowed for the successful creation of a Congregational theocracy in North East America whilst undermining the religious governance of other colonies. In India, Protestant diversity helped in the development of a policy of religious sufferance, although at the same time caused friction between factors who complain of 'confusion amongst ourselves' when it came to

⁷³ Karen Kupperman, *Indians & English: Facing Off in Early America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), p. 1.

⁷⁴ Stern, *Company-State*, p. 11.

⁷⁵ Peter Lake, *The Boxmaker's Revenge: 'Orthodoxy', 'Heterodoxy' and the Politics of the Parish in Early Stuart London* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 5.

⁷⁶ Games, *Web of Empire*, p. 253.

religious governance within the company's factories and proselytisation of the local peoples.⁷⁷ This occurred in part due to the 'schismatic, and dispersed nature of religious settlement during decades of instability at home' being emulated abroad.⁷⁸

Across England, the 'polyphony' of Protestant communities defined in differing ways how religion was to be governed. These communities contained, in varying degrees and sizes, the variety of factions that had developed in the Church of England through the years after the Reformation.⁷⁹ The fractured unity that defined the early Church of England was also mirrored in England's overseas trading companies.⁸⁰ Various groups lived and worshipped together as members of the Church of England (in its broadest definition), whilst sharing in the same communal debates surrounding the theology and the Church in England.⁸¹ Therefore, it is important to identify and outline the terms used in this work to describe these various religious groups and denominations who were, particularly, Conformist, Anglican, Nonconformist and Puritan.

Throughout this work, Conformist and Anglican are used interchangeably to refer to those individuals and groups who broadly remained and worked within the framework of the Church of England. Wary that the

⁷⁷ Streynsham Masters to Samuel Masters, 9 December 1678, in Michael Hunter, Antonio Clericuzio, and Lawrence M. Principe, eds., *The Correspondence of Robert Boyle, 1636–1691*, 6 vols. (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2004) VI: p. 446 (hereafter BC); Stern, *Company-State*, p. 111.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Peter Lake, 'Introduction: Puritanism, Arminianism and Nicholas Tyacke', Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake, eds., *Religious Politics in Post-reformation England: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Tyacke* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2006), p. 12.

⁸⁰ Judith Maltby, 'From Temple to Synagogue: "Old" Conformity in the 1640's–1650's and the Case of Christopher Harvey', in Peter Lake and Michael Questier, eds., *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c. 1560–1660* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2000), pp. 88–120.

⁸¹ For the broad spectrum of Protestantism in seventeenth-century England, see also Peter Lake and Michael C. Questier, eds., *The Anti-Christ's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-reformation England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002); Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'The Latitude of the Church of England', in *Religious Politics*, pp. 41–59; Paul Seaver, 'Puritan Preachers and their Patrons', in *Religious Politics*, pp. 128–142; Leo F. Solt, *Church and State in Early Modern England, 1509–1640* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 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).

term Anglicanism may obscure ‘the firmly Reformed character of the Church of England’ in the early modern era, this work uses the term to describe someone who represented or operated within the parameters of the Church of England between 1601 and 1660.⁸² Unless stated otherwise, Anglican functions merely to differentiate from groups such as Congregationalists in the MBC, who to various degrees separated themselves from the broad religious community that the Church of England represented in this period.

Similarly, terms such as Nonconformist and Puritan are used interchangeably to refer to various groups who wished to either reform, or distance or separate themselves from, the theology and episcopal authority of the Church of England. These terms encompass the various Nonconformist Protestant groups that emerged during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, including Congregationalists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Quakers and Anabaptists. However, having illustrated the various groups mentioned, it is vital to stress that it is not always clear in the historical records to which group individuals belonged. The sheer variety of Protestant ideologies that arose in this period and their overlapping beliefs means it is often difficult to place an individual with any confidence.⁸³ For many of the individuals discussed in this book, these problems make it difficult, even impossible, to trace which specific group they belonged to, other than knowing that they were Nonconformists, Puritans or Conformists.

It is also worth pointing out that not all the individuals who can be labelled as Nonconformist and Puritan were schismatic. Many of the individuals in the MBC and PC were extreme examples of those groups of Nonconformists, who because of ecumenical, confessional and theological differences wished to separate entirely from the Church of England.⁸⁴ By separating from the Church of England and establishing their own Church governance, they highlight the adaptability of terms such as Conformist and Nonconformist in this period—those that separated from

⁸² John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim, ‘Introduction’, in Coffey and Lim, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 4.

⁸³ Natasha Glaisyer, *The Culture of Commerce in England, 1660–1720* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2006), pp. 74–75.

⁸⁴ Dewey D. Wallace Jr, ‘Puritan Polemical Divinity and Doctrinal Controversy’, in Coffey and Lim, *Puritanism*, pp. 206–222.

the Church of England became both Conformists to their own governing Church and Nonconformists to the English Church they left.⁸⁵ However, many Puritans in England's overseas companies remained within the fold of the Church of England. For example, George Downing, John Haynes and John Angier all returned to England after being ministers in the MBC and entered the Church of England, conforming to various degrees after the Restoration.⁸⁶ Similarly, the early EIC chaplain, Patrick Copland, before becoming a Congregationalist in later life, preached to the company's personnel from an Episcopal background.⁸⁷ Likewise, several chaplains in the VC, such as Alexander Whitaker and Richard Buck, although harbouring Puritan sympathies, still administered to their congregations as members of the Church of England.⁸⁸

When defined within the complex layering of religious life in seventeenth-century England, the various terms—Nonconformist, Anglican, Conformist and Puritan—emphasise the cacophony of religious voices and the 'tell-tale signs of contest and anxiety' in English communities both in England and abroad during this period.⁸⁹ By understanding these terms within the framework of English overseas companies, we can see how English religious identity influenced global expansion. Terms such as Nonconformist, Anglican, Conformist and Puritan not only highlight how ideas of conformity and nonconformity evolved across the

⁸⁵ For a discussion of how conformity evolved and adapted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Fincham, 'Clerical Conformity from Whitgift to Laud', in Lake and Questier, *Conformity and Orthodoxy*, pp. 125–157; Lake, 'Moving the Goal Posts? Modified Subscription and the Construction of Conformity in the Early Stuart Church', in *Conformity and Orthodoxy*, pp. 179–205.

⁸⁶ William L. Sachse, 'The Migration of New Englanders to England, 1640–1660', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 53, No. 2 (1948); R. C. Richardson, *Puritanism in North West England: A Regional Study of the Diocese of Chester to 1642* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1972), pp. 42–43, 50–51, 98, 104, 113; Susan Hardman Moore, *Pilgrims: New World Settlers & the Call of Home* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 2007), pp. 70, 138–139, 145, 153, 159, 163.

⁸⁷ Samuel Hugh Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia 1500–1900*, 2 vols. (Ossining: Oribis Books 2007), II: p. 237.

⁸⁸ Philip L. Barbour, *Pocahontas and Her World* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1970), p. 133; David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 233.

⁸⁹ Lake, 'Anti-Puritanism: The Structure of a Prejudice', in Fincham and Lake, eds., *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2006), p. 90.

century, but also how they were influenced by foreign experiences as well as shaped them. Religious governance was not a black-and-white story that involved the successful exportation and imposition of a uniform order. Instead, it was a patchwork of authorities within which religion and religious divisions shaped the character and style of government. Experiences of overseas expansion and the evolution of religious governance and life differed not only in the East and the West but also within these geographies. Broadly, the two geographies can be split into two categories of influence: panoptic and intramural. In North East America, the experiences of those in the MBC in shaping their religious ideas and politics were panoptic. Those who migrated to Massachusetts and New England established their own government, ecumenical order, militias, ecclesiologies and educational institutions and subsequently sought to export them abroad. Their experience of establishing a ‘godly republic’ was panoptic in its vision, hoping to influence wholesale religious and political change on both sides of the Atlantic.⁹⁰ Unlike the MBC, those involved in the EIC and the LC saw their experiences influence change in a more inconspicuous manner, shaping ideas in educational and ecclesiastical institutions in England rather than influencing wider political religious life. The intramural influence of the LC and EIC was based on the experiences of those who went abroad in their service; through their encounters with other faiths and cultures, as well as their intellectual pursuits, they guided, to various degrees, policies and initiatives in various institutions. Although not as all-encompassing as the panoptic vision of the MBC, the intramural influence of the experiences of those in the EIC and LC was no less important in shaping change in England.

An assessment of these overseas corporate communities clarifies our understanding of Protestant division and unity and how it impacted governance abroad in this period. As Alison Games has commented, the overseas companies provided an arena in which religious governance could be conducted through ‘heterogeneity, dispute, [and] experimentation’.⁹¹ Overseas companies became the structural frameworks that implemented political, academic and social debates surrounding religion overseas and connected these debates and experiments with England.

⁹⁰ Michael P. Winship, *Godly Republicanism: Puritans, Pilgrims, and a City on a Hill* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

⁹¹ Games, *The Web of Empire*, p. 253.

For example, in New England, seventeenth-century corporate ideas about religious governance overseas had their foundations in the domestic debates on the relationship between the Church and the English state. Recent discussions concerning the dynamic between English expansion overseas and the debates surrounding the monarchy, the Church and state, the episcopacy, sacraments and religious liberty have often focused on the Atlantic world. Described as an 'umbilical connection', the focus in much of the literature has been on the manner in which the English, within a broad spectrum of Protestantism, were able to act upon religious debates in England whilst expanding across the Atlantic.⁹² However, notably lost in the discussions on the religious debates in the Atlantic world is the influence of the corporate structure that was key to the establishment of many of these religious polities.

Meanwhile, those individuals who travelled eastward became part of small but diverse Protestant communities that were microcosms of English religious life. These communities, whether on ships, in factories or in towns, took with them the same doctrinal and political debates mirroring religious life at home.⁹³ For instance, on one occasion an EIC chaplain was accused of being in 'contempt of the public service of God' for refusing to preach from the Book of Common Prayer.⁹⁴ Although working within religiously pluralistic environments, officials perceived the cause of many of their religious concerns to be Protestant diversity. Officials protested that the divergent Protestant theologies represented amongst the companies' personnel, especially their ministers, impeded any opportunity to evangelise in the religiously cosmopolitan environments in which they operated.⁹⁵ The diverse religious environments that company

⁹² Winship, *Godly Republicanism*, p. 46; *Making Heretics: Militant Protestantism and Free Grace in Massachusetts, 1636–1641* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002); Winship, 'Godly Republicanism and the Origins of the Massachusetts Polity', *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 63, No. 3 (2006), pp. 427–462; J. S. Maloy, *The Colonial American Origins of Modern Democratic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

⁹³ Daniel Goffman, *Britons in the Ottoman Empire 1642–1660* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1998), p. 5.

⁹⁴ William Foster, ed., *The English Factories in India 1618–1669*, 13 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1906–27), XIII: p. 284.

⁹⁵ Streysham Masters to Samuel Masters, 9 December, 1678, BC, VI: p. 446; The Earl of Winchilsea to the Earl of Southampton, August 13, 1664, *Report on the Manuscripts of Allan George Finch*, Vol. I (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1913), p. 326 (hereafter *Finch Mss.*); Stern, *Company-State*, pp. 110–11.

personnel operated in provided intellectual links between faiths, helping to form networks that connected English religious and political leaders to their eastern counterparts. For example, personnel in the LC acted as intermediaries and interlocutors between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church. Likewise, the EIC brokered diplomatic exchanges with the Armenian traders and other religious communities in India.⁹⁶ Chaplains, and others, further connected England to the outside world and to the religious communities in its emerging colonial empire by writing about their experiences, producing pamphlets, tracts and books in which they described the various religious communities and forms of religious government they encountered.⁹⁷ These works not only introduced a domestic audience to new forms of religious authority foreign to English readers, but also engineered a ‘new global geography of empire’ that centred on developing forms of English colonial governance.⁹⁸

THE COMPANY CHAPLAIN

Central to understanding the development of religious governance in England’s overseas companies is recognising the figure of the company chaplain. Through their various responsibilities, whether teaching, preaching, advising, policing or writing, chaplains were figures that influenced almost every aspect of daily life, both in and outside England. As

⁹⁶ R. W. Ferrier, ‘The Armenians and the East India Company in Persia in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries’, *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (1973), pp. 38–62.

⁹⁷ 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 natives of India and the sect of the Persees the ancient inhabitants of Persia: together with the religion and manners of each sect collected into two booke* (London: 1630); William Biddulph, *The travels of certaine Englishmen into Africa, Asia, Troy, Bythinia, Thracia, and the Blacke Sea And into Syria, Cilicia, Psidia, Mesopotamia, Damascus, Canaan, Galile, Samria, Judea, Palestina, Jerusalem, Jericho, and to the Red Sea: and to sundry other places. Begunne in the yeare jubile 1600* (London: 1609). For the theories of knowledge exchange and the establishment of political power in England seventeenth-century companies, see Miles Ogborn, *Indian Ink: Script and Print in the Making of the English East India Company* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Haig Smith, ‘Risky Business: The Seventeenth-Century English Company Chaplain, and Policing Interaction and Knowledge Exchange’, *Journal of Church and State*, Vol. 60, No. 2 (2018), pp. 226–247.

⁹⁸ Ogborn, *Indian Ink*, p. 22.

historians have pointed out, early modern chaplains 'were the versatile, ubiquitous ... supporting actors of early modern cultural life'.⁹⁹ However, studies of the early modern period have often considered them marginal figures due to 'their sheer ubiquity', combined with a 'relative invisibility in the formal record, and performance of very diverse roles'.¹⁰⁰ As important figures in households, embassies, royal courts, universities and overseas companies, chaplains could exert influence at almost every level of English society, enjoying 'a surprisingly extensive degree of influence and agency'.¹⁰¹ This is particularly the case for chaplains in England's overseas companies, who were influential figures in framing, enforcing and expanding English religious, commercial, diplomatic and eventually political authority abroad.

England's overseas companies recognised the importance and influence of chaplains in their organisations, implementing strict selection processes for the position to ensure the right individuals took on the responsibility. In the EIC, LC and VC, most vacancies arose when the incumbent chaplain returned or requested to return home, was ill or, as was often the case, died. Occasionally, in the case of the LC, chaplains would return home with the ambassador. Once the company received news of a vacant position, they would advertise the post, sometimes sending letters to the universities of both Oxford and Cambridge.¹⁰² Candidates would then apply or make themselves known to directors for support, a practice that lasted throughout the history of the EIC.

In the EIC and VC, two to three candidates were selected—and in the LC often as many as four or five—to give a sermon before the company members.¹⁰³ These sermons were occasionally open to the

⁹⁹ Hugh Adlington, Thomas Lockwood, and Gillian Wright, 'Introduction', in Hugh Adlington, Thomas Lockwood, and Gillian Wright, eds., *Chaplains in Early Modern England: Patronage, Literature and Religion* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), p. 8.

¹⁰⁰ Fincham, 'The Roles and Influence of Household Chaplains, c. 1600-c. 1660', in Adlington, Lockwood, and Wright, *Chaplains in Early Modern England*, p. 11.

¹⁰¹ Adlington, Lockwood, and Wright, 'Introduction', in Adlington, Lockwood, and Wright, *Chaplains in Early Modern England*, p. 4.

¹⁰² Daniel O'Connor, *The Chaplains of the East India Company 1601–1858* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2012), p. 17.

¹⁰³ BL IOR B/5 24 March, 1613; Simon Mills, *A Commerce of Knowledge: Trade, Religion, and Scholarship between England and the Ottoman Empire, c. 1600–1760* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), pp. 19–25; John B. Pearson, *A Biographical Sketch of*

public and were often very popular. In 1662, Samuel Pepys, although himself dismissive of the sermon, described seeing ‘many strangers and coaches coming to our church’ because a sermon was ‘to be preached by a probationer of the Turkey Company, to be sent to Smyrna’.¹⁰⁴ On most occasions, the company chose the text for these sermons, and although it has been suggested that they ‘do not demonstrate any clear connection to the unique trials of ministering overseas’, they often focused on proselytising or regionally specific issues concerning apostasy or in the case of the Levant, Christian enslavement.¹⁰⁵ For example, the LC set one candidate 1 Peter 3:19: ‘By the which he also went, and preached unto the spirits that are in prison’, a possible metaphor for a ‘spiritual’ prison regarding the Islamic faith of the people of the Ottoman empire, as well as a reference to the many Europeans who were enslaved by pirates and others in the Mediterranean. In 1622, the VC ‘appointed’ Mr. Leat Isaiah 9:2: ‘The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they dwelled in the land of shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined’.¹⁰⁶ However, occasionally candidates, such as John Covell, were allowed (in this case by the LC) to select their own texts.¹⁰⁷ Impressive sermons were often printed at the expense of the company; the LC on fifteen occasions provided the £5 for the printing of 500 copies of the sermon.¹⁰⁸ The purpose of these sermons was to assess the ability of the candidate to administer to the English communities abroad. Many years after he had given his trial sermon before the LC, the then Bishop of Gloucester, Robert Frampton, was said to have recalled that its purpose was to provide ‘a specimen of his ability to instruct young

Chaplains to the Levant Company, Maintained at Constantinople, Aleppo and Smyrna, 1611–1706 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1883), p. 9; Games, *Web of Empire*, p. 225.

¹⁰⁴ R. Latham and W. Mathews, eds., *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, 11 vols. (London: Bell & Hyman, 1970–84), III: pp. 259–260.

¹⁰⁵ Games, *Web of Empire*, p. 225.

¹⁰⁶ Glaisyer, *Culture of Commerce*, p. 71; ‘At A Court Held for Virginia’, 16 January, 1621, in Susan Myra Kingsbury, ed., *The Records of the Virginia Company of London: The Court Book, From the Manuscripts in the Library of Congress*, 4 vols. (Washington, VA: Government Printing Office, 1906–1935), I: p. 575 (hereafter *RVC*).

¹⁰⁷ Eliab Harvey to John Covell, 17 March, 1669, BL Add. Ms 22910 f.19; Glaisyer, *Culture of Commerce*, p. 71.

¹⁰⁸ Glaisyer, *Culture of Commerce*, p. 73; Games, *Web of Empire*, p. 225.

men of which the factory generally consists'.¹⁰⁹ The trial sermons, or 'Rehearsal Sermons' as the VC styled them, were a major part in the selection of ministers in the VC, LC and EIC during the seventeenth century. However, in the EIC this changed with the 1698 charter, which, instead of a sermon, required that a minister had the approval of the Bishop of London and be licensed.¹¹⁰

For most of the history of the EIC and LC in the seventeenth century, denominational affiliation, although a concern, did not impact on the selection or choice of ministers. In the case of the EIC, this was most probably a policy of necessity to fill positions falling vacant due to the high mortality rate. Of the 99 known chaplains sent out through the seventeenth century, approximately 26% died either en route to or in India.¹¹¹ As will be discussed, this did not stop company leaders from complaining about the presence of Nonconformist groups. However, despite occasional grumbling, for much of the seventeenth century EIC officials recognised the necessity of filling chaplains' positions, and so were willing to turn a blind eye to denominational difference. On the other hand, the LC's relationship with Protestant heterogeneity was often determined by internal political and religious conflict, making chaplain selection slightly more complex. At various points, the company became a hotbed of support for the Nonconformist or ultra-Conformist causes. This was often to do with who was in power in England and how it affected the leadership of the company both at home and abroad. During the Interregnum, the LC became a haven for chaplains who had been royalist supporters, and following the Restoration, it similarly harboured a small group of vocal Nonconformists.¹¹² For both companies, the denominational leaning of their leadership was often reflected in the selection of chaplains. However, successful selection often came down to the ability and reputation of the candidate rather than their theological affiliation, as the companies were often keen to fill positions quickly.

¹⁰⁹ T. Simpson Evans, ed., *The Life of Robert Frampton, Bishop of Gloucester* (London: Longmans, 1876), p. 23 (hereafter *LRF*).

¹¹⁰ Glaisyer, *Culture of Commerce*, p. 74; O'Connor, *Chaplains*, p. 18.

¹¹¹ Figures calculated from S. J. McNally, *The Chaplains of the East India Company* (London: India Office Records, 1976).

¹¹² Glaisyer, *Culture of Commerce*, p. 74; Gary de Krey, *A Fractured Society: Politics of London in the First Age of Party, 1688–1715* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 102.

Another way in which the EIC, LC and VC assessed the ability of candidates was through detailed testimonials from senior ministers and other notable referees. Although not always true, the aim of these testimonials was to find out if the candidates were men of ‘known Ability, Orthodox in Religion, and well affected to the present Government’ and if their qualities included learning, sobriety, orthodoxy and piety.¹¹³ For example, Mr Robert Staples, a minister in London, applied to the VC with testimonials ‘from many Divines resident in this City’, claiming that he was ‘of honest conversation and a good Scholar’.¹¹⁴ One EIC applicant in 1614 despite being ‘no great scholar’ was given a position because testimonies described him as an ‘esteemed and honest man and a good teacher’.¹¹⁵ In the LC and EIC, following the trial sermons, these testimonials were read out before the members of the company present at a General Court, following which a vote was cast by a show of hands and eventually a chaplain was selected to administer to the company’s personnel abroad.¹¹⁶ This process was not always successful in selecting the right candidate, as occasionally the company officials received information showing that the chaplain did not live up to their standards. In 1617, EIC officials in England were horrified to receive information that their selection for a chaplain to spar with the Jesuits at Surat had turned out to have the ‘most licentious, ungodly liver’ and that he preferred ‘his epicurism, drunkenness and intolerable insolent pride before the divine worship of God’.¹¹⁷ Similarly, in 1607 the LC warned Mr. Biddulph, their chaplain at Aleppo, that he was too argumentative and threatened him with dismissal.¹¹⁸ Although the individual company archives do contain accounts of rogue chaplains, they make up only a small number of cases.

¹¹³ The National Archives, Kew, (hereafter TNA) SP 105/156 f.90; Company to Consul Rycaut, 1 Sept 1670; TNA SP 105/113, f. 119r; William Hussey and others to Consul Metcalf, June 1688, TNA SP 105/114, f.432; Glaisyer, *Culture of Commerce*, p. 74.

¹¹⁴ ‘Meeting of the Committee 30 October, 1621’, *RVC*, I: p. 544.

¹¹⁵ Court Minutes of the East India Company, 27 January, 1614, *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series: East Indies, China and Japan, 1617–1621*, ed. W. Noel Sainsbury (London Her Majesty’s Public Record Office, 1870), p. 273 (hereafter *CSP East*).

¹¹⁶ TNA SP 105/152 f.241; SP 105/154 f.270; Glaisyer, *Culture of Commerce*, p. 72.

¹¹⁷ Attestations against William Leske, minister to the English factory at Surat, 8 January, 1617, *CSP East*, p. 9.

¹¹⁸ Games, *Web of Empire*, p. 226.

However, this small number of cases illustrates the importance that the company placed in carefully selecting chaplains to go abroad to ensure that they carried out their important responsibilities diligently.

Alongside ability and reputation, there were several other deciding factors that company officials considered when selecting chaplains; these included their age, marital status and education. Age was often a concern as company officials worried about the 'gravity' of the individuals they sent out.¹¹⁹ One EIC candidate was rejected due to his age as the company believed that it would be 'unsavoury to have a young man reprove ancient men, especially of such vices as may reign in themselves'.¹²⁰ Similarly, there was no firm marital policy in any company, although most successful candidates tended not to be married. However, in one case in the EIC, a married candidate was successful, as he informed the court that he wished to distance himself from his wife. He confessed openly to the company that 'his chief cause desiring this employment' was that his wife was 'a woman whose life and conversation is incompatible and not to be endured and with whom he never intends to have any conversation or fellowship'.¹²¹ Another factor in the selection of chaplains was their education. In most cases, successful candidates were educated at the universities of Oxford or Cambridge. In the LC, approximately 14% of the chaplains sent out held Bachelor of Divinity degrees and 32% held or would go on to hold doctorates in divinity, well above the average for local parish ministers in England.¹²²

The selection of religious personnel in the MBC shared some similarities with its counterparts in the East; however, choosing a minister remained firmly in the hands of individual church congregations. Unlike in the EIC and LC, where the company conducted the selection of the chaplain, church congregations elected ministers in the MBC. This had its foundations in the Nonconformist traditions that the MBC members rigidly enforced in Massachusetts. However, the process, which involved a sermon and religious testimony, shared some similarities with the corporate trial sermons of the EIC and LC. Unlike its counterparts in the East who selected religious personnel back in England, the founding

¹¹⁹ 12 January 1608, BL IOR B/3, f. 70^{vr}.

¹²⁰ Quoted in O'Connor, *Chaplains*, p. 18.

¹²¹ Court Minutes of the East India Company, 5 January 1629, *CSP East*, pp. 603–604.

¹²² Glaisyer, *Culture of Commerce*, p. 71.

of Harvard College allowed the MBC to educate and train religious personnel locally, although they would first have to receive a bachelor's degree before being offered any theological training.¹²³ The anonymous author of *New England's First Fruits* recalled how the MBC in its early days 'longed for' educated ministers to 'advance Learning and perpetuate it to Posterity', dreading that if they did not do so they would 'leave an illiterate Ministry to the Churches, when our present Ministers shall lie in the Dust'.¹²⁴ This served two purposes: first, in theory, it secured a constant supply of religious personnel, although this was not always the case. Second, it was a way of maintaining religious uniformity, an issue that plagued the selection of chaplains in England's eastern companies. However, despite establishing several fellowships and other financial and social incentives for Harvard graduates to stay in Massachusetts, it often proved hard for the MBC to prevent these godly young men from migrating to England to minister there.¹²⁵ For the MBC, the selection of religious ministers was an equally important task and required a rigorous system of selection. Although the process of selection in the company had different foundations to its eastern brethren, they shared similar characteristics. Moreover, MBC ministers and EIC, VC and LC chaplains all shared the same responsibilities: they policed and governed the companies' members, providing spiritual and social security to their communities.

The position of a company chaplain carried with it several spiritual, financial and professional incentives that were attractive to certain groups of people. In the MBC, the incentive was the establishment and maintenance of a godly republic. Those who wished to be ministers in the company's jurisdictions shared the members' Congregationalist faith in which the project had its religious foundations. Throughout the century, many chose to migrate to Massachusetts and administer to the Church there for religious and political reasons, often fleeing what they believed to be persecution in England, to engage in a godly project across the

¹²³ Mark A. Peterson, 'Puritanism and Refinement in Early New England: Reflections on Communion Silver', *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 58, No. 2 (2001), pp. 325–326; Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Founding of Harvard College* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935), p. 8.

¹²⁴ Anonymous, *New England's First Fruits* (London: 1643) quoted in *ibid.*, p. 325.

¹²⁵ Moore, *Pilgrims*, pp. 75, 82, 92, 103.

Atlantic.¹²⁶ There was not always a uniform migration of ministers to New England, and the MBC reacted harshly, punishing and often banishing anyone who wished to preach a doctrine that was not in line with their own theology. Throughout its history, the MBC used banishment to 'keep their community free from undesirables', but this proved futile in ensuring religious and social unity. Between 1630 and 1631, Boston, Salem and Charlestown alone banished 1.4% of their combined population. This included the merchant Thomas Morton, a drunkard named Thomas Grey and Henry Lynn, who was given the sentence for 'writing into England falsely and maliciously against the government'.¹²⁷

In the case of the EIC and LC, there were also more temporal incentives for individuals to seek employment as chaplains in overseas commercial companies. Firstly, the pay was attractive, often as good if not better than a parish living. For much of the century, pay varied between £50 and £100 a year, in addition to accommodation and often a stipend to acquire books and other materials.¹²⁸ In the English communities abroad, this positioned them as second only to the president or chief factor of the factory, above factors, surgeons and others. In the EIC, chaplains although unable to trade privately, could invest in the joint stock, whilst in the LC they could invest and trade, and often did so with great success.¹²⁹ According to his biographer, Edward Smyth, whilst chaplain in Smyrna between 1689 and 1692, was involved in successfully trading in the company, so much so that he made 'great Advancement of his Private Fortune'.¹³⁰ A chaplaincy in England's overseas companies also offered individuals such as Edward Pockocke, Robert Huntington and Henry Lord the ability to engage in academic pursuits and establish

¹²⁶ Ibid., pp. 16–31; T. H. Breen, *Puritans and Adventurers: Change and Persistence in Early America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 9–13.

¹²⁷ Nan Goodman, 'Banishment, Jurisdiction, and Identity in Seventeenth-Century New England: The Case of Roger Williams', *Early American Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2009), pp. 109–110.

¹²⁸ TNA, SP 105/148, f. 219; Mills, *Commerce of Knowledge*, p. 22; O'Connor, *Chaplains*, pp. 18–19; A. C. Wood, *A History of the Levant Company* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935), pp. 222–223.

¹²⁹ O'Connor, *Chaplains*, p. 19; TNA SP 105/156, p. 175.

¹³⁰ Quoted in Glaisyer, *Culture of Commerce*, p. 77.

contacts that would advance their own interests.¹³¹ As one LC chaplain wrote, ‘I am confident that there are no such advantages for study to any other Englishmen abroad in all the world, as I have here’.¹³² Through their positions as company chaplains, many an individual gained ‘access to networks of power at an early stage of his career’, and in doing so they gained patrons and contacts across the globe that would later help them advance their own careers.¹³³ Many individuals saw the position of company chaplain and the governmental opportunities it provided as a chance to advance their own professional and financial standing positively, whether this was in politics, the army, academia or the Church.

Despite their differences, it was through the interactions with local peoples and the possibilities of evangelism that chaplains in all of England’s overseas companies were connected by a similar spiritual incentive. From America to India, Japan to the Middle East, non-Christian peoples provided a religious incentive for some chaplains to go abroad and spread the gospel. Although the zeal for this cause varied across the century, it was for some individuals and companies an incentive that remained throughout this period.

CONCLUSION

By understanding the role of religious governance in policing the behaviour of English corporate ‘congregations’ overseas, we can trace the evolution and connection between ideas of authority, identity and government in England’s emerging colonial empire. This book places the development of religious governance in overseas corporations at the centre of early modern ideas of English empire and colonisation. It assesses how each corporation refined ideas of authority, offering an account of the varied and complex experiments that influenced the multifarious directions of English governmental expansion.

Starting in 1601 with the chartering of the EIC and ending before the 1698 chartering of the new EIC and Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, this book covers almost the entire seventeenth century,

¹³¹ Adlington, Lockwood, and Wright, ‘Introduction’, in *Chaplains in Early Modern England*, p. 4. See also Chapter 4.

¹³² Quoted in Glaisyer, *Culture of Commerce*, p. 77.

¹³³ Adlington, Lockwood, and Wright, ‘Introduction’, in *Chaplains in Early Modern England*, p. 4.

offering an in-depth analysis of the global development of English governance in its emerging colonial empire. Although it does not cover every English overseas company active in this period, or every form of colonial settlement, it does provide a new way of understanding government formation and corporate identity in the early modern era. It also shows how religious governance shaped the behaviour of English expansion in the seventeenth century. Moreover, the religious, cultural and diplomatic interactions between English and non-English communities across the globe are traced, as is also the manner in which they informed the development and character of governance in England's early colonial empire. By doing so, this volume highlights new ways of understanding English officials' efforts to globally regulate the behaviour of their personnel, as well as their efforts to incorporate non-English people into English governmental control. This approach straddles boundaries, integrating the experiences of various individuals and communities into the governmental history of the early English empire, accentuating how they instructed each other in the construction of colonial governmental identity in England's early empire.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

