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Law and Crime in India: British Policy and the Female Infanticide Act of 1870 ¹

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Introduction

Recent studies examining British attitudes and ideologies which structured colonial policies towards 'outcaste'² and 'deviant' groups in indigenous society, have suggested that the groups who were marginalised included those whose activities were conceived of as 'threatening' to new normative definitions (Freitag 1983:141-42).³ The twin notions of moral authority and British paramountcy justified the interference in the lives of various communities in the North-Western Provinces by institutions like the Thuggee and Dacoity Department, the Judicial Infanticide Department, the police and the complex of the criminal law (ibid.). In the 'enlightened' eyes of many British officials, female infanticide, together with sati, thuggee and dacoity, seemed to represent the barbaric and degraded state of Indian society. Freitag suggests that the colonial regime, which justified its claim to exclusive authority 'not merely on the grounds of brute force, but on the basis of an in-built belief in its own moral superiority' could not refrain from remarking upon and interfering with such 'culturally-specific actions' as female infanticide which evoked its greatest disgust in areas like the North- Western Provinces (ibid.).

The official debates and discussions which culminated in the passage of the Female Infanticide Act of 1870 marked the triumph of repressive measures over those favouring conciliation and reform. The Act also represented an important moment in 19th century legal discourse on crime, where those sections of the colonial subject population whose culturally-specific actions were deemed deviant were interrogated, classified and controlled by the administrative, legal and coercive structures of the Government of India.

This article will not attempt to hypothesise about the multiple and complex causes of female infanticide but will limit itself to an understanding of the working of Act VIII of 1870 which was applicable to communities suspected of the crime.⁴ The analysis is carried out in three parts: the first section focuses on various fragments of colonial policy which went into the making of the Act. The second section delves into the terms of the Act as well as the subsequent modifications promulgated with reference to the same between 1871 and 1900. It

also includes a detailed account of the intricate arrangements made for the surveillance of the proclaimed clans and lineages in the region. Finally, in the third section, I shall examine the extent to which the Act was 'successful' in its expressed intent to stamp out infanticide by the beginning of the 20th century.

I The Issue

The horror and moral condemnation of female infanticide stretched as far back as the late 18th and early 19th century, when chroniclers observed that the practice of killing female babies was rife in many parts of India. The death of female children both by violent means as well as by systematic neglect was classified by officials as a crime.⁵ Even where families suspected of infanticide eschewed violence and saved their legitimate female issue, these children were often systematically neglected in the hope that they would die of malnutrition. During the course of their tours of suspected villages in the 1870s, British officials noticed a number of sickly female children in thakur settlements. It was felt that many of these little girls died because of the want of basic nourishment and care that was mainly lavished on boys.

The statistics collected by the end of the 1890s showed that the percentage of little girls as a proportion of the total minor population in numerous settlements was often as low as 25 to 30 per cent. In certain villages such as those inhabited by the Surajbansi Babus in the Basti district there were as many as 104 boys to one girl.⁶ These low figures were noticed as a distinct pattern in the North-Western Provinces amongst high-ranking Rajput clans such as the Chauhans, Surajbansis and Bhadauriyas. Other suspected groups included certain sections of the lower caste peasant communities like the Jats, Ahirs and Gujars in districts like Bijnor, Moradabad, Mainpuri, Saharanpur and Meerut. In most cases, investigators found that an abnormal sex ratio was present in scores of settlements in the same neighbourhood leaving little room for doubt as to the guilt and complicity of the concerned communities.⁷

It was on the basis of these explorations that officials like A.O. Hume, the Collector of Etawah, came to the conclusion that although most Indian families took greater care of their male offspring, the 'excess loss of female infants amongst certain castes could only be the result of actual murder and wilful neglect to a degree unknown in other races.'⁸

As early as the beginning of the 19th century the 'unnatural' and 'evil' propensities of this practice had assumed such great importance in British eyes that two volumes of Parliamentary papers on infanticide were tabled in the House of Commons in 1824 and 1828 (Peggs 1830: 113). These contained the facts recorded and observations made by local administrators in different regions. At

this time it was increasingly being asserted that the whole civilised world was looking towards Britain to do her 'duty' in India by stamping out evils like infanticide, which were 'subversive' of the principles of the 'natural' and 'revealed' Christian religion.⁹ In this context, numerous addresses to the Honourable Court of Directors of the East India Company were made, petitioning the government to make clear its 'moral disgust' by using every means in its power to stop such deviant activities.¹⁰ As early as 1819, it was suggested that 'out castes' of human nature, such as the infanticide-practising groups, should be isolated from the general population by 'withholding from them every mark of confidence and regard, as well as by inflicting pains and penalties according to the nature of the case'.¹¹ Similar suggestions were vouchsafed time and again by policy-makers throughout our period.

The direct interference by the colonial state in the affairs of its subjects was further justified by local officials and reformers on the ground that various sections of the 'native' population too found the crime of infanticide horrible and reprehensible. At the same time, they argued that any measures which would be put into force should not clash, but should be in consonance with the tenets and doctrines of the 'Hindoo' religion, which condemned the murder of women and children. (Peggs 1830: 143). In support of this opinion officials often quoted the following verse taken from the shastras:

To kill one Brahmin is equal to one hundred cows,
To kill one woman is equal to one hundred Brahmins,
To kill one child is equal to one hundred women,
To kill one hundred children is an offence too heinous for comparison
(ibid.).

It was further noted that those who killed women and young girls were condemned to the hell, 'kalle soothe', where they would be infested with maggots and, if born again, would be transformed into lepers, or even worse, lose their caste. (ibid.). Given these views, those persons who constituted the social conscience of the Empire reiterated that there was no 'impropriety' attached in seeking to stamp out female infanticide, as such acts of cruel murder were in complete opposition to the very principles of the 'native' Hindu civilisation (ibid.).

What convinced policy-makers of the innate 'righteousness' of their task was the fact that there seemed to exist an unforeseen tolerance of those who practised female infanticide within local society. In the 1830s, Sleeman observed with great surprise that in Awadh, those Rajput families in which a child had been recently killed were ostracised by the local inhabitants of the village only for a very short

while, and did not seem to have to reap in the long run the fruits of the dreadful deed which all knew that they had committed (Reeves 1971: 206). It seems that no persons would partake of food or drink in the houses of families who were believed to have killed a female infant until a priest granted the 'sinners' absolution (ibid.). After a token period of repentance, the priests performed a few ceremonies absolving such families of their 'sins' and thereafter the incident slid into oblivion (ibid.). While some Brahmins asserted that they never took water from thakurs known to practise infanticide, and refused to associate with those of their brethren who 'purified' such families, it would seem that the perpetrators of this practice were treated with great leniency in agrarian society (ibid.)

The nearest approach to an accusation by the members of one set of villages towards its neighbours was always couched in general terms, and was backed by claims of ignorance of the current practice of infanticide.¹² In 1870, the Magistrate of Kanpur found that when asked why there were no female children in certain families, many Rajputs were 'content to say in a helpless manner, *hota nahin*'.¹³ Even if infanticide was committed in a particular household, the rest of the village always 'agreed' to know nothing about it.¹⁴ Very often such happenings were only reported when there had been a feud in the village.¹⁵ Investigators in Basti found to their chagrin that while there 'ought' to have existed a natural dislike of marrying women to men of suspected localised Rajput patrilineages like the high status Surajbansi and Gautam clans, many thakur families did not seem to entertain such 'fine sensibilities'.¹⁶ Given the indulgence accorded to the infanticide-practising clans and lineages in agrarian society, in official minds there seemed to exist no alternative to state intervention in the matter.

Repression or Reform?

The exact nature of the measures to be adopted to classify, control and finally 'normalise' the suspected Rajput, Jat and Ahir lineages and clans formed the subject of discussion throughout the 19th century. The distinction made was between two kinds of measures in order of their perceived importance. One form was called 'direct' or 'primary' and involved ascertaining, watching and punishing the suspected groups.¹⁷ This was in contrast to the 'indirect' or 'secondary' measures epitomising reform and conciliation, and which sought to remove the perceived chief cause of female infanticide: the high levels of wedding expenditure and expensive marriage presentations to the groom's family, in the hope that this would bring down the incidence of the practice.¹⁸ Local officials repeatedly emphasised the direct linkages between these two sets of factors. They argued that female babies were killed so that 'proud but poor lineages' would not have to spend large sums of money that they could ill-afford on alliances that were perceived as suitable. Before 1870, there were differences

of opinion between various officials who favoured one or the other of these two broad alternatives.

Most early efforts were impelled by the need for reform in the hope that persuasion would induce the suspected lineages from practising infanticide. The earliest recorded instance of such a move was in 1789 when Jonathan Duncan, the Resident of Banaras, declared that he had 'prevailed' upon the 'daughter killing' Rajkumars to agree to renounce female infanticide, and to affix their names to a covenant to this effect.¹⁹ The Rajkumars declared that they had agreed not to commit such 'detestable' practices any longer, averring that 'any among us who (which God forbid) shall be hereafter guilty thereof or shall not bring up and get our daughters married to the best of our abilities among those of our caste, shall be expelled from our tribe, and we shall neither eat or keep society with such person or persons, besides suffering hereafter the punishments denounced in the above Pooran and Shaster'.²⁰ Such agreements continued to be signed throughout the 19th century. Thus, in 1851, at a meeting in Surnaon in Mainpuri held under the aegis of Colonel Raikes, a group of Chauhan Rajputs agreed to sign a document proposing a graduated scale of the amount to be demanded as dowry by those in different income groups.²¹ It was resolved that all those seeking to ask for more than what was justified would be put out of the 'brotherhood' or biradari. It was also decided that marriages between those of equal rank would be encouraged in order that the evils attendant upon the system of hypergamous alliances could be effectively checked.²² This process was repeated in 1869 when the Mainpuri Raja collected the leading men of the Chauhan clan in his fort. At this meeting, a resolution seeking to regulate wedding expenditure was signed by all those who took part.²³ The active participation by influential men belonging to the suspected communities in the movement for reform was encouraged by local administrators involved in the crusade against infanticide. It was felt that such persons would be in a position to influence their more recalcitrant followers by the force of example. 'Conspicuous' gestures such as that of the Raja of Bansi who married his nephew and sons without accepting any dowry were lauded by official opinion, which sought vindication and support of its policies from the guilty communities.²⁴

Despite these on-going efforts, those who believed in the efficacy of punitive measures to expunge infanticide gradually gained an ascendancy over their opponents by 1870. At first, although Section 11 of Regulation III of 1804 recognized infanticide as a cognisable offence punishable by the due processes of criminal law, it had been held inexpedient for the Government of India to interfere too actively in the customs of the people.²⁵ But the 'indirect' method of dealing with the crime presented far too many problems. There was a growing disillusionment with the efficacy of appeals to the 'reason' and 'humanity' of those who murdered their girl children.²⁶ Moreover, there were complaints that

the system was purely 'local' in character.²⁷ It was noticed that in districts like Mainpuri, as long as the assenting parties to the scheme for reform intermarried amongst themselves, it was possible to adhere to the proposals limiting demands for high dowers. On the other hand, when alliances were contracted outside the district, these methods were almost impossible to enforce. Thus the long-term effects of reform were not very encouraging.²⁸

It was increasingly felt by officials that it would take many years to extirpate the customs and feelings at the root of female infanticide.²⁹ As such, it was felt that attempts at reform had to be accompanied by more forcible means of repression to prevent the murders themselves, 'before the thakurs sink so low in the scale that their rescue is not worth attempting'.³⁰ Official efforts to generate changes in the marriage systems of the suspected groups were not given up, and it was reiterated that officers would continue, to encourage movements for the 'enforcement of economy at marriages',³¹ as it was felt that changes in marriage patterns could only take place if introduced and adopted by the infanticide-practising groups themselves.³² Nevertheless, there was a 'crying need' for a foolproof system, backed by the authority of criminal law, which would ensure the detection of the guilty.³³ One of the reasons behind the shift in policy by 1870 was the apparent success of punitive measures which had already been tried out in districts like Agra.

The Female Infanticide Act was an elaboration of the punitive methods utilised by Mr. Gubbins, the Magistrate of Agra district, in the 1860s. These measures had also been adopted in other areas like Mainpuri, Basti and Allahabad in the same period.³⁴ The linchpin of these measures was a careful system of registry which ensured the recording of the birth of every female child, and subsequently, an enquiry into the death of every such infant in suspected families.³⁵ In Agra by the 1860s, 97 of the 108 villages which were later proclaimed as guilty under the terms of the Female Infanticide Act were being monitored.³⁶ Similarly, in Mainpuri, the compulsory registration of the births and deaths of all female children was being carried out by village watchmen: local police kept a close watch on the suspected Chauhan and Ahir families, and the bodies of children who died in strange circumstances were examined by the Civil Surgeon.³⁷ In defence of these measures, administrators like Mr. Gubbins argued that the enforced preservation of girls would lead to the abolition of the feelings which provoked fathers to destroy their daughters, because 'as the girls must be married, and the means for effecting the illustrious matches heretofore desired are wanting, alliances with neighbouring tribes of equal blood must of necessity be contracted'.³⁸ It was also felt that the 'dread' amongst the guilty, when it was realised that the government was dead against the practice, would lead to the abandonment of female infanticide.³⁹ Further, many officials emphasised the importance of giving the force of law to 'severe' rules which appeared to be the

only solution to the problems posed by an anonymous crime like infanticide, practised within the domestic space.⁴⁰

What appeared to be satisfying about the punitive measures was their apparent high success rate. Using comparative statistics, administrators in Agra and Mainpuri asserted that the proportion of females to the total minor population in the earmarked settlements had actually registered an increase, after the introduction of the punitive rules on a local scale. According to officials, the percentage of girls in Bah Pinnahat tehsil in Agra district rose from 32.2 per cent in 1854 to 40.2 per cent in 1869, while in Futtehabad tehsil, the proportions rose from 30 per cent in 1854 to 43 per cent in 1869.⁴¹ Similarly in Mainpuri, figures were cited to show that between 1866 and 1869 female children constituted 43 to 46 per cent of the total minor population amongst the groups suspected of practising female infanticide, a definite improvement on earlier figures gathered in 1851.⁴² Indeed, in 1869, over-confident officials in Agra declared that 'the evil although still lingering with prescriptive malignity in some villages and hamlets, has been in great measures successfully grappled with and to a large extent crushed out.'⁴³

The growing popularity of repressive measures among policy-makers was thus linked to notions that they produced good results in 'areas where the subjects of them are uninfluenced by the might of knowledge and good reason and where the dread of supervision and terror of the law are necessary conditions to secure compliance with the ordinary instincts of nature'.⁴⁴ The period between 1870 and 1900 was to see the exercise of relentless pressure upon the guilty communities by the combined forces of the legal, administrative and coercive structures of the state in the North- Western Provinces, in an attempt to efface all traces of female infanticide from the region.

II - Act VIII of 1870

The Infanticide Committee set up by the Government of India attempted to cover as much ground as possible when framing the exact terms of Act VIII of 1870, better known as the Female Infanticide Act.⁴⁵ It laid down the basic principles on the basis of which specific lineages and clans were to be brought under 'special surveillance', the procedures according to which the census figures and mortality statistics of the minor population of the proclaimed groups were to be collected, and the methods by which the information so collected was to be categorised and registered. The nature of the coercive action to be exercised against those implicated by local investigators was also outlined.⁴⁶ Some of these rules were to be modified in the course of the late 19th century.

Female infanticide was committed by the suspected groups within the confines of their private space and in a covert manner. The state, which did not wish to and indeed could not directly invade the boundaries of the homes of their colonial subjects without rousing their ire, sought to find other ways to detecting the crime. One method of assessing the distribution of female infanticide was to monitor the births and deaths of all girl children under a particular age.⁴⁷ In the main this was to be done through the census operations.⁴⁸ The statistics derived from this exercise were the foundation of the proceedings taken under the Act and thus it was vital that the figures be as accurate as possible.⁴⁹ The census, repeated within every one to three lineages and clans in the proclaimed tracts and villages.⁵⁰ It was also to be carried out in those districts where further inquiry as an initial step was necessary prior to bringing such areas under the purview of the punitive rules.⁵¹ All statistics were to be collected through the medium of patwaris, chaukidars and mohurrirs. This was to be done in the 'cold season' when local officials toured the area under their jurisdiction, so that they would be able to exercise thorough supervision over the enumeration of members of the implicated communities.⁵²

The census (details of which were recorded in special registers) was supposed to include information about the sex ratios of the adult and minor population, pregnancies, marriages, and arrivals and removals of all women and children (especially little girls) from the proclaimed villages.⁵³ But most important, the census registers were to note with especial care the births and deaths of all children, and females in particular, below the age of 1 year.⁵⁴ Under the Act, the death of all female infants under the age of 6 months in a proclaimed family was to be considered *prima facie* sudden and suspicious enough to warrant an inquest being held on the spot by the local police. Unless the result was one which entirely cleared the case from suspicion.⁵⁵ After that, if necessary, the wheels of justice were to turn. Particular attention was also to be paid by the census officials and local investigators to girl children under age of 12.

Evidence cited elsewhere (Kasturi 1992) indicates that the mortality rates for females continued to be double that of males in this age group throughout our period. It was after 1893 that the focus of the Act was narrowed even more than concentrate on children under the age of 6 and not 12, as it was felt that girl children were specially susceptible to danger at a particular tender age.⁵⁶ The prisms through which the requisite sensitive information was to be filtered were various, and included the head of the family, the midwives in attendance upon the suspected patrilineages, and the *lambardars*, *choukidars* and police of the demarcated village.

Under the terms of the Female Infanticide Act of 1870, the heads of all families in the 'reclaimed' tracts and communities were ordered to extend all possible

cooperation to local officials and members of the village administration involved in the 'crusade' against the crime⁵⁷ (In 1874 the 'head of a family' was defined as any person with a wife and children, as distinguished from the head of a joint household, which was made up of a wider kinship network.)⁵⁸ The heads of the proclaimed families were to report all domestic events like births, deaths and marriages to the chaukidars.⁵⁹ After 1874, the illness of all girl children was added to the events that they were to report.⁶⁰ It was in this period that the duty enjoined upon heads of families to present all female children for inspection when- ever necessary, was formalised.⁶¹

In addition, the Act enjoined lambardars of all proclaimed villages to assist in enforcing any rules for making and maintaining registers pertaining to births, deaths and marriages in the proclaimed areas: to make a census of the suspected groups wherever necessary, and to prescribe how and by whom information on various matters was to be given to the proper officers.⁶² Midwives (dais) were also to be an important direct source of information. A register of all midwives was to be kept at local police stations. All dais were to report the fact of the birth of a female child in a proclaimed family, and the fact of death, especially if it took place in suspicious circumstances.⁶³ After 1874, dais were also supposed to report instances in which they had not been called in to attend at a delivery.⁶⁴ All these persons were expected to cooperate with members of local village administrative and coercive structures such as the chaukidars and police.

One of the most important cogs in the whole network of surveillance set up by the Act of 1870 was to be the chaukidar. In the proclaimed villages, they were to report all domestic events to the local police stations.⁶⁵ Further, all arrivals and removals from proclaimed tracts, particularly those of pregnant women and young girls, had to be carefully watched. In order to keep a vigilant eye on pregnant women, especially in those areas and families where the percentage of girls fell below 25 per cent, chaukidars were to intimate to the police stations if expectant mothers were removed from their villages and also report the place to which they had been removed.⁶⁶ Likewise, when pregnant women were brought into a proclaimed village, chaukidars were to report the fact of their arrival.⁶⁷ Given the important position of the chaukidars in the system, it was vital that these officials were not susceptible to blandishments and corruption. In this regard, the Act pronounced that in all suspected villages, the chaukidar 'must not be either a relation, connection, or of the same caste as the proclaimed families'.⁶⁸

In addition to the lambardars, dais and chaukidars, local police officials were also to be drawn into the complex web of surveillance, control and punishment. As noted earlier, the police stations were the places where all the reports were to be made, and where the infanticide registers and census returns were to be

housed.⁶⁹ Further, when female children were born in suspected villages the officer in charge of the police station was to call on the families concerned to see the child, and to warn the father not to neglect the infant. Both the fathers and midwives were to produce the children for impromptu inspections whenever necessary.⁷⁰ Policemen were also to make local inquiries in person, to ensure that registers at the police stations were kept accurately and constant supervision maintained, and report all important or suspicious events to their immediate superiors. All village officials, including the local police, were indispensable for the proper functioning of the Act, the expenses for which were to be recovered from the proclaimed families as arrears of land revenue.⁷¹ It was only in those villages which were 'blood red' (in terms of guilt) that it was to be considered necessary to buttress the coercive and administrative structures with extra and specialised staff.

At a general level, the provisions of the Act were to be applied to all settlements where the proportion of girls to the total minor population was less than 40 per cent.⁷² This was increased to 50 per cent in 1895.⁷³ Policy-makers declared that no villages were to be proclaimed before a lengthy analysis had been undertaken of the census statistics and other relevant information. Further, the crime was to be treated in terms of tribes and localities, i.e., specific clans (and not particular families) were to be declared either guilty or innocent in each district and also within each pargana, depending on the local sex ratios of its juvenile population in each area.⁷⁴ In districts where girl children constituted a sizeable section of the non-adult population among clans suspected of female infanticide, only those villages were to be recommended for special surveillance where the proportion of girls to boys was so bad as to leave no doubt as to the guilt of its inhabitants.⁷⁵ Care was to be taken to ensure that in villages where the numbers of the suspected clans were very small, or where the juvenile population was made up of less than 25 children, they were not to be automatically proclaimed.⁷⁶ Such settlements were to be put under special surveillance only if the crime was known to be practised by the same clan in adjoining areas or where there existed prior knowledge that infanticide had been committed by one of the families in these villages on earlier occasions.⁷⁷ It was only when guilt had been satisfactorily established after careful examination that the suspected population was to be further divided by local officials into two categories, depending on how deeply the proclaimed groups were tainted by 'girl murder'.

Before the Act was passed, there had been great debate as to whether the rules should differentiate between the 'less guilty' and the 'particularly guilty' amongst the proclaimed clans with separate repressive measures attached to each category.⁷⁸ While this was felt to be necessary, policy-makers wished to err on the side of caution, lest the measures be offensive to the suspected groups, the powerful dominant landholding castes of the region. Hence, whatever

regulations were given the force of law were sought to be applied in a judicious manner. The Act divided proclaimed settlements into two categories, one in which the percentage of girls was less than 25 per cent of the child population, and the other in which the percentage of girls was above 25 and less than 40.⁷⁹ In the first category, where the number of female children was particularly low, all pregnancies were to be reported to the anti-infanticide squad.⁸⁰ (This did not have to be done in the other villages.)⁸¹ A special register of pregnancies was to be kept for this purpose. The modifications made to the Act in 1874 enjoined that special files known as Register B with full particulars of families in this category were to be kept in all police stations.⁸³ In order to be less offensive in applying the law, midwives and chaukidars were to be the main sources of information rather than the heads of families, and the registers were to be closed books open only to the official gaze.⁸⁴ Only if the proportion of girls noted in Register B did not rise above 25 per cent would the heads of the families concerned be required to personally report details of events like pregnancies to the officer in charge.⁸⁵

On the one hand, surveillance was attempted to be tightened over 'blood red' villages and families. On the other, so that 'no unnecessary violence' was done to the feelings of the suspected clans, control at all times was to be exercised by the ordinary district police, and was to be supplemented by a special supervisory officer only in the most 'tainted' areas.⁸⁶ Extra police were under no circumstances to be quartered except in those areas where there was active resistance to, and complete disregard for, the rules.⁸⁷ Far from wishing to keep proclaimed villages under continuous monitoring, officials in the North- Western Provinces sought to exempt all tracts from the purview of the Act as quickly as possible. This could be done as soon as the female child population touched 40 per cent in these areas, although the sex ratios in such settlements would still remain tilted heavily in favour of male children.⁸⁸

The Power of Resistance

By the beginning of the 20th century it was being asserted that female infanticide had been extirpated in the North-Western Provinces. In 1871, a grand total of 3,707 villages in 22 districts were brought under the Female Infanticide Act. These comprised settlements in the various administrative divisions peopled by numerous Rajput, Jat, Ahir and Gujar clans. Out of a total proclaimed population of 398,565 persons, 83,812 were boys and 40,256 were girls, 'a disproportion in the sexes', remarked the administrative report of the period, 'which shows at once how generally the cruel practice is perpetrated among the guilty tribes'.⁸⁹ But by 1887-88, the Act was in force only in 1,381 villages,⁹⁰ and by 1900 this number had further shrunk to 264.⁹¹ Of the 15 districts where the Act held sway, Mainpuri, Agra, Etawah, Farrukhabad and Saharanpur, amongst others, were 'specially open' to the suspicion of infanticide.⁹² Indeed, after 1906, female

infanticide was considered more or less extinct and the special measures of control were removed from all areas in the region. Yet available evidence would seem to indicate that the Female Infanticide Act was not entirely successful in its mission, and was unable to do more than scratch the surface of the problem, partly because of the resistance to the rules by the proclaimed population.

The accurate compilation and updating of the census statistics pertaining to the suspected groups was fundamental to the proper functioning of the Act. Yet it is clear that the recording of all domestic events and the compulsory registration of female births and deaths was extremely difficult, as the proclaimed communities regarded such exercises as intrusions into their private space. Numerous efforts were constantly made to evade detection by concealing the births and deaths of girl babies (Kasturi 1992: chapter II, 125-38). One of the most popular methods devised to escape the eagle eye of local investigators was to remove pregnant women and young girl children from the demarcated settlements.⁹³ The large-scale departures of pregnant women as compared with arrivals in the suspected villages in most districts suggested to local officials that they were removed in order to escape scrutiny. It was observed that a large number of young girls were also sent away from these settlements. Unfortunately, as the exact number of removals was very imperfectly reported, large numbers of female infants and children escaped the surveillance of the anti-infanticide squad.⁹⁴ Once born, girl babies were often sought to be misrepresented as boys in the infanticide registers, to avoid ticklish questions which would be asked upon the death of a female infant (ibid.). In a few instances recorded in 1871, local investigators suspected that families in districts like Meerut perhaps even 'borrowed' their neighbours' daughters on those occasions when the population of the villages was being enumerated.⁹⁵ In other cases, the proclaimed population refused to gather their children together for an inspection.⁹⁶ Very often the concerned parties, such as a Rajput zamindar of Serowli Buzurg in Hamirpur district, had to be fined for concealing or 'forgetting' to report the deaths of girl children.⁹⁷ Further, one of the main errors occurring in the registration of these vital statistics was the comparative neglect of figures relating to the births and deaths of boys.⁹⁸ Consequently, in almost all districts, the number of recorded female births and deaths was usually double that of boys.⁹⁹ As the Officiating Commissioner of the Allahabad Division commented in 1872, the gross inaccuracies ensconced within the registers often led to the idea that female infanticide had been eradicated, a fact contrary to the grim reality.¹⁰⁰

What rendered even more difficult the collection of reliable information pertaining to female infanticide was the complicity of the village officials with the proclaimed families to outwit and neutralise the official machinery.

Lower level village officials like the lambardars and the chaukidars colluded with the suspected families to suppress and distort information, as well as to exploit the loopholes in the Act. In 1872, the District Superintendent of Police of the North-Western Provinces had emphasised that the accuracy of all returns, and indeed the proper functioning of the Act, depended on the fearlessness and honesty of local officials like the chaukidars.¹⁰¹ But in numerous cases, the latter did not carry any such reports to the police station which would entail trouble or punishment for the proclaimed powerful patrilineages in guilty villages¹⁰² Many chaukidars, particularly those belonging to the same caste as the proclaimed population, were often equally hostile to the rules. In one such case, in Mouza Beula-ul-khurd in Deoband Pargana, Saharanpur district, both the lambardar and the chaukidar of the village were caught when attempting to conceal the birth of a female child.¹⁰³ In yet another instance, a chaukidar in Bulandshahar was sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment, both for failing to report the death of a female infant, as well as for allowing the parents to burn the body of the child before arrangements could be made for an inquest.¹⁰⁴ On the other hand, in those cases where chaukidars attempted to discharge their duties, proclaimed families sought to browbeat these officials until they were finally removed¹⁰⁵ Chaukidars were particularly vulnerable if they were of the same caste as the proclaimed population (many were the illegitimate issue of thakur families),¹⁰⁶ and therefore efforts were made by local officials to engage complete strangers to work in suspected villages, with varying degrees of success.¹⁰⁷ In cases where the chaukidars were non-residents, it was even more difficult for them to collect sensitive information¹⁰⁸ Their non-resident status however did not always stop chaukidars from cooperating with the zamindars, as they were usually in the latter's power. Mid-wives also participated in these acts of evasion. In the Sessions Court in Azamgarh, two dais of the Village of Tikkarā, inhabited by Bais thakurs, were sentenced for concealing the murder of a female child by declaring that it had been stillborn, even though there was evidence available to the contrary.¹⁰⁹ Given this situation, it was not surprising that many officials, were reluctant to put their trust in midwives, chaukidars and other village officials.¹¹⁰

District officials recognised the lacunae existing in the working of the punitive measures and sought to plug the holes wherever possible. 'The suppression of infanticide' argued the Magistrate of Farrukhabad, 'if to be effected by the rules, can only be so effected by the strict enforcement of them'.¹¹¹ It was felt that if the working of the measures was in any way a failure, the reasons lay in the 'inefficiency' and 'laxity' of village administrators and the police force.¹¹² Policy-makers were convinced that this could only be corrected by prosecuting all those who breached the regulations of the Act.¹¹³ At the same time, they recognised the difficulty of the task of the anti- infanticide squad, given the fact that the Act was unpopular with the villages and was consequently very tough to enforce.¹¹⁴

Administrators like the Officiating Magistrate of Basti emphasised that 'what was needed was very good men who, using great tact, could ingratiate themselves with the thakur population they wished to control'.¹¹⁵

Attempts were made to deal with the manifold problems outlined here, both by seeking to build an efficient administration, as well as by encouraging accurate reporting of all domestic events and strict adherence to the rules by handing out rewards and benefits to those concerned. Lapses and evasion of duty were, on the other hand, punished with fines and imprisonment.¹¹⁶ This policy was also extended to families in the proclaimed villages who broke the rules. Thus, in Hamirpur, to quote just one example, there were over 18 prosecutions of chaukidars and midwives amongst others in 1872, including five cases involving the heads of families.¹¹⁷ In Mouzah Khyori in Azamgarh district, a zamindar was promptly punished for refusing to allow the police to see newly-born children.¹¹⁸ Despite their best attempts, however, British officials were forced to admit partial failure in the working of the Act. Relatively few persons were put in the dock, although there continued to exist a blatant infringement of and resistance to the rules.¹¹⁹ This was due as much to acts of collusion, as to the inabilities of the understaffed infanticide squad to follow up and deal adequately with all cases.¹²⁰ Indeed, even in districts where the punitive measures worked relatively well, it was often very difficult to convict guilty families, because of the concealment of incriminating evidence relating to murder. This was in part due to the methods adopted to commit female infanticide.

A Crime Hard to Prove

Differences in degree separated proclaimed patrilineages steeped in female infanticide. Even in 'blood red' villages, the practice was either what officials called 'wholesale' or 'incomplete'(Kasturi 1992: chapter III, 146-77). In many families it was quite common for some girls, especially the eldest daughter, to be preserved to the exclusion of the others.¹²¹ In others, all girl babies were either systematically killed through deliberate intent or died of criminal neglect. In all cases, whatever the actual method used to perpetrate the deed, it was often well-nigh impossible to obtain convictions for the crime. In all districts, local inquests were automatically held on the bodies of female infants and children if there was any doubt concerning the immediate cause of death (ibid.) Reports of 'stillborn' children in Rajput houses particularly called for special inquiry.¹²² But while the law took its course, the results were not very encouraging. For example, in 1873-74, while as many as 1,157 inquests were carried out in the North-Western Provinces, only 412 cases were referred to the Civil Surgeons for post mortem. Out of these, 40 cases were considered suspicious enough to be tried in the criminal courts. Twenty cases were further dismissed at the stage of preliminary enquiry, and ultimately only 20 came up for trial, with 11 convictions and nine

acquittals. The very small proportion of the total who were found guilty were sentenced to a variety of punishments ranging from the extreme penalty of the law and transportation for life to imprisonment for six months.¹²³ Both men as well as women were amongst the few convicted.

Successful prosecutions only took place in those cases where it was impossible to suppress evidence especially if children bore the marks of violence on their bodies. For example, in Azamgarh, a grandmother belonging to a proclaimed family of Bais thakurs was sentenced to transportation for life when it was proved that she had suffocated her newborn grandchild by placing the placenta over the mouth of the infant.¹²⁴ But the evidence suggests that in most cases the number of convictions was very low.

The reasons behind this distressing fact was the inability of the judicial system to gather together conclusive evidence to nail the accused. This was mostly because many female deaths were concealed, and when reported, were registered with the police under a panoply of euphemisms which served to conceal more than reveal. In most cases, the exact truth was difficult to ascertain, given the fact that the crime was a domestic one mainly taking place within the private, and more specifically, the female space. As it was often observed by local officials, the very nature of the crime meant that it was not witnessed by any but those whose mouths were shut because they were accomplices in the act.¹²⁵

Given this situation, the only hope of obtaining proof was from signs of violence upon the child's body, which unfortunately 'told no more tales than its murderers'.¹²⁶ The most common methods of killing included drowning, strangulation, poisoning, asphyxiation by drawing the cord over the face of the baby to prevent respiration, or death by starvation when sickly female babies 'dried up' and finally died.¹²⁷ In the latter case, while the Civil Surgeons who examined the bodies could say that death was caused by 'imperfect nutrition', they could not ascertain whether food was 'wilfully' withheld or not.¹²⁸ In the former case, magistrates found it difficult to imprison families despite a strong presumption of guilt. Thus it was not surprising that most medical reports often stated: 'brain and lungs slightly congested, cause of death unknown'¹²⁹ In one situation, even when the Civil Surgeon in Farrukhabad found that in four out of 11 post mortems, death had resulted from an overdose of opium fed to the child supposedly for 'medicinal' purposes, local administrators refused to send the parents up for trial on the ground that there was no proof that the infants had been 'deliberately' poisoned.¹³⁰ The suspicion of foul play could not be corroborated unless witnesses for the prosecution were forthcoming. Generally such corroboration was unusual. As for the parents, they professed ignorance of the reasons behind the excessive death of females, often resignedly answering, 'pameshwar se hua'.¹³¹ As the Magistrate of Bulandshahr observed in dismay,

'what takes place inside the parents' house is unknown to the outside world and no honest evidence for or against the parents can be produced'.¹³²

Ambivalence of the State

What compounded the problems faced by those attempting to implement the rules were the vacillations in government attitudes towards the suspected groups. On the one hand, the state sought to use repressive measures to monitor, control and ultimately normalise the deviant infanticide - practising clans and lineages of the region. On the other hand, it impressed upon local officials in administrative and coercive structures that in order not to excite 'violent' feelings amongst the proclaimed castes, there was to be no undue interference in their innermost private lives, unless absolutely necessary.¹³³ The attempts to keep on the right side of these powerful communities was never more clear than when the state hesitated to be firm with those who, although guilty of female infanticide, escaped from the arms of justice.

Policy-makers were alive to the weaknesses of the Act and of the criminal law which made it difficult to prove the systematic neglect of female children. It was suggested by some officials in the field that where there existed a strong presumption of guilt against the parents, the father should be indicted and be presumed guilty unless he could prove his innocence.¹³⁴ Other officials felt that if it could be proved that female babies could have died of exposure or neglect, the act of omission of the parents to take ordinary precautions to preserve such infants should be declared a criminal offence.¹³⁵ But such suggestions were rejected by an administration which wished to soothe the ruffled feelings of the proclaimed population, by not invading their privacy except on those occasions when it could be 'justified that there were grounds for presuming individual guilt undeniable'.¹³⁶ Thus the inability to produce unimpeachable proof except in a few cases (for the reasons outlined earlier) proved a great stumbling block for criminal prosecutors, and undermined the coercive impact of the Female Infanticide Act.

Despite the numerous problems associated with Act VIII of 1870, an apparent fall in female mortality statistics in the proclaimed villages by the end of the 19th century occasioned both a sense of false optimism and a rapid decline in direct interference in the affairs of the suspected clans. In 1895, self-satisfied officials declared that the rules had operated successfully and that female infanticide was fast becoming extinct.¹³⁷ For them, such conclusions were born out by the special census of the proclaimed villages undertaken in 1888-89.¹³⁸ These figures appeared to suggest that the number of boys to every 1,000 girls in these settlements had fallen from 204 in 1871 to about 128 in 1889. At the same time the number of girls to 1,000 boys seemed to have risen from 458 in 1871 to 783 in

1889.¹³⁹ After the census operations were concluded, about nine-tenths of the originally proclaimed villages were released from the Act on the grounds that the percentage of girl children to the total minor population had risen to over 40 per cent, the proportion required before exemption could be granted.¹⁴⁰ It was further asserted that between 1897 and 1898 the death rate of female babies under 1 year in relation to the total number of deaths of babies under 1 year among the proclaimed population in the North-Western Provinces stood at 48.56 per cent, and compared favourably with the general provincial figure which was 48.64 per cent. ¹⁴¹ Further, policy-makers argued that the percentage of deaths of girls under 1 year out of the total number of girls born in the proclaimed villages - 25.58 per cent-was lower than the corresponding provincial figures which stood at 29.62 per cent.¹⁴²

According to officials this trend was the general effect of the punitive measures. Indeed by the end of the 19th century only 1 per cent of the clans and lineages implicated in judicial records were retained on the infanticide registers.¹⁴³ By 1904, these included the locally dominant landholding Rajput, Jat, Ahir and Gujar clans of most of the districts of the Agra and Meerut Divisions, and of areas like Bijnor, Shahjahanpur and Jalaon.¹⁴⁴ Of all these places, Mainpuri with 101 settlements had the largest number of villages under surveillance. Some of the other villages still under close supervision included 13 settlements in Saharanpur, two in Muzaffamagar, five in Meerut, two in Agra, 21 in Etawah and 10 in Farrukhabad.¹⁴⁵ But it is clear that by this time the Government of the North-Western Provinces had lost all interest in the punitive measures. In 1912 it was the official opinion that the Act had done its work and the servants of the Crown wished 'to be rid of the whole thing'.¹⁴⁶ This was merely a reiteration of what had by then become the dominant position on the future of the Female Infanticide Act. Diverted from all other concerns in the early 20th century by the increasingly disturbing political events in the Provinces, policy-makers released all the remaining villages from the grip of the rules and dismantled the special infanticide squads in these areas in 1912, despite the continuing evidence of disproportionate sex ratios amongst the proclaimed population. ¹⁴⁷

Conclusion

The preceding discussion does not appear to bear out the assertions of frameworks like those of Pannigrahi (1972) and Pakrasi (1970) which maintain that the colonial state had eradicated female infanticide by the beginning of the 20th century. Pannigrahi seeks to examine efforts to suppress infanticide in various parts of India which culminated in the passage of the Female Infanticide Act while Pakrasi focuses her attention on the anti-infanticide measures taken by officials in Kathiawar up to 1899. Both suggest that girl murder was completely eradicated due to the 'humanitarian zeal' and 'scrupulous care' of the colonial

state (Pakrasi 1970: 215; Pannigrahi 1972:187-91) Yet, as we have seen, the measures of repression sanctioned by the Female Infanticide Act had only partial success. As noted earlier, British officials chose punitive action over gradual reform because their interventions in order to induce the eradication of female infanticide by persuasive methods were yielding only slow and hesitant commitments to change among the guilty communities. Therefore, the force of law was used in order to check the appalling sex ratios encountered in various settlements. But matters were made very difficult because the suspected lineages and clans resisted with great vigour all attempts to check the crime. The evidence analysed here has shown that the Act had been fairly successfully evaded in many areas by the proclaimed communities. Thus the effectiveness of the measures had been greatly reduced. Even when local officers were strict about the enforcement of the regulations, the representatives of the 'most Christian government' were crippled by its reluctance to interfere too deeply in the lives of the proclaimed, dominant landholding castes, or to use the criminal law to convict those found guilty. Further, even if the policy of surveillance and control may in the short run have curbed the actions of the proclaimed population, in the long run they returned to their old ways. That a large number of exempted villages in the various districts had to be 'reproclaimed' was but an indication of this fact¹⁴⁸ In 1901, out of the 24 villages reproclaimed in a district like Mainpuri, 17 were classed as 'specially guilty'.¹⁴⁹ Indeed this was so because the fundamental principles of the Female Infanticide Act, which were embedded in the policy of repression and not reform, were not equipped to deal with this complex problem. It is therefore not very surprising that coercive measures were unable to effect any long-term changes in the conscious demographic choices exercised and to 'normalise' the subjects of surveillance. The very fact that by the turn of the 20th century there were numerous families still on the rolls of the proclaimed groups in areas like the Agra and Meerut Divisions indicated that the practice was still rife. In districts like Saharanpur (which had once borne the dubious distinction of having housed one of the largest numbers of special infanticide police in the Provinces),¹⁵⁰ the sex ratio in 1901 was still very disproportionate. The appalling proportion of 176 boys to every 100 girls in this area showed that despite Act VIII of 1870, very little had changed in many parts of the North-Western Provinces.¹⁵¹ The census reports of 1900 and after also indicate that male: female sex ratios continued to remain very disparate amongst certain sections of the population. Indeed, later in the century, female infanticide was 'rediscovered'. Recent studies tend to confirm that the practice is very much in existence even today-perhaps never having fully died out-among a large number of social groups (Bardhan 1982; Boscrup 1970; Miller 1980,1981; Krishnaswamy 1988; Visaria 1967). Such evidence falsifies the official assertion made in 1897 that after being exposed to the Female Infanticide Act for over 20 years, the death rate of the female population amongst the proclaimed communities was lower than the mean provincial death rate. The rediscovery of

female infanticide reemphasises the fact that an investigation into some of the multiple social processes influencing the practice remains as significant a task as before.

Notes

1. This article is a revised version of a chapter from my M. Phil dissertation, 'Property, Marriage and Female Infanticide North-Western Provinces in the Late Nineteenth Century' (Jawaharlal Nehru University, 1992).
2. The words 'crime', 'guilty', 'guilt', 'deviant', 'innocent'-proclaimed' 'recalcitrant' suspected and 'surveillance, are used here without quotes, but with an awareness of their official connotations.
3. For a few recent discussions on crime and law in colonial India, see, for example, Yang (1983), Nigam (1990) and Singha (1993a and 1993b).
4. Elsewhere I have attempted to argue that female infanticide was the specific response of certain groups to particular systems of marriage alliance and notions of honour, status and power. British administrators understood only part of the problem when they argued that female infanticide was the immediate result of the high dowries customarily paid in certain communities to prospective bridegrooms by the fathers of girls (Kasturi 1992).
5. Officiating Magistrate, Hamirpur to Commissioner, Allahabad Division, 27th July 1871, North-Western Provinces (hereafter NWP), judicial (Infanticide) Proceedings (hereafter JIP), Index no. 93, Proceedings (hereafter Progs.) no. 8, 7th October 1871, p. 349, Uttar Pradesh State Archives, Lucknow (hereafter UPSA).
6. Joint Magistrate, Basti to Magistrate, Basti, 18th June 1868, Selections from the Records of the Government of the NWP, Second Series (hereafter Selections), Allahabad, 1871, p. 16.
7. Assistant Magistrate, Basti to Magistrate, Basti, 15th June 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 68, Progs. no. 13, 7th October 1871, Vol. 54, p. 281.
8. Collector, Etawah to Secretary, Board of Revenue, NWP, 1st September 1865, Appendix C, Census of the NWP, 1865, Allahabad, 1867, Vol. 1, p. II.
9. Governor of Bombay to Honourable Court of Directors, November 1827, cited in Peggs (1830:201).

10. Colonel Walker to Court of Directors, 1819, cited in Peggs (1830:157-58).
11. Colonel Walker to Court of Directors, August 1819, cited in Peggs (1830:203).
12. Joint Magistrate, Basti to Magistrate, Basti, 18th June 1868, Selections, pp. 7-8.
13. Magistrate, Kanpur to Secretary to The Infanticide Committee, 24th October 1870, Selections, p. 83.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Joint Magistrate, Basti to Magistrate, Basti, 18th June 1868, Selections, p.7.
17. Demi Official Note from Assistant Magistrate, Agra to Collector, Agra, 15th February 1870, NWP JIP, Index no. 202, Progs. no. 39, 21st January 1871, Vol. 53, p. 353.
18. Ibid.
19. Jonathan Duncan, Resident of Banaras to Governor General in Council, cited in Peggs (1830:171).
20. Ibid.
21. Magistrate, Mainpuri to Commissioner, Agra Division, 7th November 1851, Selections, Allahabad, 1855, Vol. 3, pp. 3-5.
22. Ibid., p. 6.
23. Officiating Magistrate, Mainpuri, to Officiating Secretary to Government, NWF, 2nd June 1870, NWP JIP, Index no. 52, Progs. no. 34, 21st January 1871, Vol. 53, p. 78, UPSA.
24. Secretary to Government, NWP, to Secretary to the Government of India (hereafter GOI), Home Department, 27th August 1868, Selections, p. 2.
25. Superintendent of Police to Chief Secretary to Government, Bengal Presidency, May 1819, cited in Peggs (1830:188).

26. Ibid., pp. 181-82.
27. Officiating Magistrate, Mainpuri to Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP, 2nd June 1870, NWP JIP, Index no. 52, Progs. no. 34. 21st January 1871, Vol. 53, p. 78, UPSA.
28. Ibid., p. 74.
29. Memorandum on Female Infanticide in Farrukhabad, 4th October 1870, NWP JIP, Index no. 66, Progs. no. 49, 21st January 1871, Vol. 53, p. 109, UPSA.
30. Ibid.
31. Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP to Senior Member, Board of Revenue, 1st June 1870, Selections, pp. 62-63.
32. Ibid.
33. Magistrate, Saharanpur to Secretary to Government, NWP, 16th February 1870, NWP Index no. 184, Progs. no. 30, 21st January 1871, Vol. 53, p. 338, UPSA.
34. Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP to Senior Member, Board of Revenue, 1st June 1870, Selections, p. 60.
35. Demi Official Note on Female Infanticide by. Assistant Magistrate, Agra to Collector, Agra, 15th February 1870, NWP JIP, Index no. 202, Progs. no. 39, 21st January 1871, Vol. 53, p. 353, UPSA.
36. Memorandum on Female Infanticide in the Agra District, by Assistant Magistrate, Agra, 18th April 1870, NWP M, Index no. 50, Progs. no. 18, 21st January 1871, Vol. 53, p. 60, UF'SA.
37. Officiating Magistrate, Mainpuri, to Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP, 2nd June 1870, NWP JIP, Index no. 52, Progs. no. 34, 21st January 1871, Vol. 53, p. 78, UPSA.
38. Demi Official Note by Assistant Magistrate, Agra to Collector, Agra, 15th February 1870, NWP JIP, Index no. 202, Progs. no. 39, 21st January 1871, Vol. 53, p. 354, UPSA.
39. Ibid.

40. Note by Settlement Officer, Farrukhabad, to Secretary to Government, NWP, NWP JIP, Index no. 190, Progs no; 42, 21st January 1871, Vol. 53, p. 34, UPSA.
41. Magistrate, Agra to Commissioner, Agra Division, 21st April 1870, NWP JIP, Index no. 48, Progs. no. 16, 21st January 1871, Vol. 53, p. 58, UPSA.
42. Officiating Magistrate, Mainpuri to Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP, 2nd June 1870, NWP JIP, Index no. 52, Progs. no. 34, 21st January 1871, Vol. 53, p. 76, UPSA.
43. Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP to Commissioner, Agra Division, 25th May 1870, NWP JIP, Index no. 51, Progs. no. 19, 21st January 1871, Vol., 53, p. 72, UPSA.
44. Commissioner, Agra Division to Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP, 30th April 1870, NWP JIP, Index. no. 47, Progs. no. 15, 21st January 1871, Vol. 53, p. 57, UPSA.
45. Secretary to Committee for Suppression of Infanticide, to Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP, 25th November 1870, Selections, p. 90.
46. Ibid., p. 91.
47. Officiating Secretary to government, NWP, to Senior Member, Board of Revenue, 1st June 1870, Selections, pp. 62-63.
48. Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP, to All Magistrates, 17th November 1870, Selections, p. 88.
49. Ibid., p. 89.
50. Notification of the Home Department, 10th February 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 3, Progs. no. SOB, 7th October 1871, Vol. 54, p. 134, UPSA.
51. Secretary to Committee for Suppression of Infanticide, to Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP, 25th November 1870, Selections, p. 92.
52. Notification of the Home Department, 10th February 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 3, Progs. no. SOB, 7th October 1871, Vol. 54, p. 134, UPSA.
53. Ibid., p. 136.

54. Ibid., p. 135.
55. Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP, to All Magistrates of Districts Proclaimed Under the Infanticide Act, 14th March 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 4, Progs. no. 80c, 7th October 1871, Vol. 54, p. 141, UPSA.
56. Notification no. 269, 26th April 1895, GOI, Home (Police) Part A, Nos. 61-62, National Archives of India, New Delhi (hereafter NAT).
57. Notification of the Home Department, 10th February 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 3, Progs. no. SOB, 7th October 1871, Vol. 54, p. 135, UPSA.
58. Assistant Magistrate, Agra to Collector, Agra, 22nd January 1875, File no. 145/no. 14/1880 Agra Collectorate Judicial (Infanticide) Records, Agra Regional Archives.
59. Notification of the Home Department, 10th February 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 3, Progs. no. SOB, 7th October 1871, Vol. 54, p. 135, UPSA.
60. Secretary to Government, NWP to Secretary to GOI, 31st October 1873, GOI, Home Police, (Part A), January 1874, nos. 48- 51, NAI.
61. Ibid.
62. Notification of the Home Department, 10th February 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 3, Progs. no. SOB, 7th October 1871, Vol.,54, p. 135, UPSA.
63. Ibid.
64. Secretary to Government, NWP to Secretary to GOI, 31st October 1873, GOI, Home Police (Part A), January 1874, nos. 48- 51, NAI.
65. Notification of the Home Department, 10th February 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 3, Progs. no. SOB, 7th October 1871, Vol. 54, p. 135, UPSA.
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid.
69. Notification of the Home Department, 10th February 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 3, Progs. no. SOB, 7th October 1871, Vol. 54, p. 134, UPSA.

70. Ibid.
71. Notification of the Home Department, 10th February 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 3, Progs. no. SOB, 7th October 1871, Vol. 54, p. 135, UPSA.
72. Officiating Secretary to government, NWP to officiating Secretary to GOI, Home Department, 14th December 1870, Selections, p. 105.
73. Notification no. 269, 26th April 1895, GOI, Home Police (Part A), nos. 61-62, NAI.
74. Administrative Report of the North-Western Provinces, 1871-72, Allahabad, 1873, p. 138.
75. Magistrate, Etawah, to Commissioner, Agra Division, 26th April 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 72, Progs nos. 3-16, 7th October 1871, Vol. 54, p. 300, UPSA.
76. Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP to All District Officers of the NWP, 1st June 1870, Selections, p. 64.
77. Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP, to Officiating Secretary to GOI, 14th December 1870, Selections, p. 99.
78. Ibid., p. 101.
79. Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP to Officiating Secretary to GOI, 14th December 1870, Selections, pp. 103-104.
80. Ibid., p. 103.
81. Notification of the Home Department, 10th February 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 3, Progs. no. 80B, 7th October 1871, Vol. 54, p. 136, UPSA.
82. Ibid.
83. Secretary to Government, NWP to Secretary to GOI, 15th September 1874, GOT, Home Police (Part A), November 1874, nos. 27-28, NAI.
84. Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP to Officiating Secretary to GOI, Home Department, 14th December 1870, Selections, pp. 103-104.

85. Notification of the Home Department, 10th February 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 3, Progs. no. 80B, 7th October 1871, Vol. 54, p. 135, UFSA.
86. Officiating Secretary to Government, NWP, to Officiating Secretary to GOI, 14th December 1870, Selections, p. 103.
87. Notification of the Home Department, 10th February 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 3, Progs. no. 80B, 7th October 1871, vol. 54, p. 135, UPSA.
88. Ibid., p. 136.
89. Administrative Report of the North-Western Provinces, 1871-72, Allahabad, 1873, p. 135.
90. Report on the Administration of the North-Western Provinces for the Year 1886-87, Allahabad, 1888, p 48.
91. Report on the administration of the North-Western Provinces for the Year 1900-1901, Allahabad, 1902, p. 25.
92. Ibid.
93. Magistrate, Kanpur to Secretary, Infanticide Committee, 24th October 1870, Selections, p. 83.
94. Report on the Working of the Infanticide Act in the NWP in the year ending 31st March 1886, NWP Police Progs, Progs. no. 2, Serial no. 12, March 1887, Vol. 87, p. 17, UPSA.
95. Officiating Magistrate, Meerut to Commissioner, Meerut Division, 19th April 1871, NWP JIP, Index no. 106, Progs. no. 9, 7th October 1871, Vol. 54, p. 364, UPSA.
96. Officiating Commissioner, Allahabad Division to Secretary to Government, NWP, 3rd June 1872, NWP JIP, Index no. 32, Progs. no. 1, August 1872, Vol. 56, p. 67, UPSA.
97. Magistrate, Hamirpur to Commissioner, Allahabad Division, 6th April 1872, NWP JIP, Index no. 33, Progs. no. 2, August 1872, Vol. 56, p. 68, UPSA.
98. Administrative Report of the North-Western Provinces, 1871-72, Allahabad, 1873, p. 122.

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