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The 'Second City of the Empire'?: A Comparative study of Public
Museum Cultures in Glasgow and Calcutta c. 1858 - 1901.

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degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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May 2021

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Abstract

This thesis studies the meaning of the term ‘second city of the Empire’ in the nineteenth-century British Empire. London may have been the unchallenged first city of the Empire, but the question of which urban centre constituted the Empire’s second city was regularly and variously disputed by contemporaries, though importantly not, by historians. At a time of substantial urban expansion during the high point of British imperial power, Birmingham, Bombay, Calcutta, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, and Sydney were all, in a myriad of ways, said to be the ‘second city of the Empire.’ Whilst a study that draws together all the vying cities is long overdue, this thesis begins this extensive task and sets two of the most proponent claimants – Glasgow and Calcutta – as its protagonists. One was the colonial capital of India, the other a Scottish-British industrial and provincial city. Identical claims by such radically different cities pose questions about how major imperial cities related to each other, as well as how differences between them were articulated. These cities offer hugely different models for what exactly contemporaries understood the ‘second city of the Empire’ to be. Using newspapers, political debates, travelogues and travel guides, this thesis identifies four key attributes of second city status, namely: a substantial population, a significant administrative profile, a full spectrum economy and a noteworthy civic culture, which included an important public museum. All require further investigation, but the focus of this thesis is the understudied function of the public museum within the imperial network.

By charting the establishment and development of Calcutta’s Imperial Museum and Glasgow’s City Industrial Museum over the second half of the nineteenth-century, this thesis argues that public collections, and the buildings that housed them, were intimately and variously connected to their respective cities’ aspirations for civic and imperial status. In this context, cultural dynamics of civic confidence and defensiveness were integral to the emerging museums sector. Museums were key to negotiating the imperial space, in ways that were shaped by second city rhetoric, and, in return, shaped it. Moreover, relationships between imperial, national and provincial museums, all emergent during this period, reveal fresh perspectives on the competitive and collaborative nature of Empire. Scholars have tended to overlook the complexities underlying the concept of the ‘second city of the Empire’ and its implications for urban centres, instead just accepting the title as given. Whilst acknowledging that it is a rhetorical concept, this thesis argues that asserting and competing for such an elusive title provided very real motivation to create changes in individual cities. The dialectical engagement between imperial rhetoric and the history of museums raises further questions relevant to current efforts to decolonise museums, both in Britain and India.

Keywords: Glasgow, Calcutta, Empire, Second City, Civic, Status, Museums, Collecting, Networks, International Exhibitions.

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Declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Signature:

Lydia Murtezaoglu

May 2021

Abbreviations

GCA	Glasgow City Archives
GMRC	Glasgow Museums Resource Centre Archive and Library
IOR	British Library, India Office Records
NAI	National Archives India, Delhi
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
UGSC	University of Glasgow Special Collections
VMH	Victoria Memorial Hall, Kolkata
WBSA	West Bengal State Archives

Introduction

London may have been the unchallenged first city of the British Empire, but the question of which urban centre constituted the Empire's second city was regularly and variously disputed. At a time of substantial urban expansion during the high point of British imperial power, Birmingham, Bombay, Calcutta, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, and Sydney were all, in a myriad of ways, said to be the 'second city of the Empire.'¹ Both contested and competed over, second city status was certainly coveted. Whilst a study that draws together all the vying cities is long overdue, this thesis sets two of the most proponent claimants – Glasgow and Calcutta – as its protagonists.² One was the colonial capital of India, the other a Scottish-British industrial and provincial city. Identical claims by such radically different cities pose questions about how major imperial cities related to each other, as well as how differences between them were articulated. These cities offer hugely different models for what exactly contemporaries understood the 'second city of the Empire' to be. Significantly, the notion of a second city speaks both to comparisons with the first city, and between other commercial and administrative centres.

This thesis charts the development of this rhetoric between two pivotal imperial moments – the Indian mutiny-rebellion of 1857-8 and the death of Queen Victoria in 1901.³ The first was 'the largest and most threatening rebellion' experienced in the British Empire across the nineteenth-century.⁴ The latter, marked the end of an era and coincided with the beginning of a new century, which left Calcutta looking rhetorically backwards and Glasgow determinedly forwards. Scholars have tended to overlook the complexities underlying the concept of the 'second city of the Empire' and its implications for urban centres, instead just accepting the title as given.⁵ An exception is John M. MacKenzie, who

¹ Birmingham: 'Birmingham becomes second city of the Empire', *Dundee Courier*, 4 August 1910, p. 3; Bombay: 'Britain's Greatness', *Motherwell Times*, 14 March 1885, p.4.; Calcutta: 'Calcutta a Vast Shambles', *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 20 August 1946, p. 1.; Dublin: 'Astronomy', *Saunders's News-Letter*, 23 October 1837, p. 3.; Edinburgh: 'The Press, An Irish Premier on Ireland', *Northern Whig*, 4 July 1863, p. 4.; Glasgow: 'The Aquarium', *Rothesay Chronicle*, 12 August 1876, p. 2.; Liverpool: 'The London Reform Union', *London Evening Standard*, 13 January 1893, p. 3.; Manchester: 'Notes on Social Questions', *Lincolnshire Chronicle*, 4 March 1865, p. 6.; and Sydney: 'Perfect Reception', *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 23 November 1931, p. 7.

² Calcutta is spelt at such throughout when referring to the city in its historical context, and Kolkata when referring to the city after its name was officially changed in 2001.

³ For 'Indian mutiny-rebellion' see Clare Anderson, *The Indian Uprising of 1857-8. Prisons, Prisoners and Rebellion* (London: Anthem Press, 2007).

⁴ *Ibid.*, p.3.

⁵ For example: Rimli Battacharya, 'The nautee in "the second city of the Empire"', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 40.2 (2003), pp. 191 – 235; Michael Donnelly, 'Glasgow's Glorious Glass', *History Today* 40.5 (1990); Lionel Gossman, 'The Photographic Work of Thomas Annan', *The*

argues that ‘competition for the accolade of second position reveals something of the nature of imperial power that citizens sought to quantify fractions to share.’⁶ While his focus was on Glasgow specifically, this thesis unpacks exactly how imperial citizens carved up portions of the Empire in an urban context, and strengthens the idea that it was a shared project, which required certain levels of collaboration.

This thesis identifies four key facets to claims to second city status, namely: a substantial population, a significant administrative, even governmental profile, a full spectrum economy which provided a diverse range of industrial, commercial, and financial services, and, a noteworthy civic culture, which included an important public museum.⁷ All require further exploration, but the focus of this thesis is the understudied function of the public museum within the paradigm of the second city. Public museums provide a point of commonality between second city claimants during the second half of the nineteenth century. Within both Britain and India’s developing civic cultures, these institutions emerged as a crucial means of communication and comparison between cities. Museums therefore became enmeshed in the ways municipal administrations projected the city’s status, both to their own citizens and the outside world. Unlike other aspects of second city status, which were often difficult to define and prone to change, museums offered a long-term means of refining a city’s reputation. Changes to Glasgow and Calcutta’s institutions paradoxically highlight points of confidence and underlying anxiety in the imperial project throughout the epoch. In fact, assertions of the ‘second city of the Empire’ pivoted on this axis, so that in some ways they exuded civic confidence and, in others, were vitally defensive. This was a period when elites sought to develop a popular basis for the empire in Britain, and also defend the empire against nationalist and anti-colonial challenges in the colonies.⁸ Just as other scholars have used ‘museums to enlarge our understanding of Victorian epistemologies, institutions, and empire,’ this thesis takes the development of

Princeton University Library Chronicle 75.2 (2014), pp. 165 – 200; G. Jackson, ‘The Ports’ in *Transport in Victorian Britain* ed. by Michael J. Freeman and Derek H. Aldcroft, (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1991), pp. 218-252; Brad A. Jones, ‘The American Revolution, Glasgow, and the Making of the Second City of the Empire’ in *Europe’s American Revolution* ed. by Simon P. Newman (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 1 – 25; Nicholas J. White, ‘“Ferry off the Mersey”: The Business and the Impact of Decolonization in Liverpool’, *History* 96.2 (2011), pp. 188 – 204.

⁶ John M. MacKenzie, ‘“The Second City of the Empire”: Glasgow- imperial municipality’ in *Imperial Cities Landscape, Display and Identity* ed. by Felix Driver and David Gilbert (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1999), p.216.

⁷ Evidence will be provided in the following chapter.

⁸ John M. MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire. The manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880 – 1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984); Catherine Hall, (ed.), *Cultures of empire, Colonizers in Britain and the empire in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, A Reader* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p.2.

Glasgow's City Industrial Museum and Calcutta's Imperial Museum as its central threads.⁹ It provides analysis of their role in articulating and ratifying the status of these purported second cities of the Empire within the imperial network. Museums were therefore key to negotiating the imperial space, in ways which were informed by second city rhetoric, and, in return, shaped it.

Glasgow and Calcutta: historical developments and assessments

With reference to relevant empire-wide studies, this section addresses some useful ways scholars have tended to deal with the cultural, social, political and imperial trends in Glasgow and Calcutta. Imperial studies continue to expand in all directions to examine how the tendrils of the British Empire entered every area of the lived experience during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.¹⁰ Nothing, most scholars would argue, was left untouched by imperial policy and practice. One of the core proponents of this outlook has been MacKenzie, whose work on hugely diverse topics such as: popular imperialism, Scotland's role in the Empire, Glasgow as the 'second city of the Empire', museums, architecture, and many more, have influenced every aspect of this project.¹¹

MacKenzie's 'four nations' approach to the British Empire has directed attention to the particularities of the Scottish imperial experience.¹² Recurring throughout the literature is the question, 'did the formation of the British Empire and the vast expansion of British imperialism in the nineteenth century' progress identities 'of Greater Britain or of the Welsh, Irish, English and Scottish elements that made it up?'¹³ This thesis responds to the question by considering the overlapping nature of identities in Glasgow, which were civic, national, British and imperial. As Andrew Mackillop illuminates, 'historicizing more effectively the considerable integration and ongoing particularities of Ireland, Scotland,

⁹ Lara Kriegel, 'After the Exhibitionary Complex: Museum Histories and the Future of the Victorian Past', *Victorian Studies* 48.4 (2006), p. 682.

¹⁰ Scholarship continues to be influenced by seminal studies: David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: how the British saw their empire* (London: The Penguin Press, 2001); Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003) and Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its forms of knowledge: the British in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

¹¹ See by Stephanie Barczewski and Martin Farr (eds), *The MacKenzie Moment and Imperial History: Essay in Honour of John M. MacKenzie* (London: Palgrave, 2019).

¹² John M. MacKenzie, 'Irish, Scottish, Welsh and English Worlds: The Historiography of a Four-Nations Approach to the History of the British Empire', in *Race, Nation and Empire: Making Histories, 1750 to the Present* ed. by Catherine Hall and Keith McClelland (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), pp. 133-53.

¹³ John M. MacKenzie, 'Empire and National Identities the Case of Scotland', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 8 (1998), pp.215-231.

Wales, and England’ allows us to better ‘assess what made the British Union and Empire such a dynamic, pluralist, mutually constitutive and interconnected entity.’¹⁴ Second city rhetoric stemming from the different parts of the British Union, as well as India and Australia, importantly draws interconnectivity to the fore in ways which stress the uniqueness of different urban contexts. Indeed, Catherine Hall notes that ‘there is an assumption of connections’ throughout the British Empire ‘which link its histories in ways worth reflecting on.’¹⁵ Competing claims to be the ‘second city of the Empire’ speaks to an imperial world which was interconnected, but not necessarily through the metropole.

Antoinette Burton has long been ‘remapping the boundaries between home and empire’ to question ‘the presumptive core-to-periphery flow of ideas, people, and even policies by emphasizing colonial encounters.’¹⁶ Thinking about my own research as a process of ‘remapping’ has had a formative effect on this thesis. By developing an understanding of British civic institutions as deeply imperial, and colonial institutions as increasingly civic, this thesis contributes to existing attempts to reassess the ‘boundaries between home and empire.’ **Indeed, the provincial museum networks that were established during this period contradict the idea that all processes and ideas emanated from the metropole.** Bringing Burton’s ideas forward, Barry Crosbie and Mark Hampton examine the ‘dissemination and exchange of ideas’ across the British Empire.¹⁷ They argue that ‘the cultural British world helped to ensure the system’s cohesion by supplying the cultural sinews that served to reinforce the institutional, political and economic bonds of empire.’¹⁸ This has been important for framing Glasgow and Calcutta’s disparate but similarly imperial cultures.

The interplay between culture and identities of different kinds has driven the analysis in this thesis. MacKenzie argues that Glasgow’s International Exhibitions, for example, were ‘principally concerned with negotiating identities of Glasgow, Scotland and the empire.’¹⁹ In the British context, Brad Beaven reasons that the second half of the nineteenth century ‘proved a critical period for urban elites’ attempts in establishing a

¹⁴ Andrew Mackillop, ‘What Has the Four Nations and Empire Model Achieved?’ in *The MacKenzie Moment and Imperial History: Essay in Honour of John M. MacKenzie* ed. by Stephanie Barczewski and Martin Farr (London: Palgrave, 2019), p. 266.

¹⁵ Hall, *Cultures of empire*, p. 10.

¹⁶ Antoinette Burton, *Empire in Question: Reading, Writing and Teaching British Imperialism* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011), p.11.

¹⁷ Barry Crosbie and Mark Hampton, ‘Introduction: the cultural construction of the British world’ in *The Cultural Construction of the British World*, ed. by Barry Crosbie and Mark Hampton (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), p.1.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.2.

¹⁹ MacKenzie, “The Second City of the Empire”, p.227.

sense of civic identity.’²⁰ Like many urban studies, Beaven uses a case study model. He addresses the ways that urban elites in Portsmouth, Coventry and Leeds disseminated ideas about the empire to their wider communities.²¹ He chose these particular cities for their contrasts, to highlight ways that ‘differing urban contexts’ shaped the imperial message. Similarly, the ‘second city of the Empire’ has been a means of drawing together Glasgow and Calcutta to better understand how civic and colonial elites articulated their place in the empire.

Urban elites ‘lay at the crux of the relationship between the city and Empire’, thus they are necessarily the group which populate this thesis.²² As Irene Maver deftly untangles, Glasgow was ‘emphatically identified’ from the late 1880s with ‘municipal socialism’ in ‘recognition of the broad range of public services and utilities that were on offer to citizens.’²³ In recognition of its works, the Town Council officially became the Corporation of the City of Glasgow in 1895.²⁴ Liberal Unionism similarly emerged in Glasgow during this period following Gladstone’s policies towards Home Rule in Ireland. Politically, ‘Liberal Unionists emphasised the integrity of the British Empire’ and revolved around ‘the dual themes of imperialism and social welfare.’²⁵ These political identifications necessarily directed the civic institutions which are the focus of this thesis. Indeed, Beaven reflects on how ‘monumental buildings’ were used to foster a ‘civic culture and identity’, which were seen ‘by some contemporaries as the ideal conduit in shaping the exemplary citizen of the modern city.’²⁶

In India too, this period was one of particularly seismic political change. Yet, as Dipesh Chakrabarty articulates, ‘the colonial relationship denied the colonized the status of the citizen.’²⁷ Key to this is what Partha Chatterjee has termed ‘the rule of colonial difference’, whereby lines of distinction between the coloniser and colonised were emphasised.²⁸ This thesis shows that such statements were made through architecture, civic institutions, and public collections. Ranjit Sen synthesises that through Calcutta’s

²⁰ Brad Beaven, *Visions of empire. Patriotism, popular culture and the city, 1870-1938* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), p.1.

²¹ Ibid., p. 5.

²² Ibid., p.7.

²³ Irene Maver, *Glasgow* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), p.153.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 156.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 152-155.

²⁶ Beaven, *Visions of empire*, p.12.

²⁷ Dipesh Chakrabarty, ‘The Difference – Deferral of a Colonial Modernity: Public Debates on Domesticity in British Bengal’ in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, ed. by Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p. 374.

²⁸ Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Post-colonial Histories* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), p.10.

‘meteoric rise from a riparian village to a capital of a vast south Asian empire’ it became ‘the second city of the British Empire.’²⁹ Vitally, following the turn of the nineteenth century, ‘the British Empire had taken its shape and it needed to be ruled from an imperial city – not simply from a traders’ emporium.’³⁰ Transforming Calcutta into a capital city, which reified European culture and divided the rulers from the ruled, was a process which consumed colonial officials. The work of some has become famous, Lord Wellesley, for example, was responsible for Government House, famously modelled on Kedleston Hall in England. Anindita Ghosh explores the ‘role of the city in fundamentally reconfiguring the social, cultural, and moral landscapes of its diverse inhabitants.’³¹ Though contemporaries described the city as racially aggregated into its ‘White’ and ‘Black’ towns, to the north and south respectively, historians have revealed that spatially, the city overlapped and intermingled, meaning any rhetorical boundaries were blurred in reality.³² Understandings of ‘colonial difference’ have been fundamental to critically evaluating the motivations of urban elites in Calcutta.

In the Glasgow context, scholars have increasingly turned their attention to the city’s Empire and slavery connections.³³ Prompted by T. M. Devine, and others such as Stephen Mullen, a more reflective tone has entered the narrative, which tries to unpack the role Scotland played in the development of the transatlantic slave trade.³⁴ This work has necessarily informed my research approaches. In Glasgow, there is a growing urgency to frame the city within its vitally imperial context and, whilst the commercial aspect of these connections is increasingly well-documented, the gaze is now turning to the cultural impact of empire. In light of reconsiderations of the city’s imperial past, research into the role played by culture and heritage in the making of empire is both timely and essential.

As suggested, the complexities of second city rhetoric has not been satisfactorily covered by any existing study. MacKenzie’s assessment that Glasgow’s claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire’ was a municipal one, ‘based dubiously on population, economic integration, and imperial commerce’ has, however, provided a useful starting

²⁹ Ranjit Sen, *Calcutta in Colonial Transition* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019), p.1.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, viii.

³¹ Anindita Ghosh, *Claiming the City: Protest, Crime and Scandals in Colonial Calcutta, c. 1860 – 1920* (Oxford University Press, 2016), p.1.

³² See Swati Chattopadhyay, ‘Blurring Boundaries: The Limits of “White Town” in Colonial India’, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 59 (2000), pp.154-179.

³³ John M. MacKenzie, *The British Empire through buildings, Structure, function and meaning* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), p.3; MacKenzie, “The Second City of the Empire”, p.216.

³⁴ Tom M. Devine, (ed.), *Recovering Scotland’s Slavery Past: The Caribbean Connection* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015); Stephen Mullen, *It Wasn’t Us: The Truth About Glasgow and Slavery* (Edinburgh: Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, 2009).

point for thinking more critically about the title.³⁵ David Dickson refers to a “second city syndrome” to reflect the position held by cities which ranked in varying ways, second to their metropole.³⁶ His work centres on Ireland’s cities and the anti-metropolitan values which being the second city evoked.³⁷ He argues that ‘second cities’ in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries formulated their image as rival to the capital with public displays of jealousy.³⁸ Crucially, ‘a second city had necessarily to measure itself against the metropole, to differentiate itself from the dominant “other”’.³⁹ Though there are some similarities, this thesis argues that urban centres which claimed to be the ‘second city of the Empire’ had competitive dynamics with other imperial provincial cities but not usually with London. Instead, this thesis refers to ‘secondary capitals’ to explicate the roles played by Calcutta and Edinburgh, namely, national centres which were not the imperial capital. In modern terms, a secondary capital has been ‘defined as a capital city that is not the primary economic centre of its nation. Such capital cities feature a specific political economy characterized by a strong government presence in its regional economy and its local governance arrangements.’⁴⁰ In the nineteenth century, Glasgow held the primary economic position in Scotland, yet Edinburgh remained the secondary capital because of its historical, administrative and financial position. In India too, Calcutta’s economic position fluctuated significantly. Whilst a secondary capital could claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire’, its status within the Empire was not dependent on it. The ‘public displays of jealousy’ described by Dickson can thus be seen in the relationships between Glasgow and Edinburgh, as well as between Bombay and Calcutta. Dickson further argues that the rivalry between Glasgow and Edinburgh was waged over ‘the reputation of their public institutions, on their rival claims to the commercial and cultural leadership of an improving Scotland.’⁴¹ This competitive dynamic makes the case for using museums to explore the relationships between different imperial centres.

In the museum context, resentment over the concentration of funding in national museums built up, arguments were waged to retain specimens in provincial museums and provincial collections were developed to compare favourably with those in secondary capitals and the metropole. These antagonisms link to the paradoxical use of second city

³⁵ MacKenzie, “‘The Second City’”, p.216.

³⁶ David Dickson, ‘Second City Syndrome: Reflections on Three Irish Cases’ in *Kingdoms United? Great Britain and Ireland since 1500* ed. by S.J. Connolly (Dublin: Four Court Press, 1999), pp. 95-108.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.95.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

⁴⁰ David Kaufmann, Martin Warland, Heike Mayer and Fritz Sager, ‘Bern’s positioning strategies: Escaping the fate of a secondary capital city?’, *Cities* 53 (2016), pp. 120 – 129.

⁴¹ Dickson, ‘Second City Syndrome’, p. 95.

rhetoric at times of civic and imperial confidence and anxiety. Calcutta's civic leaders, for example, started to use this rhetoric far more consistently after 1900 when the city's place within the Empire was being threatened, and more especially after the removal of the capital to Delhi in 1911. This thesis builds on Dickson's assessment to unpack the relationship between cultural heritage, civic competition and imperial aspirations.

Comparing Glasgow and Calcutta

All comparisons are arbitrary, and Liverpool or Bombay, which more closely resembled Glasgow, could have proven effective counterpoints. Sandip Hazareesingh, for example, uses the 'simultaneous emergence' of Bombay and Glasgow as 'modern though unequal global ports in the second half of the nineteenth century' to argue against Cain and Hopkins' 'metropolitan-based model of explanation' for British imperialism.⁴² Between Bombay and Glasgow are numerous points of commonality, not least in the second city and museum contexts, as this thesis will touch on. Yet the less obvious juxtaposition of Glasgow and Calcutta, instigated by the British Academy funded 'Second Cities of the Empire' project (2015 – 2017), has arguably been more enlightening. Although politically, socially, and culturally very different, both were ports, had rivers as their defining natural feature, contained significant industry and commerce, as well as stark levels of poverty, and developed civic and cultural institutions. In line with its political status, Calcutta was commonly referred to as the 'Metropolis of India', and only rarely as the 'second city of the Empire' until the turn of the twentieth century, when civic leaders lay claim to the title as a means of interpreting the city's shifting status. As suggested above, this becomes particularly noticeable after the capital was removed to Delhi in 1911 and Calcutta was demoted. By contrast, Glasgow was increasingly connected to the epithet through a sustained campaign led by civic leaders from the 1860s onwards.⁴³ This comparative approach strengthens existing understanding of the complex relationship between civic and colonial confidence and defensiveness. Whilst acknowledging that it is a rhetorical concept, the 'second city of the Empire' was variously used to quantify Glasgow and Calcutta's contributions to the imperial project, and therefore provides a unique vantage point for comparing their museums. The dialectical engagement between imperial rhetoric

⁴² Sandip Hazareesingh, 'Interconnected synchronicities: the production of Bombay and Glasgow as modern global ports c. 1850 – 1880', *Journal of Global History*, 4.1 (2009), 7 – 31; see P.J. Cain and A. Hopkins, *British Imperialism 1688-2015*, Third Edition (New York: Routledge, 2016).

⁴³ Maver, *Glasgow*, p.170.

and the history of museums has generated the energy for this thesis and provided the central plank of its methodology.

To understand the relationship between developing museums in Glasgow and Calcutta, and aspirations civic elites had for their city, it is important to explicate the historical problem posed by the ‘second city of the Empire.’ Certainly, this rhetorical device was far more complex than scholars have previously supposed, as there was no set way of deciding which city could legitimately use it. In fact, commentators, politicians and travel writers used the term in a multitude of ways, depending on what best served their interests. This dispute was commented on, added to, and dictated by newspapers, civic buildings, museums, International Exhibitions, parliamentary debates, tourist books, and travel narratives. The ‘second city of the Empire’ was therefore everything to everybody and yet, the lexis remained loaded and competitive. Archibald Philip Rosebery, 5th Earl of Rosebery, British Liberal Prime Minister between 1894 and 1895, for example, referred to Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Bristol as ‘the second city of the Empire’, albeit in various ways, to flatter his different audiences, something which the *Linlithgowshire Gazette* referred to as Rosebery’s ‘enviable gift’ so that he could ‘always [...]strike the chord most in harmony with the tone of his audience’, and they left ‘pleased with him and very much satisfied with themselves.’⁴⁴ Despite the fluidity of its use, it still carried weight and could provoke a variety of responses. For one, Rosebery’s speech in Glasgow on 14th November 1894 to the Scottish Liberal Association and the Glasgow Liberal Association prompted a small outcry. During his lengthy oration, he asserted:

It is true you send four Liberal votes, but you also send three Tory votes, giving four against three. Glasgow, the second city of the Empire, sends one vote to support the Liberal party in the House of Commons...⁴⁵

In this period, second city rhetoric was regularly used to rouse Glaswegians into action, whether to donate money to improve their public museum, or, in this case, to vote differently. Simple enough, but Rosebery had irritated ‘one of the oldest inter-urban disputes’, which *St James’s Gazette* considered to be his ‘latest blunder’.⁴⁶ Accordingly, the *Aberdare Times* proclaimed that ‘London, of course, is absolutely the first without question or comment, but this point as to the second is a bone of contention that seems

⁴⁴ Bristol: ‘Lord Rosebery at Bristol’, *Morning Post*, 31 October 1894, p. 2; Edinburgh: ‘Lord Rosebery in Edinburgh’, *London Evening Standard*, 1 December 1894, p.3, Glasgow: ‘Lord Rosebery in Glasgow’, *Leeds Mercury*, 15 November 1894, p. 8; ‘Lord Rosebery on Municipal Progress’, *Linlithgowshire Gazette*, 29 January 1898, p.4.

⁴⁵ *Leeds Mercury*, 15 November 1894, p.8.

⁴⁶ ‘Our London Correspondent’, *The Aberdare Times*, 24 November 1894, p.2; H.C., ‘The Second City of the Empire’, *St James’s Gazette*, 16 November 1894, p.4.

always ready to be picked.’⁴⁷ Bombay, Liverpool and Manchester were all offered as alternative claimants. Another paper called Rosebery’s statement a ‘lavish outpouring of flattery on the city of Glasgow’, arguing that ‘Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester’ came before it, and, moreover, that ‘Glasgow is not even the capital of Scotland, and Edinburgh, which is the capital, is not likely to forget the insult.’⁴⁸ One asked exactly what Rosebery had meant by “second city”, because, ‘as far as size and population are concerned Glasgow is nowhere near second among the great cities of the Empire.’⁴⁹ Of these ‘great cities’, he claimed that ‘London is first, Bombay second and Liverpool third’, and again echoed that ‘Glasgow is not even the capital of Scotland.’⁵⁰ Of course, Bombay was no more the capital of India than Glasgow was of Scotland, yet Calcutta and Edinburgh remain curiously absent from this list, suggesting that a secondary capital did not necessarily equate to ‘second city of the Empire’. This discourse emphasises that different commentators contributed to the parameters of this unofficial title, but the actual criteria were never determined. Consequently, claims overlapped, allowing multiple cities to use the rhetorical title at the same time. Whilst Lamont contends that ‘such epithets, honorary in nature, can become arbitrary’, and asks ‘what good is having the title if four and five other cities still claim it?’, this thesis argues that for the purposes of analysis, this competitive element is highly revealing.⁵¹ Its appropriation by different commentators reflects how they understood the empire and their place within it, as well as the roles played by different cities, making the various ways it was applied to Glasgow and Calcutta all the more pertinent and illustrative of wider cultural dynamics. Calcutta, for example, entered this debate much later than Bombay, because commentators in Calcutta had different titles to articulate the city’s status.

Though the competitive inflection of the ‘second city of the Empire’ suggests an intensely hierarchical imperial structure, it is more useful to think about Glasgow and Calcutta as occupying a global, interactive space of imperial provincial cities. One expression of this diversity is to see cities located within a matrix of constantly shifting positions, on a spectrum of cultural and civic geographies, from metropole to secondary capital, and provincial centre to local city. Provincality is central to this thesis, because to be a second city necessarily meant provincial, and the development of museums and

⁴⁷ *The Aberdare Times*, 24 November 1894, p.2.

⁴⁸ The Umbrella Fiend, ‘Lord Rosebery’s Latest Blunder’, *The Western Mail* [Wales], 17 November 1894, p.4.

⁴⁹ *St James’s Gazette*, 16 November 1894, p. 4.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Craig Lamont, *The Cultural Memory of Georgian Glasgow* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021), p. 191.

collecting strategies in this period was shaped by wider debates about what a provincial city should be. ‘Provincial’ is used here as a Victorian descriptor of a city outside the metropole, rather than in a modern derogatory sense.⁵² Notably, within colonial India, the ‘Provinces’ were a specific administrative division.⁵³ In this context, Farina Mir highlights that there was a ‘disjuncture’ between ‘Calcutta and those who governed on its behalf at the provincial level.’⁵⁴ As a result, Calcutta was, increasingly, a national metropolitan centre and an imperial provincial one. A city could therefore be simultaneously local, provincial and imperial, which was reflected in second city rhetoric.

Harry Stopes importantly argues that for those in provincial centres, ‘transnational connections were horizontal, and the city existed in a network of connections in all directions, some stronger and some weaker, in a global space that shrank and stretched in uneven ways.’⁵⁵ He considers the global space to have been ‘something more complex’ in the nineteenth century than simply ‘graded hierarchies of centres and peripheries.’⁵⁶ This also accounts for the Empire being a shared project, within which cities were tied to each other in multifarious ways. Leaders in Edinburgh, for example, were happy for Glasgow to be the premier industrial city in Scotland, and even Britain, because the purported ‘second city of the Empire’ could never outstrip Edinburgh in political status and, in the interests of Scottish national prestige, it was beneficial for Glasgow to be imperially revered. In the grand scheme of Empire, however, Glasgow had to concede to Calcutta as the Metropolis of Empire, suggesting it was both a competitive and collaborative venture.

An understanding of the complex relationships between provincial cities, which does not overplay the role of the national centre, facilitates better comparisons across the British Empire and beyond. It also encourages analysis of the different people museums were designed to serve, and the ways in which governing bodies and curators adapted their practice to better fit the colonial or provincial context.

⁵² Giles Waterfield, *The People’s Galleries Art Museums and Exhibitions in Britain, 1800-1914*, (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 2016), p.5.

⁵³ Tirthankar Roy, ‘Geography or politics? Regional inequality in colonial India’, *European Review of Economic History* 18.3 (2014),

⁵⁴ Farina Mir, ‘Imperial policy, provincial practices: Colonial language policy in nineteenth-century India’, *The Indian Economic & Social History Review* 43 (2006), p.397.

⁵⁵ Harry Stopes, ‘From Manchester and Lille to the World: Nineteenth-century Provincial Cities Conceptualise their Place in the Global Order’ in *Re-Mapping Centre and Periphery. Asymmetrical Encounters in European and Global Contexts* ed. by Tessa Hauswedell, Axel Körner and Ulrich Tiedau (London: UCL Press, 2019), p. 104.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

Museums and Collecting

Whilst other factors were propagated at different times and in varying ways, public museums were established in all purported second cities, as well as many other urban centres, during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The proliferation of museums in urban landscapes suggests that civic leaders understood their importance for delivering their social, cultural and political agendas. Public museums beyond the metropole were largely stimulated by the 1845 Museums Act, which allowed Town Councils for cities with inhabitants numbering over 10,000 to levy a rate of up to one-halfpenny to provide its citizens with a public museum. This was followed by the Public Libraries and Museums Act of 1850 and supplanted by Acts in 1855 and 1866.⁵⁷ The quick succession of superseding Acts highlights that the emerging museum sector was highly dynamic. Notably, advocates for museums were motivated by social reform and, consequently, these institutions became embroiled in plans to cultivate a productive and moral society.

Groundwork for museum history studies was laid by Tony Bennet, who famously coined the ‘exhibitionary complex’, using principals explored by Michel Foucault, to describe the museum’s transition from ‘enclosed and private domains’ to ‘progressively more open and public arenas’ where ‘they formed vehicles for inscribing and broadcasting the messages of power [...] throughout society,’ in ways which changed modes of display and seeing.⁵⁸ His seminal text, *The Birth of the Museum* provides a useful vantage point for this period of museum-making, in which the modern museum emerged as a necessarily didactic space.⁵⁹ Following on from Bennett, Kate Hill brings focus to the specific context of the provincial museum, which she argues is ‘distinct from other forms of museum’.⁶⁰ She raises important questions about what caused the municipal museum to develop in towns at this time, indeed, unpacking these motivations has been a core concern of this thesis. By framing the ‘free, rate-supported museum’ as a ‘model’ which was adopted in an increasing number of towns and cities across the second half of the nineteenth century, Hill highlights that these new spaces were appealing for those who wished to disseminate particular ideas about themselves, the urban environment, and the world at large.⁶¹ Though

⁵⁷ David Chadwick, *Free Public Libraries & Museums: their usefulness in the promotion of the education of the working classes and the improvement of their social position, as compared with the libraries or Sunday schools, and of mechanics and other institutions* (London: Shaw & Sons, 1857), p. 7.

⁵⁸ Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), pp.59-88.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Kate Hill, *Culture and Class in the English Public Museums, 1850 – 1914* (London: Routledge, 2016), p.145.

⁶¹ Ibid., p.36.

her research is principally concerned with English public museums, her findings on their internal mechanics – their modes of systematic collecting and increasing professionalization, for example, can be explored in relation to those outside it. Hill describes ‘museums as a communication medium’, which leads directly into my focus on the civic, national, and imperial messaging of the public museums established in Glasgow and Calcutta, and the way that certain collecting practices were implicated in wider aspirations to promote the status of the city, nation and the Empire.⁶²

Taking this understanding of the modern museum, which emerged in the nineteenth century, as a necessarily didactic space, utilised for delivering an array of civic, national and imperial messages, this thesis brings debates about early museum development into conversation with urban development through the ‘second city of the Empire’ question. Museums reflected both the economic and manufacturing position of the city, and the willingness of citizens to serve the progression of cultural interests in their society. As museums became state and civic run affairs, they were ‘increasingly central to the debate about all things cultural.’⁶³ In this context, public museums were key sites for negotiating the cultural status of a city, particularly in cities like Glasgow and Calcutta, which were not equipped with the cultural assets of other more historically important cities like Edinburgh or Dublin. In this way, museums offered a tangible means for negotiating urban space through a series of architectural, curatorial, and collecting decisions.

Whilst nineteenth-century museums, both national and imperial, have received historical attention, more analysis is required to understand the role played by museums in delivering an imperial agenda at the civic level, cultivating local, national and imperial identities, and promoting its location, and, therefore, second city status.⁶⁴ Glasgow and Calcutta’s curators were influenced by individual whims, scholarly, political and commercial interests, and personal relationships, much of which was often collaborative. The administrative bodies responsible for the museum, whether state or municipal, had their own objectives for making changes, which were often inflected with competition with other important urban centres. MacKenzie’s conception that museums were, in a deliberate

⁶² Ibid., p.144.

⁶³ Rosemary Flanders, ‘Early museums and nineteenth-century media’ in *Museum, Media, Message*, ed. by Eilean Hooper-Greenhill (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 72.

⁶⁴ For example: Tim Barringer and Tom Flynn, (eds.), *Colonialism and the Object: Empire, Material Culture and the Museum* (London: Routledge, 1998); John M. Mackenzie, *Museums and Empire, Natural history, human cultures and colonial identities* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); Sarah Longair and John McAleer, (eds), *Curating Empire: Museums and The British Imperial Experience*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012); Partha Mitter, *Much Maligned Monsters, A History of European Reactions to Indian Art* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Waterfield, *The People’s Galleries*.

and instrumentalised sense, ‘tools of empire’, which were used to expand the imperial project has had a formative effect on the study of imperial museums.⁶⁵ Drawing Glasgow as an ‘imperial city’ into this corpus of imperial museums and analysing the motivations behind its City Industrial Museum has revealed how important attempts to emulate successes in other cities were to establishing a public museum in Glasgow.⁶⁶ From there, the museum project was a civic one which was closely linked to parks.⁶⁷ Museums were thus tools of civic culture which were considered a marker of a municipality’s success. In Calcutta, arguments were made that, as a colonial capital, it was a duty of the government to provide the city with a public museum. This thesis argues that museums were not a singular coordinated project but instead, led in uneven ways by individual municipalities.

Sarah Longair argues for the centrality of the Museum in the ‘colonial landscape’, because these ‘monumental edifices [...] simultaneously embodied the imperial mission and housed collections that sought to order and exhibit colonial knowledge.’⁶⁸ Tapati Guha-Thakurta, looks at ‘the specific contours of this landscape in India’, primarily focusing on the ‘process of the subtle transmutation of the colonial into a national authority.’⁶⁹ Through her wide ranging study, she argues for ‘the centrality of the country’s archaeological and art historical resources in the shaping of imperial command and custodianship.’⁷⁰ Her work keenly highlights Calcutta’s central role in delivering imperial policy, whilst simultaneously being asserted as a national capital.

Understanding the motivations for establishing specific museums both in Britain and its colonies is vital to unpacking the imperial project, as well as how people experienced empire in Glasgow and Calcutta. Longair and John McAleer’s edited volume, *Curating Empire*, highlights the paucity of studies on the creation of imperial institutions and, in particular, the extent to which the wide range of museums within the British Empire ‘relate to the empire’s policies and practices.’⁷¹ This sits within a wider ‘early

⁶⁵ Mackenzie, *Museums and Empire*, pp.7-8, this derives from Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tentacles of Progress, Technology Transfer in the Age of Imperialism, 1850-1940* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

⁶⁶ Cannadine, *Ornamentalism*, p.183; John M. MacKenzie, *The British Empire through buildings, Structure, function and meaning* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020), p.3.

⁶⁷ Irene Maver, ‘Glasgow’s public parks and the community, 1850-1914: a case study in Scottish civic interventionism’, *Urban History* 25.3 (1998), pp. 323-347.

⁶⁸ Sarah Longair, “Projections of Empire: The Architecture of Colonial Museums in East Africa,” in *The MacKenzie Moment and Imperial History*, ed. by Stephanie Barczewski and Martin Far (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), p.97.

⁶⁹ Tapati Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments, Objects, Histories* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), pp. xviii - xix.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Longair and McAleer, *Curating Empire*, p. 3.

twenty-first century intellectual trend’ which has moved ‘away from the idea that there existed an overarching, co-ordinated imperial project.’⁷² In response to Longair and McAleer’s volume, scholars have attempted ‘more nuanced accounts of individual institutions in their specific historical contexts.’⁷³ Alice Stevenson, for example, has addressed the ‘cultural juxtapositions around displaced Egyptian finds that were extracted from one imperial context, managed through the empire’s centre and transplanted into colonial institutions.’⁷⁴ Throughout her study, she focusses on the specifics of individual institutions across the British Empire. Certainly, research for this thesis has revealed that the nineteenth-century museum project was actually a series of individual efforts which were messy, uneven, and far from organised. Though aspirations amongst professionals were increasingly angled towards creating ordered, systematic and complete collections, this was usually an ideal rather than a reality.

What was contained within Glasgow and Calcutta’s museums was arguably integral to how both the museum and the city were perceived. Collecting processes and the resulting collections have been a core concern of this thesis. In particular, it asks how the national and imperial status of these very different second cities informed the types of collecting processes available to curators, and the types of collection they could create. Through hybridised systems of public funding and private donations, the collections in Glasgow and Calcutta offer insight into how the museum project became embroiled in civic, national and imperial aspirations. This follows MacKenzie’s argument that ‘museums developed a voracious hunger for worldwide collections, which would establish their international status and offer evidence for the cultural relativities that justified their existence.’⁷⁵ Many scholars have chosen to focus on the material elements of museum collections. Maya Jasanoff argues that:

Objects, like people, were moved and classified by imperial expansion. Unlike people, many objects survive. In public and private collections in Britain and its former colonies, dislocated objects continue to present tangible evidence of the circuits of exchange that linked Europe and empire, “centre” and “periphery.”⁷⁶

Whilst my focus has centred on collecting processes rather than individual objects, these ideas of dislocation and cultural exchange have been key to understanding the ongoing

⁷² Alice Stevenson, ‘International, Colonial and Transnational Connections (1880 – 1950)’, in *Scattered Finds, Archaeology, Egyptology and Museums* (Open Access PDF: UCL Press, 2019), p.116.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Mackenzie, *Museums*, p.9.

⁷⁶ Maya Jasanoff, ‘Collectors of Empire: Objects, Conquests and Imperial Self-Fashioning’, *Past and Present* 184 (2004), p.111.

development of public collections in Glasgow and Calcutta. This builds on the huge variety of responses to collecting in different imperial contexts.⁷⁷

Viewed in the wider framing of empire and city politics, both Calcutta's Imperial Museum and Glasgow's City Industrial Museum have hitherto been understudied and certainly not compared or linked to each city's broader imperial status. As Lara Kriegel articulates, museum 'edifices provide living tributes to the nineteenth-century projects of liberal reform, urban government, and imperial engagement.'⁷⁸ The public museums in Glasgow and Calcutta were physical embodiments of the priorities of the administrations responsible for them. Looking at the peculiarities of how Calcutta and Glasgow's public museums emerged underlines the need to reflect on the significance of different imperial contexts. Indeed, as Longair and McAleer argue, 'museums responded to their locations, perceived audiences and the agency of individual collectors in order to mediate an engagement with non-European spaces, peoples and cultures.'⁷⁹ In the context of second cities, Glasgow and Calcutta were increasingly distinguished by the quality of their cultural institutions, which indicated a developed municipal structure and an educated citizenship.

Longair and McAleer's work has fundamentally shaped my approach to this work. Whilst focusing on the unique scenarios posed by Glasgow and Calcutta, this thesis aims to balance the specifics of the local and individual with an understanding that these were influenced by wider developments within museums, and thus problematise the hyperlocal approach.

Methodology and Source Material

Postcolonial approaches have obviously and necessarily influenced my approach to this project. Though a succession of work has followed, Hall's introduction to 'thinking the postcolonial, thinking the empire', has provided a useful frame for this thesis.⁸⁰ Firstly, as she synthesises, 'Colonialism made both colonizers and colonized, and postcolonial forms of analysis attempt to understand that process.'⁸¹ This type of analysis is designed to

⁷⁷ See Maia Wellington Gahtan and Eva-Maria Troelenberg, (eds), *Collecting and Empires. An Historical and Global Perspective* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2019).

⁷⁸ Lara Kriegel, 'After the Exhibitionary Complex: Museum Histories and the Future of the Victorian Past', *Victorian Studies* 48:4 (2006), 681.

⁷⁹ McAleer and Longair, *Curating Empire*, p.4.

⁸⁰ Hall, *Cultures of empire*, pp. 1 – 33.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.5.

‘highlight the centrality of colonial relations to patterns of global politics.’⁸² Examining Glasgow and Calcutta through the lens of the ‘second city of the Empire’ has meant that all relationships, whether between government bodies or individual curators, have been viewed with a colonial inflection.

Secondly, ‘to decolonize representation means to decolonize the cultures through which those systems of representation were produced’.⁸³ Nicholas Dirks has called colonialism ‘a cultural project of control’, whereby ‘colonial knowledge both enabled colonial conquest and was produced by it’, which is particularly relevant when looking at the Imperial Museum as a means of creating ‘colonial knowledge.’⁸⁴ For this reason, I have chosen to foreground archival material as much as possible, to recreate historical engagements to illustrate complex contemporary reactions to empire. As MacKenzie rightly notes, ‘the cultural history of empire in its diverse and complex patterns has the capacity to illuminate all other aspects of imperial studies.’⁸⁵ A cultural response to imperialism necessitates a multitude of disciplinary sensitivities and, whilst centring on my training in history, I have actively drawn on approaches from art history, geography, literature, museum and urban studies.

Thirdly, the city case study approach used in this thesis is supported by *Cultures and Empire*. Glasgow and Calcutta have, broadly speaking, been case study examples of competing second cities of the Empire, but within them have been the City Industrial Museum and Imperial Museum, the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and the Victoria Memorial Hall. This thesis is comprised of numerous case studies of different scales which have arisen through points of contact between second city rhetoric and museum development. Using the approach advocated by Longair and McAleer, this thesis analyses museums and their development within their original contexts through close reference to archival material, with an aim to providing a more sophisticated understanding of how museums emerged in the British Empire.⁸⁶

Source material has been mined from archives in Britain and India, most notably the India Office papers at the British Library, Glasgow Museums, the National Archives of India, and the West Bengal State Archives. These archives naturally privilege some voices over others, particularly within the records for the period in question. Ghosh seeks to

⁸² Ibid. p.3.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 10.

⁸⁴ Nicholas B. Dirks, (ed.), *Colonialism and Culture* (Ann Arbor MI: University of Michigan Press, 1992), pp. 2-3.

⁸⁵ MacKenzie, *The British Empire through buildings*, pp.3-4.

⁸⁶ Longair and McAleer, *Curating Empire*, p.5.

redress such imbalances and over reliance on the colonial archive by looking ‘through the lens of the city’s indigenous population’, which can ‘offer competing ideas and self-images.’⁸⁷ Whilst it is certainly highly desirable to move beyond the colonial archive, without the vital linguistic skills it has been impossible to fill this thesis equally with Indian and European voices. It is, however, important to reflect on how different my research would have been had my linguistic skills stretched beyond English source material. Active resistance to the imperial nature of museums may have been drawn more closely to the surface, different material may even have highlighted different ways the ‘second city of the Empire’ was appropriated by groups beyond the elites. Difficulty accessing non-elite voices is prevalent in Glasgow too, even beyond the colonial setting. Consequently, the focus has been on the projection of imperial ideologies by those with a vested interest in promoting the Empire both in Britain and in the colonies.

Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper brought focus to the restraints placed on the researcher attempting to ‘analyse the colonial situation’ by the colonial archive.⁸⁸ Furthermore, that the way the colonial archive was organised actually created classifications and categories between Indian people subject to British rule.⁸⁹ These archives, particularly the State Archive of West Bengal and the National Archives of India are, of course, still dictated by the colonial organisation of knowledge. Subversion of these established colonial archives has been achieved, albeit minimally, through bringing together material from two disparate corners of the Empire.

Beyond the organisation of the archive, control over who can access the records can, in my experience, be strictly guarded too. Obtaining a research visa for my trip to India was lengthy, challenging, and yet entirely necessary. State approval of my project was required before I was able to proceed. I had to show evidence that I was financially supported by the Leverhulme Trust and academically supported by the University of Glasgow, and the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences in Kolkata. On numerous visits to the Glasgow visa office, I saw countless people progress through tourist visas, with nothing but the aggravation of a long queue. In my case, the wheels only began to turn when I asked my local MP to become involved. Critically, I have no doubts that the process is equally if not more painful for Indian researchers attempting to enter the UK.

⁸⁷ Ghosh, *Claiming the City*, p.2.

⁸⁸ Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, ‘Between Metropole and Colony, Rethinking a Research Agenda’ in *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* ed. by Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1997), p. 4.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Once in India, however, my research visa made a difference. It meant that once I had shown all my documentation – letters of introduction, affiliations, a notarised letter from the British Deputy Commission and scans of my passport, and then filled in the paperwork, I was able to access most of the materials I needed. When in the archive, entry in and out of the reading rooms required a signature, passport numbers and reading cards. Access to the Wi-Fi was often impossible, sometimes intermittent and, on one occasion, procured through a process better suited to a spy novella. All this added to my feeling that in India, the archive is safeguarded to prevent unregulated eyes accessing the records. Many archivists, librarians, and historians were immensely helpful, they gave me their time, their expertise, and usually tea. The tea may seem immaterial but, actually, it points to one of the stark differences between researching in India and in the UK. This critical awareness of the politics of the archive, as opposed to an assumption about the unproblematic nature of its contents and research findings, reflects the importance of post-colonial methods in all aspects of historical investigation.

Fortunately, digital databases have been available throughout, even during the course of 2020 when nothing else was, which has made them invaluable for the furtherance of this project. Moreover, the rapid digitisation of newspapers has afforded research techniques which would be inconceivable otherwise. As Amelia Bonea notes, newspaper reports are ‘an indispensable historical resource for scholars of colonial South Asia.’⁹⁰ It would have been entirely impossible to fully survey the use of the ‘second city of the Empire’ without access to digital, word-searchable databases. Perhaps this is why most scholars have neglected to critically evaluate this nebulous rhetoric before. Using these newspaper articles, as well as other material outlined in the following chapter, I have identified key lexical choices surrounding descriptions of cities claimed as the second city, and then used these examples to look for less overt projections of second city status in other texts. Often, a commentator will refer to Glasgow’s population, municipal administration, full spectrum economy, and its noteworthy civic culture, without necessarily using the precise term ‘the second city of the Empire.’ Yet, these commentaries no doubt influenced the parameters of second city status. The criterion laid out here has therefore been created to define second city sentiment in broad terms, which aims to include rather than exclude material that pertains to the status of the city.

⁹⁰ Amelia Bonea, *The News of Empire: Telegraphy, Journalism, and the Politics of Reporting in Colonial India, c. 1830 – 1900*. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2016), 2.

Chapter Outline

The first two chapters provide an introductory grounding to second city rhetoric across the whole period, followed by a second section composed of four chapters which adopt a chronological approach. Chapter One offers a definition of the ‘second city of the Empire’ based on the four criteria suggested above; population, administrative profile, full spectrum economy, and a noteworthy civic culture. It reveals the different ways Glasgow and Calcutta related to other cities, and how this rhetorical phrase was used to differentiate between forms of imperial provincial status, including secondary capitals and commercial centres. Chapter Two focuses more specifically on how civic infrastructure became ingrained in comparisons between cities. Good quality cultural institutions both reflected and were supposed to generate an engaged and enlightened citizenship and therefore became entwined with notions of civic pride and identity.⁹¹ That said, this chapter also illustrates one of the core problems with second city rhetoric, namely, that these large, prosperous settlements were rife with poverty, poor housing conditions, and other blights of industry. Museums therefore posed opportunities for propagating the successes of either the colonial or municipal administration, and, in some cases, regulating perceived problematic social behaviour. Building on this, Chapter Three analyses the motivations for establishing public museums at similar times in both cities; the first, the Imperial Museum in Calcutta, and the second the City Industrial Museum in Glasgow. It examines how colonial and civic elites used the status of their city to justify public expenditure on a museum. What was considered worthy of the colonial capital in India differed from what was fitting of a British industrial city. Alongside the distinct nucleus collections, the new museum space became entwined with each city’s navigation of the imperial space. Chapter Four unpacks the vital tension between the dual forces of civic competition and professional collaboration which drove museum development during the 1880s. It investigates the respective positions of Glasgow and Calcutta’s museums within the wider imperial provincial web of institutions, which demonstrates that some of their connections were stronger and some weaker. Chapter Five employs two case studies – firstly, Calcutta’s 1883 International Exhibition, secondly, Glasgow’s 1888 International Exhibition of Industry, Science and Art – to showcase heightened occasions when the imperial status of the city, its museum, and collection development converged. Lastly, Chapter Six moves on to two new cultural institutions, which became flagships of their respective cities – Glasgow’s Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, and Calcutta’s

⁹¹ Flanders, ‘Early museums’, p. 72.

Victoria Memorial Hall. Importantly, these institutions get to the root of the paradoxical tension within the ‘second city of the Empire’, which centred on both confidence and anxiety in the imperial project, and each city’s place within it. It argues that by the turn of the next century, Glasgow’s place in the empire was forged on the city’s contribution to modernity, while Calcutta’s was centred on its past, yet both were closely tied to assertions of the ‘second city of the Empire.’

To conclude this thesis, I reflect on the heightened need for research which actively engages with the contemporary resonances of the post-colonial museum. How this research might be used by museum professionals has been a guiding thought throughout. Whilst museums have been viewed through the prism of establishing and developing imperial rule, it is vital to explore the individual motivations and objectives behind specific museums and their collections if we wish to understand those which remain in our cities today. Especially, ‘if we consider the experience of colonialism not as a concluded chapter in global history, but as an intrinsic and indelible part of the contemporary world.’⁹² Never has this arguably been more true than in 2020, when the Black Lives Matter movement asked us why we continue to commemorate individuals who benefited from, and actively perpetrated, the systematic exploitation of others. Museums are key spaces for negotiating these debates, which centre not only on how we commemorate the past, but who we are as individuals, and, as a society. Undoubtedly, ‘none of these stories is in the museum by accident.’⁹³

Increasingly, ‘the practical application of decolonial theory raises questions that permeate into all levels of museum practice.’⁹⁴ Rachel Minott asks ‘to what extent current practices perpetuate colonial thinking and glorify the history of the British Empire, despite the pain the Empire caused, and continues to cause, to many globally.’⁹⁵ In many cases, these institutions remain the most Victorian of institutions, not just architecturally, but in terms of their collections and how they are organised. Again, much like the colonial archive described by Stoler and Cooper, Victorian museums and their collections remain entrenched in a bygone age. In the Indian context, Saloni Mathur and Kavita Singh have

⁹² Alessandra De Angelis, Celeste Ianniciello, Mariangela Orabona and Michaela Quadraro, ‘Introduction: Disruptive Encounters – Museums, Arts and Postcoloniality’ in *The Postcolonial Museum: The Arts of Memory and the Pressures of History*, ed. by Iain Chambers, Alessandra De Angelis, Celeste Ianniciello, and Mariangela Orabona (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2014).

⁹³ Alice Proctor, *The Whole Picture, The colonial story of the art in our museum & why we need to talk about it* (London: Cassell, 2020), p.10.

⁹⁴ Rachael Minott, ‘The Past is Now’, *Third Text* 33 (2019), pp. 560 – 574.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.561.

identified the need to ‘deconstruct such a master-narrative through a rigorous investigation of a vast range of museum discourses and practices on the subcontinent.’⁹⁶

What is revealed is only the beginning of what second city rhetoric can tell us, but, critically, this thesis starts to expose the hybridised processes of competition and collaboration, public and private enterprise and, civic and colonial confidence and defensiveness, which characterised the development of Glasgow and Calcutta as imperial cities, as well as their public museums. Much like the imperial project, which MacKenzie describes as a ‘highly complex and messy affair’, these processes were often contradictory. Yet, drawing together evidence through the second city lens reveals parallels which enhance our understanding of empire.⁹⁷

Chapter One - Glasgow and Calcutta: Claiming the ‘Second City of the Empire?’, c. 1857 - 1920.

As the Introduction has argued, the ‘second city of the Empire’ was an unstable rhetorical form, which meant it was applied and challenged in multifarious ways to different cities across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Whilst these claims varied significantly, they were largely clustered around four main areas, namely, population, its social makeup and geographical spread: the administrative role of the city – whether the capital of India or a civic municipality, its commerce and industry, and the need to develop civic cultural infrastructure. Using travel narratives, tourist guides, newspaper reports and parliamentary debates, this chapter elucidates what contemporaries understood the ‘second city of the Empire’ to be, and provides a much needed definition for future studies. Certainly, the epithet was used by those wishing to promote a city’s interests but, as evidence presented here shows, it infiltrated public perceptions of both cities more widely. This is far clearer in Glasgow’s case for two reasons, firstly, because of the campaign by civic leaders to connect the city to the title through ‘plans for urban regeneration’, and secondly, the source material which has been accessible provides less thorough coverage of Calcutta.⁹⁸

Methodologically, it rests on a survey of the term ‘second city of the Empire’ across multiple databases and source types for the period covering 1857 to 1901, and,

⁹⁶ Saloni Mathur and Kavita Singh, *No touching, no spitting, no praying: The Museum in South Asia* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2015), p.4.

⁹⁷ MacKenzie, *The British Empire through buildings*, p.3.

⁹⁸ Maver, *Glasgow*, p.170.

where relevant, into the twentieth century.⁹⁹ This survey is by no means exhaustive, and only a small fraction of the material elicited has been included, which testifies to the scale of the historical archive. Even so, there are some clear results, Glasgow for example, was the city most closely tied to the epithet in the House of Commons, but predominantly the issue was discussed in newspapers.¹⁰⁰ Importantly, the ways different cities claimed this title shifted over time to reflect changes in the city's characteristics, as well as to respond to tactics employed elsewhere. By the close of the nineteenth and opening of the twentieth century, Calcutta, too, was increasingly framed as the 'second city of the Empire' in both official and public spaces. Drawing on the themes outlined in the Introduction, this chapter explores the influence of civic confidence and defensiveness on the ways Glasgow and Calcutta related to other cities, and how this rhetorical phrase was used to differentiate between forms of imperial provincial status, including secondary capitals and commercial centres.

The different channels used to propagate second city rhetoric

To establish why, where and how second city discourse developed, the different channels through which it was disseminated will be taken in turn, looking firstly at newspapers and journalists, followed by politicians in the Houses of Parliament, and lastly travel literature. Newspapers, in this sense, were the most dominant vehicle for circulating ideas about the 'second city of the Empire', and facilitating public debate. Letters to the Editor, for example, were an important means for individuals to express their opinions, and thus provide rich source material for analysing the second city and museum contexts. Proprietors and journalists felt it was important for these discussions to reach a large audience, particularly as readership in Britain and across the Empire was expanding rapidly at this time. Many newspapers had overt political and social agendas, so engaging the recently enfranchised was vital.¹⁰¹ Additionally, new technologies, such as the telegraph cable, had a significant impact on the spread of news in colonial India.¹⁰² No

⁹⁹ Databases used include; *British Library Newspapers*, the *British Newspaper Archive*, *Historic Hansard*, *ProQuest*.

¹⁰⁰ See appendix I

¹⁰¹ *Representation of the People (Scotland) Act 1868* (c.48, 31 and 32 Vict); *Representation of the People Act 1884* (c. 3, Vic. 48 and 49).

¹⁰² Bonea, *The News of Empire*, p.2.

longer hampered by physical distance, the time lapse between an event and its reporting shrank considerably.

The nuances of language indicated by the Rosebery example cited in the Introduction, suggests that ‘second city of the Empire’ was deliberately used by some and not by others. Across the channels, individuals and their companies had vested interests in fostering certain local, national and imperial identities, which were linked to differing needs to popularise imperialism.¹⁰³ Projecting a vision of a city as the ‘second in the Empire’ met commercial objectives by attracting investment to the city, the best example being the International Exhibitions, which will be discussed in Chapter Five. Consequently, there was significant crossover between the channels; civic leaders evoked second city rhetoric in the newspapers, and politicians, as well as tourists, wrote travel narratives.

Today, new technologies continue to expand the reach of these historic newspapers. The *British Newspaper Archive*, *National Library of Wales Newspapers*, and the National Library of Australia’s *Trove*, have enabled access to a huge variety of digitised newspapers, including a small, but increasing range of Anglo-Indian examples, notably Bengal’s *Englishman’s Overland Mail* and *Friend of India and Statesman*, and Bombay’s *The Times of India*.¹⁰⁴ While Victorian journalists would have found it inconceivable that such a survey could be done, they knowingly used the phrase ‘second city of the Empire’, and therefore contributed to its parameters. Within the *British Newspaper Archive* alone, a search for “second city of the Empire” between 1850 and 1899, elicited 4737 results, distributed as follows:¹⁰⁵

Table 1.1 – Search results for “second city of the Empire” between 1850 and 1899 in the British Newspaper Archive

Decade	Number of results
1850 – 1859	502
1860 – 1869	708
1870 – 1879	781
1880 – 1889	1,526
1890 – 1899	1,220

¹⁰³ Simon J. Potter, *News and the British World, The emergence of an imperial press system, 1876 – 1922* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), p.87.

¹⁰⁴ Formerly *The Bombay Times and Journal of Commerce* between 1838 and 1861,

¹⁰⁵ Survey conducted 3rd August 2020.

Expectedly, there is a sharp increase in the 1880s, illustrative of imperialism being ‘a core ideology in British society between the 1880s and the 1950s’, which was expressed through popular culture.¹⁰⁶ Debates about status within the empire were important because it was discovered, as MacKenzie notes, ‘that imperial patriotism was also profitable.’¹⁰⁷ Of the newspapers searched, the *Glasgow Herald*, perhaps unsurprisingly, produced the most results, followed by the *Glasgow Evening Post*, *North British Daily Mail*, *Liverpool Mercury*, and *Freeman’s Journal*. Certainly, 4737 results across such a broad range of newspapers across a long time span is not vitally large, but it is not insubstantial either, and, as further newspapers are digitised, this number will only increase. As the list of newspapers already suggests, the largest number of reports were published in Glasgow itself, interestingly followed in descending order by Dublin, London, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Dundee, Manchester, and Aberdeen. The limited coverage of Indian newspapers partly explains why Calcutta and Bombay are not in this list. Importantly, these results are from just one newspaper database and, whilst *Trove* produced far fewer results, amounting to 157 reports from the same period, and *Welsh Newspapers* only 66, these databases contain fewer publications. Not all of these results relate to the British Empire, indeed, a kaleidoscope of papers refer to the second city of the Turkish or French Empires.¹⁰⁸ There is also repetition within the database because many articles were reprinted in several newspapers. While there are causes for caution with this method, there is a lot to recommend it to scholars wishing to conduct a broad study of the different circumstances when such an expression was used. Indeed, newspapers provide necessarily complicated source material because of the individual, local, national and imperial allegiances which directed their publication. It is, however, the understanding that these editorial decisions dictated whether or not, or else how, a city was referred to as second in the empire, that make newspaper reports indispensable to this study. Letters to the editor, in particular, stress that articles can provide a highly individualised response, which may not wholly align with the newspaper as a whole. By reflecting on the cities and countries these reports were published in, I highlight that this rhetoric was part of wider social, economic and political objectives to inform and persuade audiences on local, national, and imperial issues.

¹⁰⁶ MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire*, p.11.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p.3.

¹⁰⁸ For example: ‘Easter Notes’, *York Herald*, 21 January 1878, p.5; ‘Our London Correspondent’, *Framlingham Weekly News*, 22 December 1877, p.2; ‘France. Theatrical Riot at Lyons’, *London Daily News*, 5 September 1865, pp.4-5.

Who was reading these reports and refracting second city rhetoric is obviously of interest, but this can be difficult to discern. In India, the focal audience for English language newspapers was ‘a relatively small group of Anglo-Indian merchants, soldiers, administrators, and other civilians resident in the subcontinent’, and increasingly, a ‘group of English-educated Indians, representing colonial South Asia’s emerging middle class.’¹⁰⁹ As Bonea identifies, these were two hugely different groups – one the colonial elite, the other a group which may benefit from colonialism but were not at its centre. Across India, civic competition was incited by similar, largely European, individuals resident in different cities and circulated through the press as their core method of communication. Of the copies of the *Englishman’s Overland Mail* available digitally, the ‘second city of the Empire’ is only used four times between 1850 and 1899.¹¹⁰ In these instances, the title is deployed rather sarcastically to cast derision on claims made by Bombay.¹¹¹ By contrast, the *Times of India* printed the epithet twenty six times and the *Bombay Gazette* five times between 1850 and 1899. However, when compared to the 414 times it was used by the *Glasgow Herald* across the epoch, this number pales into relative insignificance.¹¹² As Section Four will show, claims made by Bombay elites were usually directed towards differentiating their city’s role from that of the secondary capital, Calcutta. Following the turn of the century, the *Englishman’s Overland Mail* changed tack, and started overtly projecting Calcutta as the ‘second city of the Empire.’¹¹³

Whilst the epithet littered newspaper reports across the period, it was used infrequently in the House of Commons and only twice in the House of Lords, potentially because it was a slippery and undecided term, which could not be conclusively allocated to a city. In 1885, during discussions centred on granting additional MPs for Glasgow, Sir Charles Cameron (1841-1924), Liberal MP for the city, stated that the House had heard ‘a good deal about the laudable and natural ambition’ held by Glasgow to ‘rank as the second

¹⁰⁹ Bonea, *The News of Empire*, 2.

¹¹⁰ First made available digitally in *British Newspaper Archive* in March 2020.

¹¹¹ ‘The second city in the Empire’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 1 February 1871, p.3.; ‘Bombay. From our special correspondent’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 8 November 1872, pp.3-4; ‘Administrative Battalion Presidency Volunteers’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 24 March 1897, p.17.

¹¹² Search for “second city of the empire” in *British Newspaper Archive* <<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/search/results/1850-01-01/1899-12-31?basicsearch=%22second%20city%20of%20the%20empire%22&phrasesearch=second%20city%20of%20the%20empire&exactsearch=false&place=glasgow%2c%20lanarkshire%2c%20scotland&retrievecountrycounts=false&mostspecificlocation=glasgow%2c%20lanarkshire%2c%20scotland&newspaper=title=glasgow%2bherald>> [accessed 27 April 2021]

¹¹³ ‘Calcutta Trades Association’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 19 February 1903, p.11; ‘Kali and Calcutta’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 26 February 1903, p.3; ‘Dismal Calcutta’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 9 April 1903, p.9; ‘A Valuable Suggestion’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 24 November 1904, p.2; ‘Bengal’s Duty’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 23 August 1918, p.1.

city of the Empire', but that he would not argue 'the case to the Committee on sentimental grounds.'¹¹⁴ This suggests that some considered second city rhetoric to offer a romanticised version of the city, which spoke more to Glaswegian sensibilities than to something tangible. In this instance, such rhetoric was centred on local municipal partisanship which attested to the moral fibre of distinct bodies of citizens, more than imperial magnificence. Cameron was also the owner and editor of the *North British Daily Mail* which had been established by his father in 1847, making it Glasgow's first daily newspaper, highlighting the crossover between political and commercial ventures. Incidentally, the paper made 184 references to the 'second city of the Empire' across the fifty-year period, some of which were highly impassioned in favour of its native city.

At a national level, the Hansard record refers to seven cities as the 'second city of the Empire' – Glasgow, Calcutta, Birmingham, Bombay, Dublin, Liverpool and Manchester, between 1845 and 1940.¹¹⁵ Often, Members of Parliament attempted to promote the wider interests of the city they represented by asserting its claim. In this space, it was Glasgow, and not its British or Irish competitors which was overwhelmingly referred to as the 'second city of the Empire'. With no Indian MPs present on behalf of Calcutta or Bombay, this sample is naturally biased toward Glasgow. Had the criteria for the title been concrete, however, it may have been officially awarded in a setting like the Commons. Of the forty-six occasions when the phrase 'second city of the Empire' was used, Glasgow was its obvious claimant thirty-two times. Calcutta, by contrast, was referred to as the second city six times, and these were all after 1900. Birmingham and Bombay were named twice, and Manchester and Liverpool once each. It was not until the 1870s that claims were made for more than one city within the decade, and references remained low, amounting to only three or four times per decade until 1910. Throughout this decade, five instances named Glasgow, Calcutta, Liverpool, and Birmingham, as the second city, by the 1930s, this had risen to sixteen, but these were divided fifteen to one in favour of Glasgow. As MacKenzie argues, this competition speaks to 'the nature of imperial power', which these findings show, fluctuated significantly over time, both within individual urban centres and the ways they related to each other.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ House of Commons, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates: The Official Report* (23 March 1885, vol.296, cols. 294-347) [Online] < <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1885/mar/23/boroughs-to-have-additional-members> > [accessed 27 April 2021]

¹¹⁵ See Appendix I.

¹¹⁶ MacKenzie, "'The Second city of the Empire'", p. 216.

Claims made by politicians can largely be filtered into two camps, the first promoting the city's assets, and the second deployed as a persuasion tactic to increase financial or political provision. Aspirations for political power were therefore linked to assertions of the 'second city of the Empire' made by the city's political elite. Though there were attempts to rebut claims made by MPs, the infrequency of these assertions suggests that the Commons was not the primary space where the issue was debated. Whilst it was not used frequently, it was used in numerous debates by different individuals. This epithet thus offers a distinct portal into records that shed light on the way Glasgow and Calcutta were encapsulated within the administrative framework of the British Empire, but, principally, it should be seen as a civic rather than an explicitly political issue.

Similarly, travel narratives were not the principal arena for developing second city discourse. Yet such material provides insight into the ways Glasgow and Calcutta were described, which contributed to the parameters of the 'second city of the Empire'. Significantly, those that did not refer to Glasgow as the second city, when the city was most closely connected to the title, did so deliberately. In contrast to press reporting at this time, which was largely anonymous – the opinions being those of the newspaper rather than individuals, travel narratives presented distinctly personal responses. Volumes selected for this study derive from the 1870s to early 1900s, and incorporate male and female voices, as well as Indian and Britons from different personal backgrounds. Looking at examples describing Calcutta from across the period: John Matheson's *England to Delhi, a Narrative of Indian Travel* (1870), Isabel Burton, *AEI, Arabia, Egypt, India: narrative of travel* (1879), John Ure, *A Tour Round the World* (1885), Edwin Arnold's *India Revisited* (1886), John Murdoch, *Pictorial Tour round India* (1890), Edmund Stirling, *A Descriptive Reading on Calcutta and Bombay* (1891), George Forrest, *Cities of India* (1903), Sir Sidney Low's *A Vision of India* (1907), has revealed that only Low referred to the 'second city of the Empire,' although he mentions both Bombay and Calcutta's claims, leaning in favour of the latter.¹¹⁷ Problematically, as Simon Cooke argues, regardless of how objective a travel writer claims to be, the text 'is always to some degree, consciously or not, a self-portrait – a record of a subjective individual or cultural point of view.'¹¹⁸ Thus who wrote the narrative and for whom dictated how they would frame the city they were appraising. Ure, the former Lord Provost of Glasgow, as one of the city's civic elite, for example, could never give credence to an alternative claim to the

¹¹⁷ Sidney Low, *A Vision of India*, (London: Smith Elder & Co, 1907), pp.56 and 212.

¹¹⁸ Simon Cooke, 'Inner Journeys, Travel Writing as Life Writing' *The Routledge Companion to Travel Writing* ed. by Carl Thompson (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), p. 15.

title by Calcutta in his narrative.¹¹⁹ Even to mention that some considered it to be the second city would imply that Glasgow's self-professed title was a malleable claim, not a statement of fact. Narratives were doctored for their readers and their observations were claimed as the verifiable truth. In this vein, Ure adapted his anecdotes 'to suit the different hearers' back in Glasgow, and therefore his description of Calcutta – 'the great city' – actually engendered Glasgow's superiority.¹²⁰

Certainly, travel narratives speak to the paradoxical domestication and othering of Britain's colonies, including India. By the late nineteenth century, many in Britain felt they 'knew' India, despite never having set foot on the subcontinent. Indeed, Mary Louise Pratt argues that travel books 'gave European reading publics a sense of ownership, entitlement and familiarity' with the 'distant parts of the world that were being explored, invaded, invested in and colonized.'¹²¹ Successive travel narratives over the preceding decades, newspaper reports, panoramas, museum displays, and, by the mid-century, International Exhibitions, brought a vision of India and its role within the Empire home to Britons. Much like panoramas, this vision tended to be one dimensional. Within the colonial context, these sources are particularly problematic, because, as Ghosh has rightly shown, they have led scholars to preserve the idea that Calcutta was 'an otherwise orderly city being constantly threatened by an unruly and disease-ridden Indian section.'¹²² European travellers regurgitated this image of Calcutta, based on their expectation that the city would be as geographically and racially segregated into Black and White Towns as other narratives had described.¹²³ Black Town became an established route for commentators to discuss the state of British rule in India, colonial dynamics between the European and Indian populations, ideas for civic improvements, and many other major issues, which will be discussed further in the following chapter. In actuality, any boundaries in Calcutta were blurred and overlapping, nevertheless, such perceptions had negative ramifications for second city rhetoric finding purchase by the turn of the twentieth century.

The earliest narrative from this sample is John Matheson's *England to Delhi*, which was published in 1870, but depicts a journey taken seven years previously. Matheson (1817-1878), was born in Glasgow and became prolific in the commercial life of the city

¹¹⁹ John Ure, *A Tour Round the World, Outwards – India, Australia* (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1885).

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.i.

¹²¹ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes Travel Writing and Transculturation* Second ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 3.

¹²² Ghosh, *Claiming the City*, p. 3.

¹²³ See Kate Teltscher, 'India / Calcutta: city of palaces and dreadful night' in *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* ed. by Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 191-206.

through his roles in the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, first as a director then as its president in 1872.¹²⁴ He travelled to India in his role as the managing partner of William Stirling & Sons, so that he could see for himself the ways textiles were distributed and consumed.¹²⁵ His interests were not, however, limited to the mercantile. Indeed, he loved painting, drama, and music and became a patron of the Arts, which led to his appointment as chairman of the Glasgow Festivals Committee in 1860 and 1873. As a prominent figure in the life of nineteenth century Glasgow, he was included in the 1886 *Memoirs and Portraits of One Hundred Glasgow Men*. Thus his opinion really mattered in Glasgow circles. Matheson provides a crucial example of the Glasgow entrepreneur turned civic leader which typified the city's ruling elite. He also reflects the type of person that contributed to perceptions of Glasgow as the 'second city of the Empire' during this period.

The other travellers should also be considered socially privileged commentators, despite their backgrounds differing significantly. For one, Arnold (1832 – 1904), was a celebrated poet and journalist, who had worked in India since 1875 when he was appointed the principal of the Deccan Sanskrit College at Poona.¹²⁶ Low (1857 – 1932) was born in London to Jewish parents; he was a journalist, but also a historian and essayist.¹²⁷ In 1883 he began his writing career for the *St James's Gazette*, and edited the paper between 1888 and 1897. During his editorship, he provided ardent support for 'empire builders such as Rhodes, Curzon, Cromer, and Milner.'¹²⁸ Like Matheson, Low pursued his own objectives, in this case the security of imperialism, in his narrative. Similarly, Glasgow born John Murdoch (1819 – 1904) was a Presbyterian missionary and book agent, who travelled to India via Ceylon as the headteacher of a government school in Kandy.¹²⁹ His narrative, therefore, came from a basis of extensive experience in India, as well as experience of Glasgow and was primarily centred on the furtherance of his Christian mission. The fact that bibliographical information about these different people is so readily available is indicative of the type of people who were producing descriptions of India at

¹²⁴ Stana Nenadic, 'Selling Printed Cottons in Mid-Nineteenth-Century India: John Matheson of Glasgow and Scottish Turkey Red', *Enterprise and Society* 20:2 (2019), p. 333.

¹²⁵ Ibid., pp. 328 – 365.

¹²⁶ J. P. Phelan, 'Arnold, Sir Edwin' in *ODNB* online edn, 2008 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/30455>> [accessed 27 April 2021]

¹²⁷ Andrew S. Thompson 'Low, Sir Sidney James Mark', in *ODNB* online edn, 2004 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/34608>> [accessed 27 April 2021]

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ David W. Savage, 'Murdoch, John', in *ODNB* online edn, 2008 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/53175>> [accessed 27 April 2021]

the time. Whether journalists, councillors, historians, or administrators, their views held weight because of their prominence in other fields.

Reversing the colonial gaze towards Glasgow, reveals that similar spatial, social, class and religious divisions were stark there too. Indian travelogues to Glasgow studied here include: Lala Baijnath's *England and India: Being Impressions of Persons and Things, English and Indian, and Brief Notes of Visits to France, Switzerland, Italy and Ceylon* (1887), T. N. Mukharji's *A Visit to Europe* (1889), N. L. Doss', *English and Australasian; being an account of a visit to England, Australia, etc.* (1893) and G. Paramaswaran Pillai's, *London and Paris through Indian Spectacles* (1897). These narratives, despite not mentioning Scotland in their titles, offer a unique window into late nineteenth-century Glasgow, as most were produced by Indian commentators, known as 'reverse travelogues' – a specific genre which changed the direction of the imperial eye. Most of these authors were little interested by Scotland, and less so by its commercial capital. Although, Mukharji (1847 - 1919), a Bengali civil servant, had particular cause to visit Glasgow because he was responsible for the Indian art-wares for the 1888 International Exhibition. Cherie McKeich describes him as a 'middle-ranking government official' who worked on the International Exhibitions held in Melbourne, Jeypore, Amsterdam, Calcutta, London and Glasgow.¹³⁰ Moreover, his work as a curator at the Bengal Economic Museum and then as the Assistant Curator of the Economic and Art Section from 1887 at the Imperial Museum, made him a prominent figure in Calcutta's museum project. Biographical notes on N. L. Doss and G. Paramaswaran Pillai remain elusive.

From this survey of the varied channels used to discuss claims to the 'second city of the Empire' title, it is clear that many individuals performed multiple roles in propagating a city's claim, whether through politics, local governance, commerce, or civic culture. Indeed, it is the crossover of individuals between the different genres which is perhaps the most striking. A focal group of elites, in these mediums at least, were responsible for shaping what contemporaries understood the second city to be. Newspapers were clearly the most dominant vehicle for deploying and debating the title specifically, but the other mediums, particularly the travelogues, provided the context within which this rhetoric found purchase.

¹³⁰ Cherie McKeich, 'T. N. Mukharji and the Exhibition of India 1870 – 1900' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Melbourne, 2014), p.1.

Second City Rhetoric and Popular Views of Glasgow and Calcutta

Using the press reports and travelogues, discussed above, and bringing in travel guides, this section looks at the ways second city rhetoric interacted with popular images of Glasgow and Calcutta. In the complex web of cities created by the British Empire, epithets were used as shorthand for the city's role within the imperial network. The 'second city of the Empire' was one of these, but Calcutta was also described as the 'City of Palaces' and 'Metropolis of India', and Glasgow was the 'commercial capital of Scotland' and closely connected to its motto, 'Let Glasgow Flourish'. In this way, the popular vignettes of both cities were made up of their origin and history, as well as the noted facets of second city claims – population, administrative profile, commerce and industry, and civic culture. Second city rhetoric can thus be regarded as a form of civic 'spin', which highlighted the positive aspects of the city, and the more beneficial sides of industry, that had allowed both cities to flourish.

On the one hand, the pervading image of Glasgow was a grey, smoky and industrial city, which prospered despite its climatic difficulties. The rain, as relentless then as it is now, failed to brighten this polluted scene. Much of the city's industry was located on or near its main waterway – the Clyde, but factories and other works littered the city too. The Clyde was a site of great interest in the city as it was credited by many 'for transforming Glasgow from a place of comparative insignificance and obscurity to the proud position of the second city of the empire.'¹³¹ Whilst Glasgow continues to be associated with the soubriquet 'Dear Green Place', owing to the translation 'green hollow' of its ancient Celtic name *glas cau*, this was not what most late nineteenth-century travellers noticed when they visited the city.¹³² Indeed, Daniel Defoe's summation in the 1720s that Glasgow was 'the cleanest and beautifullest, and best built city in Britain, London accepted', was, if not entirely forgotten, not immediately brought to mind when new travellers visited this rapidly growing urban centre.¹³³

On the other, Calcutta was similarly blessed and plagued with industry, which, again, was mainly concentrated along its river, the Hooghly, in the numerous jute mills that

¹³¹ 'Mercator, Why is the Weir not Removed?', *Glasgow Herald*, 23 January 1872, p. 3.

¹³² Robert Crawford, *On Glasgow and Edinburgh* (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2013), p. 187.

¹³³ Daniel Defoe, *A Tour Thro' the whole Island of Great Britain, Divided into Circuits or Journies* (London: G. Strahan, 1724).

lined its banks. The city itself was known for its grand administrative buildings, dense social calendar, and cosmopolitan population. Although, these were in spite of adverse environmental and climatic conditions, especially ‘the dismal Bengal swamps.’¹³⁴ Whilst the climate did not change, the trappings of a capital city, which were lavished on Calcutta, helped to alleviate some of the worst of its adverse effects. Indeed, Forrest reports that it was the partial removal of these ‘local disadvantages’ that had allowed Calcutta to gain the title of ‘The City of Palaces.’¹³⁵

Glasgow and Calcutta were, according to their pervading narratives, grown from humble village beginnings into great cities within the British Empire by human endeavour. Whilst of course all cities have been built with human endeavour, the important commonality between these two cities was that these efforts could be attributed to the relatively recent past. Whereas other cities, like London or Edinburgh were the products of progress over hundreds of years, these cities had grown rapidly from settlements of little consequence into commercial centres as a direct result of British imperialism. Glasgow through the transatlantic and slavery-dependent tobacco and sugar trades and Calcutta through Asian colonial trade. The 1860 *Guide to Glasgow* argued that the ‘spectacle of great energy directed to commercial and mechanical pursuits’ transformed ‘a village, gathered under the wing of a cathedral, to a mighty city’.¹³⁶ In both cases, the validity of these narratives was arguably less important than creating a civic mythology.

Glasgow, was nevertheless, presented as a historical settlement owing to its associations with Saint Mungo, who died in 603AD. According to *A Popular Sketch of the History of Glasgow* from 1882, which notes the city’s common trajectory, Saint Mungo established a ‘religious institution on the banks of the classic Molendinar’ around the year 550, marking the origin of the city, even though it ‘could scarcely be said to have had a visible existence then.’¹³⁷ Maver argues that ‘during the late nineteenth century Glasgow’s rulers repeatedly pulled rank over other claimants to the title ‘Second City of the Empire’, notably Birmingham and Manchester, because their municipal charters dated only from the 1830s.’¹³⁸

¹³⁴ ‘The Port of Calcutta’, *Blackburn Standard*, 7 February 1880, p. 2.

¹³⁵ George Forrest, *Cities of India* (Westminster: Archibald Constable and Co Ltd, 1903), p. vii.

¹³⁶ Oliver and Boyd’s Scottish Tourist, *Guide to Glasgow and its neighbourhood, Lanark and the falls of Clyde and the watering-places on the Frith of Clyde* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1860), pp. 1 – 2.

¹³⁷ Andrew Wallace, *A Popular Sketch of the History of Glasgow From the Earliest to the Present Time* (Glasgow: Thomas D. Morison, 1882), p.9.

¹³⁸ Maver, *Glasgow*, p.3.

Calcutta's narrative was one of a modern city, established by the East India Company in 1690, and therefore only its immediate history was considered noteworthy. As the *Blackburn Standard* related in 1880, 'the history of Calcutta, the metropolis of India' was considered 'very striking' and had afforded it the 'proud position next to London' making it 'the second city of the British Empire.'¹³⁹ The accepted narrative centred on the eventual blossoming of 'three clusters of mud huts on the river bank' into the 'future city of palaces', once in the hands of illustrious and persistent Englishmen.¹⁴⁰ Following in this track, Low summarised that Calcutta was 'a city which owes its very existence to English adventure, and its greatness to English rule.'¹⁴¹ Other cities across India had far richer histories, Madras for example was, according to Forrest, 'a town with a history', which meant that 'there was a time when it ranked higher than Calcutta,' though in fact, Madras was a mere sixty years older.¹⁴² Narrators made a virtue of Calcutta's European modernity. Low continued that, 'But for the English, all that there now is of Calcutta would to-day be no more than a few villages.'¹⁴³ This mentality allowed British imperialists in Calcutta to foster a feeling of ownership over the city, and a sense of shared pride in past, present and future endeavours to develop it. With this mindset, Calcutta was able to become a symbol of British imperial achievement, exactly because it lacked an Indian past. Indeed, without historic or ancient monuments like those found elsewhere, Calcutta became a site for creating 'British Indian' history. In fact, particularly after the turn of the twentieth century, this history was used to justify Calcutta's claim to be the 'second city of the Empire' by varying commentators. The institutions established in the early and mid-nineteenth century purportedly legitimised the city's preeminent position within India.

By contrast, the mid-nineteenth century proved the epicentre for Glasgow's myth making, with patents for the City of Glasgow crest awarded by the Lord Lyon Court in 1866. The city motto 'Let Glasgow Flourish' was similarly registered at the Lyon Court that year. This motto had long been connected with the city, but the decision to make this connection official is indicative of the multitude of new meanings applied to it, the religious element was dropped and what constituted 'flourishing' grew to include commerce, civic status, health, and political power. Consequently, 'Let Glasgow Flourish' was intimately tied to second city rhetoric, as both terms were deployed by similar people to meet similar ends. Glasgow's connections to ancient and religious motifs were

¹³⁹ *Blackburn Standard*, 7 February 1880, p. 2.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Low, *A Vision of India*, p. 212.

¹⁴² Forrest, *Cities of India*, p.304.

¹⁴³ Low, *A Vision of India*, p. 212.

important. The *North British Daily Mail* responded to claims made in the *Liverpool Post* ‘proclaiming Liverpool to be the Second City of the Empire’, with Glasgow’s civic imagery. The Glasgow newspaper was left in ‘stupefied astonishment’ at this ‘Shade of St Mungo’, and asked, ‘is it any wonder that the very fish in our civic coat of arms should be seen getting up on their tails and snorting!’¹⁴⁴ Moreover, that they had repeatedly ‘exposed the hollow pretensions of these benighted Southrons.’¹⁴⁵ This suggests that in Glasgow, claims to the second city were a matter of civic and national pride and identity, which were linked to wider civic symbols, such as the coat of arms.

Glasgow’s successful performance as the commercial capital of Scotland was a well-trodden path for commentators of the period, especially in response to the extent to which it ‘flourished’. Those that arrived by train into the city emerged into the city’s heart and therefore rarely failed to comment on the impressive commercial centre that laid before the. As early as 1868 MP, Mr. Smollett on the issue of ‘Scotch Reform’ referred to Glasgow as the ‘commercial capital of Scotland’ and stated that it ‘was the second city in importance in the British Empire.’¹⁴⁶ Indeed, its full spectrum economy was often its only merit when compared to the dirt and poverty stimulated by Victorian industry. Calcutta was not, however, merely the administrative capital, indeed it was a commercial city too, and as Murdoch reports ‘about one-third of the trade of India passes through Calcutta’ by the close of the nineteenth century.¹⁴⁷ Of this trade the ‘principal imports are cotton goods, metals, machinery, salt, liquors. The *exports* are opium, rice, jute, oil seeds, indigo, hides, tea, silk, and saltpetre.’¹⁴⁸ Moreover, as Low purported ‘it is as a home of English trade even more than a seat of English statesmanship that Calcutta impresses one.’¹⁴⁹ He surmised that though the East India Company may not have been deliberate in all their achievements ‘they did intend that Calcutta should be a world-centre of trade, the British mart and emporium for the Eastern Continent.’¹⁵⁰

Like most significant metropolises, Glasgow and Calcutta thrived on their proximity to major rivers and the development of ports which established trade links between themselves and every other major port in the world. This connectedness to the rest of the

¹⁴⁴ ‘The “Second City”’, *North British Daily Mail*, 11 November 1896, p.4.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ House of Commons, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates: The Official Report* (9 March 1868, vol. 190, cols, 1234-69) [Online] <<https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1868/mar/09/second-reading>> [accessed 27 April 2021]

¹⁴⁷ Murdoch, *Pictorial Tour Round India*, p. 3.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Low, *A Vision of India*, p. 215.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

globe was an integral part of both city's identities, not only because ports create fluctuating populations, which ebbed and flowed with seasonal trade patterns, but it also meant that Glasgow and Calcutta became springboards for ongoing travel. Indeed, due the city's valuable transport options, travellers often used Glasgow as a launch pad to the West Highlands and Islands, as well as other scenic locations like the Trossachs, the Clyde estuary or Arran. Foreign travellers typically reached Calcutta by boat, which meant the Hooghly brought them past Garden Reach and onto their first sight of the city. By the turn of the twentieth century, Forrest indicated the disparate views available from this vantage point on the city's river— on the one hand, the 'huge mills erected on the river banks – witnesses of the growing prosperity of Calcutta' and on the other, 'stately mansions at Garden Reach, which used, in bygone times, before they were shorn of their splendour, to surprise and delight the eye of the stranger.'¹⁵¹ Forrest's view is typical of those at the opening of the twentieth century, by which point the 'stately mansions' were over a century old. The city's prosperity, in this case, was seemingly in conflict with its former 'splendour', which will be discussed in the following chapter. By contrast, visitors to Glasgow mostly arrived in the city by train, and therefore emerged in the city centre, giving an entirely different first impression.

Debates about superiority within the imperial network came in different forms, population figures, for instance, were a relatively standard way of delineating cities which had traction in the popular press. Whilst other factors were at play, a substantial population was crucial to making any claim to be the second city. Consequently, when new census results were published there tended to be a flurry of discussion over which city could 'legitimately' entitle itself. Below is a table detailing the population figures for the vying cities within the British Empire, taken from the ten-yearly census. London's population figures are also provided to show that, in many ways, no second city was comparable with the first. Yet, by focusing on the comparisons between these secondary cities, this thesis pursues postcolonial directives to look beyond the primary metropole.

¹⁵¹ Forrest, *Cities of India*, p. 273.

Table 1.2 - Census results for population (in thousands) for the nineteenth century, taken from British Historical Statistics (1998)

	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
London ¹⁵²	1,117	1,327	1,600	1,907	2,239	2,685	3,227	3,890	4,770	5,638	6,586
Birmingham	71	83	102	144	183	233	296	344	401	478	522
Dublin	-	-	-	-	246	272	271	263	268	269	291
Edinburgh*	83	103	138	162	166	194	203	242	295	332	394
Glasgow	77	101	147	202	275	345	420	522	587	658	762
Liverpool	82	104	138	202	286	376	444	493	553	518	685
Manchester	75	89	126	182	235	303	339	351	341	505	544

Listed in bold is the city which returned the largest population for each census year, making it clear that across this period the westerly ports, Glasgow and Liverpool were the two main British contenders for second place. As commercial cities, they conformed to ‘the tendency of trade...to collect people in large centres.’¹⁵³ Cities like these, with equal political significance sought to distinguish themselves with their burgeoning populations.

Census returns for Britain’s provincial cities were, nevertheless, dwarfed by those of urban centres on the subcontinent. The general census arrived in India thirty years after the first ‘modern’ iteration was performed for England in 1841. In 1871, the census of India revealed that the population returns for Calcutta and Bombay far exceeded those for Glasgow and Liverpool. Below is a table showing the result of India’s general censuses between 1871 and 1901.

¹⁵² B. R. Mitchell, *British Historical Statistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp.25-26.

¹⁵³ ‘The Census Returns’, *The Cardiff Times*, 16 July 1881, p. 4.

Table 1.3 – Census results in India between 1871 and 1901

Towns	1871¹⁵⁴	1881¹⁵⁵	1891¹⁵⁶	1901
Calcutta	794,645	766,298	741,144	847,796
Bombay	644,405	772,196	821,764	776,006
Madras	397,552	405,848	452,518	509,346
Lucknow	284,779	261,303	273,028	264, 049
Benares	175,188	199,700	219,467	209,331
Patna	158,900	170,654	165,192	134,785
Delhi	154,417	173,393	192,579	208,575

Along with the statistics, the reports provide commentary on their findings, Calcutta in the 1871 census, for example, was recorded to be ‘the foremost in India, and second only to London in the British Empire’, though not explicitly stated, this would suggest that Calcutta was the ‘second city of the Empire’. Indeed, ‘withstanding the imperfection of the census taken by the municipal authorities’, Calcutta returned a population of 795,000, compared to Glasgow’s 522,000, making the former officially the second largest city in the Empire.¹⁵⁷ Nevertheless, as in Glasgow, which suburbs should be included in the census return for Calcutta was a point of contention. Colonial officials each had their own ideas about how best to conduct a census of these nebulous spaces. For example, the 1872 census was not to be ‘understood as representing the total population of the city of Calcutta’, but instead the ‘portion of the town’ which was considered ‘the heart and centre’.¹⁵⁸ This portion was ‘but a nucleus’ which ‘the expansion of trade of commerce’ was making new additions to all the time.¹⁵⁹ Despite their statistical nature, population figures could not be relied upon as an accurate reflection of the city’s size, not least because of the problematic methods used to obtain results.

Population figures could be engorged depending on which settlements were included in the city’s total, in other words, where the boundary lines were drawn. Even this

¹⁵⁴ *Memorandum on the Census of British India 1871 – 72* (London: George-Edward Eyre and William Spottiswoode, 1875).

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.276.

¹⁵⁶ J. A. Baines, *General Report on the Census of India, 1891* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1893), p.44.

¹⁵⁷ *Memorandum on the Census of British India 1871 – 72*, p.12

¹⁵⁸ H. Beverley, *Report on the Census of the Town of Calcutta taken on the 6th April* (Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Press, 1876), p.1.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

relatively straightforward criterion was complicated by prolonged disputes about where the city and its suburbs began and ended.¹⁶⁰ In the Rosebery example, *The Aberdare Times* claimed that the second cities issue really ‘turns on the question of boundaries.’¹⁶¹ To this end, the Glasgow Corporation attempted to extend the city’s boundaries to include Partick, Govan, and other outlying districts to boost the city’s population returns. This was successfully implemented in 1912, increasing the city’s population by 224,000.¹⁶² Nationally, a larger city could return more MPs and hope to obtain a larger share of national resources. Even in 1889, some twenty three years earlier, a letter from Govan to the Editor of *The Scotsman*, reveals that:

the Town Council of Glasgow is at present, and has been for some time back, afflicted with a certain kind of mania, the more prominent symptoms of which manifest themselves in the hysterical efforts to persuade the Government to annex a number of towns and country districts, more or less distant from Glasgow, so as to enable the Seat of St Mungo to be glorified as “the second city of the Empire.” The unhappy patient is haunted with terrible dreams that the title to this distinction is in serious danger of being acquired by Liverpool or Manchester.¹⁶³

The Glasgow Corporation was criticised for chasing imperial status rather than tending to its poorest citizens, many of whom were not best served by the extension of the city’s boundaries.¹⁶⁴ These areas were only latterly incorporated into the city’s boundaries as desires for a significant population mass outweighed concerns over which governing body was best placed to look after these areas. This precise criticism continued into the twentieth century so that in 1912 the Lord Provost, Daniel Macaulay Stevenson contended that extending the boundaries was not for ‘mere vainglory’ and ‘the right to the title of Second City’ but ‘to unify and make more efficient the administration of the area in which all this had been going on for generations.’¹⁶⁵ Certainly, ‘the good government of the extended city and the solution of the many problems involved would be a gigantic task’, but the Glasgow Corporation was more than equipped to deal with it effectively.¹⁶⁶

With regards to second city rhetoric, population was not just measured in size but the type of people which made up the total. Forrest, for example, concludes his section of Calcutta’s social scene at the opening of the twentieth century by arguing it was ‘the only

¹⁶⁰ ‘The Second City in the Empire’, *Edinburgh Evening News*, 14 May 1888, p.8.

¹⁶¹ *The Aberdare Times*, 24 November 1894, p.2

¹⁶² Maver, *Glasgow*, p. 128.

¹⁶³ Letters to the Editor, ‘The Second-City of the Empire’, *The Scotsman*, 13 May 1889, p.8

¹⁶⁴ Maver, *Glasgow*, p. 128.

¹⁶⁵ ‘Lord Rosebery in Glasgow.’, *The Scotsman*, 9 November 1912, p.7.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

cosmopolitan society in India.’¹⁶⁷ He then goes on to describe the three different European social sets – the ‘Official set’ made up of military men and civil servants, the ‘Mercantile circle’ who owed their position and ‘a palace at Chowringhee’ to ‘tea, indigo and jute’, and, the ‘Lawyer set’ who were ‘mainly occupied with the worst side of Bengali human nature.’¹⁶⁸ These sets were what, purportedly, made Calcutta superior to other cities in India. Indeed, the *Adelaide Observer* reported on Bombay’s pretensions to second city status in 1881:

Bombay claims to be the second city of the British Empire. In population it undoubtedly is so, as the census, just taken shows that it has three-quarters of a million inhabitants, while Calcutta – the seat of the Indian Government – has less than half a million. But the people of Calcutta, like the fox in the fable, affect to despise mere numbers, especially when those numbers represent only natives. The city of palaces – as Calcutta is called – has the lion’s share of the wealth, of commerce, and of European influence, and in these its citizens glory, while Bombay boasts a better harbour, the honour of being the English mail station, and a population more vast and infinitely more varied than any other city in the Empire.¹⁶⁹

Certainly revealing, this passage shows that the character of the population was just as important as its volume, even though the census did not distinguish, and, in any case, population alone was not enough to crown a ‘second city of the Empire’. Published a few years after the commentary on the Glasgow Council’s persistent chasing of the second city title, it highlights that, in the colonial context, the competition was racially loaded.

Bombay’s population was seemingly worth less, despite it dwarfing Calcutta, because the figures reflected ‘only natives’. Compared to the important European population resident in the capital, Bombay supposedly could not compete, even with its ‘better harbour.’

Bombay’s population may have been ‘more varied’ than other imperial cities but this growth was mirrored in British industrial cities like Glasgow, which received significant influxes of migrant workers, particularly those from Ireland. Calcutta too, was a site for immigration of labourers from eastern India. Commentary on the character of distinct urban populations helped to establish narratives about the prevalence of poverty and moral issues in Glasgow and Calcutta. The notoriety of these issues in both cities is a point of commonality which will be discussed in the following chapter. Responses to the necessary undersides of imperial provincial cities shaped the way museums would be understood as spaces for social improvement.

¹⁶⁷ Forrest, *Cities of India*, p.291.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.292.

¹⁶⁹ The Traveller, ‘At Bombay: The Second City of the British Empire’, *Adelaide Observer*, 11 June 1881, p.41.

The fact that this commentary appeared in an Australian newspaper is unlikely to be incidental as, in the 1920s, campaigners for Sydney claimed it was the ‘second city of the Empire in point of white population.’¹⁷⁰ This brings to the fore contemporary distinctions between who made up the population of these competing second cities. In 1926, *The Scotsman* reported that Glasgow ‘which hitherto has been regarded as second to London among the Empire’s White cities’ had been pushed into third place by Sydney based on the latter’s surge in population.¹⁷¹ Clearly, second city claims became more racially charged in the opening decades of the twentieth century, in response to rapidly expanding populations in India. Overt references to the racial makeup of a city was another way of delineating imperial status, which raises serious questions about the continual appropriation of the ‘second city of the Empire’ today.

This discussion informs our understanding of second city discourse, because, if population was not necessarily ranked by size alone and was also vitally malleable, then the other components identified by this thesis – administration, commerce, and civic culture, were more likely to have shaped conceptions of competing claimants, Glasgow and Calcutta. Indeed, staying with Australian commentary, *The Newsletter: an Australian Paper for Australian People* reported in 1902 that it was Glasgow’s municipal enterprise which ‘shines most’ in comparison to its competitors for second city status.¹⁷² In favour of ‘the city of St. Mungo’, again highlighting the effective propagation of Glasgow’s historical roots, the *Newsletter* argued that the municipality’s ‘progress’ – its own water supply from Loch Katrine, its gas works which turned a profit for the city, its sewage system, and other projects, made it a model for other cities to follow.¹⁷³ Crucially, the city possessed ‘science and art galleries, a splendid museum, several public halls, free libraries... and other benefits for people too many to enumerate,’ which further legitimised its status.¹⁷⁴ Conceptions of Glasgow and Calcutta as the ‘second city of the Empire’ were therefore embroiled in a wide range of other popular images, supporting the need to look closely at the complexities of this rhetorical device, particularly as it had implications for the ways public museums were developed, experienced and appraised.

¹⁷⁰ ‘Sydney now Second City of the Empire’, *The Gundagai Independent and Pastoral, Agricultural and Mining Advocate*, 17 December 1925, p.2.

¹⁷¹ ‘Empire’s Second City’, *The Scotsman*, 5 February 1926, p.8.

¹⁷² ‘Progressive Municipalities. Glasgow in the Van. The Second City of the Empire. An Example to Sydney’, *The Newsletter: an Australian Paper for Australian People*, 31 May 1902, p.10.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

Secondary Capitals, Commercial Centres, and Second Cities of the Empire

Second city rhetoric was directed towards delineating the roles played by different cities within the Empire. How, for example, did the role played by Glasgow differ from that played by Calcutta or Edinburgh? For Glasgow, the most dominant of these ‘other’ cities was undoubtedly Edinburgh, which was the national capital of Scotland, and therefore a secondary capital within the Empire. Secondary capitals, as defined by the thesis introduction, were those that in many ways operated as capital cities but were always secondary to the first city, in this case, London. As other British claimants, Liverpool and Manchester, did not have a secondary capital to differentiate against, articulations of second city status in Glasgow were fairly specific. Indeed, Linda Colley developed the concept that identities are often forged in response to an ‘other’, which has since been explored by numerous scholars in different fields.¹⁷⁵ In this way, Bombay was arguably the most similar claimant to Glasgow because its civic elites acted to distinguish its contribution to the Empire from its main competitor, and secondary capital, Calcutta. Moreover, it was only after Calcutta was relegated from its position as the capital in 1911, that civic leaders started to earnestly assert the ‘second city of the Empire’ title. Calcutta’s demotion from national to provincial capital meant that its imperial status was reliant on a persuasive and effective claim to be the second city of the whole British Empire. This section looks at how Glasgow and Calcutta’s claims were characterised by their relationship with other cities. In particular, how conceptions of the secondary capital informed understanding of what a ‘second city of the Empire’ could and should be.

In Britain during the early nineteenth century, the title of ‘second city of the Empire’ was more easily given, disputes arising only when Edinburgh was considered to have replaced Dublin. By the mid-century the term was more fluid, allowing for cities, like Glasgow, without the political or administrative gravitas to make claim to the title. That said, in the midst of debates in the early 1850s about whether Scotland should be assigned its own Secretary of State in the Houses of Parliament, *Punch* reported that ‘We consider that Scotland will do quite well enough without a separate Secretary of State; because we are of opinion that Edinburgh should be content to rank as the second city of the Empire.’¹⁷⁶ London’s intelligentsia appears entirely unsympathetic towards Scotland’s

¹⁷⁵ Linda Colley, *Britons: forging the nation, 1707 – 1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003)

¹⁷⁶ ‘A Real Scottish Grievance from Punch’, *Banner*, 18 April 1854, p.6.

desires for better representation, and ‘the second city of the Empire’ is suggested as a second prize that Edinburgh should be satisfied with. Yet in the same article, Glasgow is referred to as ‘a city containing nearly 400,000 inhabitants, being second in importance to London alone’, so Edinburgh here is posed as ‘the second city of the Empire’ based on its secondary political position to London, but Glasgow is considered the ‘second in importance’ due to its larger population and the significant revenue which was taken from the post office. This suggests that, for some, ‘second in importance’ was not the same as ‘second city of the Empire’. Over time, the parameters of the ‘second city of the Empire’, as suggested above, became more defined so that ‘second in importance’ was closely conflated with second in the Empire.

Glasgow and Edinburgh maintain a rivalry which is longstanding enough to be considered ‘proverbial’.¹⁷⁷ As Glasgow grew in commercial wealth and importance throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the two cities were necessarily compared. The close physical proximity between the two cities brought this comparison more sharply into consideration. G. Paramaswaran Pillai, for example, remarked in one of his twelve letters to the *Madras Standard* during his trip to Europe in 1897 that ‘from Edinburgh to Glasgow is only a short distance.’¹⁷⁸ This was notable because in India, Bombay sat over 1000 miles west of Calcutta, although following the same pattern – the commercial west and the administrative east. In Scotland, people were able to move easily between the two urban centres making local demarcations very provocative. The 1860 *Guide to Glasgow* succinctly articulates:

Edinburgh, the political capital of Scotland, is the memorial of much of its past history and the type of its intellectual culture, Glasgow, its commercial capital, is the emblem of its business activity and the vast material and mechanical progress.¹⁷⁹

Whilst commentators promoted Glasgow’s ancient origins, the city could not be compared to Edinburgh on an equal historical footing, civic leaders could, however, do something to improve the city’s inferior cultural offerings. As the next chapter will further explicate, a developed civic culture was a key component of claims to be the ‘second city of the Empire’. Therefore for Glasgow, Edinburgh remained a marker against which its cultural landscape was judged, which differed with its other British urban competitors. Importantly, Nenadic has argued that Scotland differed from the rest of Britain in ‘having a capital city

¹⁷⁷ Crawford, *On Glasgow*, p.1.

¹⁷⁸ G. Paramaswaran Pillai, *London and Paris through Indian Spectacles* (Madras: The Vaijavanti Press, 1897), p.70

¹⁷⁹ Oliver and Boyd’s *Scottish Tourist, Guide to Glasgow*, pp. 1 – 2.

whose political and professional elites had long engaged in overt cultural display and in having a great commercial city that competed with the capital for economic and cultural status.’¹⁸⁰

Second city rhetoric was used to direct attention towards Glasgow’s positive aspects, and assert its contemporary precedence over its historical overlord. At times, civic leaders in Glasgow sought to deny accusations that the Glasgow Corporation and other bodies, acted in deliberate competition with Edinburgh. As Chapter Three will show, this occurred in conjunction with the establishment of a public museum in Glasgow in 1870. An incident the following year elucidates much of the Glaswegian civic elite’s view of the city’s relationship with Edinburgh. In August 1871, Scotland, and its citizens scattered across other parts of the world, celebrated the first centenary of Sir Walter Scott’s birth. Though he was most closely associated with Edinburgh, hence the Scott Monument, which remains one of the city’s most iconic landmarks, the citizens of Glasgow chose to hold their own celebration, despite Scott’s slender links with the city.

Though Scott was revered in Victorian Scotland for his prolific contributions to the Scottish canon of literature, the real focus of Glasgow’s celebrations was to showcase the citizens’ ability to engage with intellectual discourses, and displays of national pride. The Scott statue in George Square was given ‘festoons of evergreens and wreaths of flowers’ with the ‘Scottish standard’ floating in front it, but the real event was the ‘grand centenary banquet’ in the City Halls.¹⁸¹ On entry, the visual cues told guests that Scotland, Scott, and Glasgow were importantly and obviously linked. Displayed on a platform was a ‘colossal bust’ of Scott, flanked on one side by ‘the Royal arms of Scotland’, and on the other, ‘by the city arms.’¹⁸² The celebration sent a clear message that Glasgow could engage with cultural events just as well as Edinburgh, which was a point that Glaswegian citizens felt the need to regularly prove. Certainly, the rhetoric surrounding the Scott celebrations provides vital context for the contemporary development of museums in the city and the civic cultural competition with Edinburgh.

As well as the visual messaging, the orations elucidated the position Glasgow’s civic leaders coveted in a local, national, and imperial context. Though an event ostensibly intended for 800 attendees, the thorough press reporting made it accessible to the wider

¹⁸⁰ Stana Nenadic, ‘Exhibiting India in Nineteenth-Century Scotland and the Impact on Commerce, Industry and Popular Culture’, *Journal of Scottish Historical Societies* 34.1 (2014), p. 68.

¹⁸¹ ‘The Scott Centenary Celebrations’, *Glasgow Herald*, 10 August 1871, p. 2.

¹⁸² Ibid.

public too.¹⁸³ In this way, the event would have contributed to public understanding of Glasgow's role within Scotland. The Lord Provost, Sir William Rae Arthur, sent a telegram to 'our friends in Edinburgh' which pointedly read, "The West of Scotland joins with Modern Athens in playing tribute to the immortal memory of Walter Scott."¹⁸⁴ The appellation of Edinburgh as 'Modern Athens' was a common one, which was critiqued by travel writers.¹⁸⁵ Its use here by the Lord Provost of Glasgow, can be seen as an attempt to actively distinguish between the roles played by both cities. Furthermore, Arthur gently challenges the notion that Edinburgh was the epicentre of the Scottish Enlightenment and therefore had a monopoly on the nation's intellectual pursuits. Modern Athens, rather than capital of Scotland opened up a space for Glasgow to occupy Scottishness too.

Significantly, besides Scott and the Scottish literary tradition, the centenary speeches were dominated by Glasgow's place within Scotland and the Empire. Really, this event acted as a vehicle for promoting Glasgow's assets, status, and aptitude for cultural engagement. The Reverend Dr. Macleod indicated that some had 'foolishly insinuated' that the banquet itself was superfluous, and 'held from mere feelings of provincial jealousy of Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland, being assumed to be the one only appropriate place for such a national commemoration of Scott.' Macleod retorted that he:

need not assure this great and intelligent audience that it is quite impossible for Glasgow to be jealous of Edinburgh, because such a feeling can never coexist with a sense of conscious power. Glasgow jealous of Edinburgh, or of any other city on earth!

This highlights how commonplace competing civic imagery was, and, if true within Scotland, then certainly true over the question of the 'second city of the Empire.' This competitive civic rhetoric was loaded and reinforced through propagation of Glasgow as a proud global city. As the Calcutta and Bombay examples will also show, these discussions elucidate the dynamic between secondary capitals and the cities forced to claim the 'second city of the Empire' as a counter to it.

By proffering Glasgow's global links, through second city rhetoric for example, civic leaders placed the city in a competitive field which it would win against Edinburgh. John Patrick Crichton-Stuart, third marquess of Bute (1847 – 1900), was tasked with proposing a toast to "The City of Glasgow", which he began by asserting 'that there are

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Robert Mundie, *The Modern Athens: A Dissection and Demonstration of Men and Things in the Scotch Capital* (London: Knight and Lacey, 1825); John Britton, *Modern Athens!: Displayed in a Series of Views* (London: Jones & Co., 1829); Paramaswaran Pillai, *London and Paris*, p.70.

very few Scotchmen who do not from the bottom of their heart echo the prayer of her ancient motto that she may flourish.¹⁸⁶ What was good for Glasgow, it was concluded, was good for Scotland too. Firstly, MacKenzie's assessment that throughout the Empire Scottish migrants found themselves to be Scottish rather than Glaswegian is challenged by Bute's rhetoric.¹⁸⁷ Angela McCarthy, to this end, argues that 'Scottishness was both an overarching identity and one that was inextricably linked to regional, county, and local identities.'¹⁸⁸ Accordingly, it could be seen that Glaswegian Scottishness was distinct from Edinburgh Scottishness or Dundonian Scottishness, certainly the local celebration of a national figure indicates a form of Scottish identity which was tied to Glasgow's civic identity. In a similar vein, Bute asserted that wherever a patriotic Scotchman could be found, there would be 'pride' and 'affection' for 'the commercial metropolis of his country – the dispenser and increaser of her wealth and her prosperity.'¹⁸⁹ He posited Glasgow's success as an active contribution to Scotland's fortune as a whole. Again, the 'commercial metropolis' marked Glasgow, not as Edinburgh's deputy, but as its vital collaborator. That said, Bute points towards regional differences within Scotland, through which Glasgow was the 'local capital' of the West of Scotland. This notion of Glasgow as a local capital poses questions about the land area and populations it was head of. Interestingly, this fed into the remit for the first public museum in Glasgow, which was intended to cover the West of Scotland and therefore influenced the flora and fauna collected. Indeed, commentators congratulated the museum on its coverage of this locality. In Scotland, the cultural configuration of competitive civics was such that Glasgow and Edinburgh could both be important and contribute towards national Scottishness.

¹⁸⁶ *Glasgow Herald*, 10 August 1871, p. 2.

¹⁸⁷ John MacKenzie, 'The British World and the Complexities of Anglicisation: The Scots in Southern Africa in the Nineteenth Century', in *Britishness Abroad: Transnational Movements and Imperial Cultures* ed. by Kate Darian-Smith, Patricia Grimshaw, and Stuart Macintyre (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2007), p.111.

¹⁸⁸ Angela McCarthy, 'Scottish Migrant Ethnic Identities in the British Empire since the Nineteenth Century' in *Scotland and the British Empire* ed. by John M. MacKenzie and T.M. Devine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p.134.

¹⁸⁹ *Glasgow Herald*, 10 August 1871, p. 2.

The Lord Provost followed Bute's speech by acknowledging the significance of such a notable aristocrat supporting the 'prosperity' of Glasgow. Furthermore:

Our city has, in its moral aspects, some sins to answer for, and I take leave to say some things also of which it may be proud. As regards population, it is now undoubtedly the second city of the Empire, and I believe has also within itself those germs of prosperity which may carry it forward to larger and larger things. Keeping in view the energy which Scotchmen everywhere display, we may hope to find this city of ours not only maintaining but extending itself as a great centre of commercial wealth.¹⁹⁰

The *Glasgow Herald* reported that this speech was met with 'hear, hear', but it is easy to imagine an uproarious response, this was, after all, a crowd of like-minded Glaswegians. Politically speaking, Glasgow was in the thrusts of Unionist-Nationalism, which meant that rhetoric connecting Scotland to the successes of Empire were particularly appealing.¹⁹¹ Significantly, Arthur acknowledged the city's 'sins', and intimated that Glasgow's position as the 'second city of the Empire' might lead to greater things which would dwarf its immoral aspects. The interaction between Glasgow's vices and leaders' claims that it was, nevertheless, the second city, will be explored in the following chapter. To reiterate, this was 1871, and Glasgow had returned a larger population than Liverpool for the first time since 1821.¹⁹² Yet, as shown in Section Two, the 1871 general census of India recorded Calcutta's population as 794,645 and Bombay's as 644,405. Compared to Glasgow's 522,000 and Liverpool's 493,000, Calcutta was far ahead in the population race. The stark gap between the population returns in Glasgow and its Indian counterparts, and the relatively small gap between it and Liverpool, highlights that claims to be the 'second city of the Empire' were constantly in flux, and largely based on perception rather than fact.

Competition between Glasgow and Edinburgh, particularly in a cultural context, persisted throughout the nineteenth century, and similar themes can be observed in interactions between Calcutta and Bombay. During the second half of the nineteenth century, Bombay was India's most assiduous claimant of second city status. In 1876, the *Indian Daily News*, a Calcutta based paper, reported that 'Bombay, as usual, the centre of the universe, and the second city of the empire, was the first to speak' on the proclamation of Queen Victoria as Empress of India.¹⁹³ However, the author was unable 'to appraise the value of her demonstration' because 'it is well-known that Calcutta is always jealous of her

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Miel Groten, 'Glasgow's new town hall: imperialism, nationalism and civic pride, 1877-1899', *Urban History* (2020), pp.1-19.

¹⁹² B. R. Mitchell, *British Historical Statistics* (1998), pp.25-26.

¹⁹³ *Indian Daily News*, 6 June 1876, pp.3-4,

western rival and her fame.’¹⁹⁴ Driving home the ludicrousness of Bombay’s claim, the report further commented that ‘Bombay, for instance, was said for the millionth time, to be the second city in the British Empire’ and, more so that ‘it was hinted that it was the centre of the world, and had the commercial advantages which ought to place it in the front rank of civilisation.’¹⁹⁵ The position taken by the Calcuttan journalist is indicative of the confidence held within the city towards its status within the Empire, compared with Bombay whose residents felt the need to crow about their achievements. The commercial and political flux experienced across this period in India no doubt exacerbated these antagonisms as imperial status was unstable. It would appear that European citizens in Bombay and Calcutta were less happy to contribute equally, albeit differently, towards the greater success of India, than was arguably the comparable case in Scotland. It paints a picture of an imperial network within which none of the participants had agreed the role they would play, or how they would relate to each other.

One of the main issues for Bombay and Glasgow was the lack of resources in comparison to the secondary capitals. As Chapter Three will explore, secondary capitals received state funding to establish and support museums, whereas commercial cities like Glasgow, were only able to do so if supported by the ratepayers. Moreover, these national institutions were provided with finances, resources, and curators beyond the scope of those in commercial cities. Consequently, local public museums, like those found in Glasgow and Bombay, were more closely associated with civic achievement than the national, or indeed, imperial institutions in Edinburgh and Calcutta. Without government sponsorship provided to Calcutta and Edinburgh, citizens were asked to actively contribute to these civic institutions.

A clear example of this, which feeds into the focus on public museums throughout the rest of this thesis, is provided by travel writer Isabelle Burton. Prior to this trip, Burton had never visited India, unlike her husband Sir Richard Francis Burton, famous author and explorer, who had joined the Bombay army in 1842.¹⁹⁶ As a result, their trip followed ‘his old quarters’ which led to the pair cutting ‘India down the middle lengthways’, and leaving the eastern side for another year, explains the omission of Calcutta.¹⁹⁷ In Bombay,

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Jason Thompson, ‘Burton, Sir Richard Francis (1821 – 1890)’ in *ODNB*, online edn, 2009 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/4136> [accessed 27 April 2021]

¹⁹⁷ Isabel Burton, *Arabia, Egypt, India: narrative of travel* (London and Belfast: William Mullian and Son, 1879), p.1.

however, she witnessed humorous ‘private theatricals’ from her host Mr. Melville, which included the following:

O my dear brethren, what a stain is this
On the fair fame of our metropolis!
We boast of our fine buildings, and we utter
Contemptuous remarks about Calcutta;
Look at our splendid Sailors’ Home! “Yes, look:
It holds two sailors and a drunken cook.”
Look at our University! how grand!
There’s not a building like it in the land!
“It cost ten lakhs,” you say? Humph, rather dear:
“Is it much used?” – Well, only once a year.
Then our Museum! What a gorgeous pile
Of architecture in Renaissance style!
“No doubt it’s full of treasures? Let us knock:
Ugh! Specimens of cotton, and trap-rock!”
Don’t laugh. With all this money (oh! ‘tis sad),
Think what a Theatre we might have had!¹⁹⁸

There is certainly familiarity to be found between the impression of Bombay provided here and those of Glasgow. Bombay’s museum, like Glasgow’s, had a primarily practical purpose, intended for the expansion of trade. However, as an exercise in civic enterprise, Bombay’s museum was more closely associated with a form of civic pride than the Imperial Museum in Calcutta was ever able to incite. On administrative grounds, however, the *Indian Times* was begrudgingly willing to admit inferiority to the capital. ‘The Bengal Administrative Report for 1882 – 83’ was ‘one thing in which Bengal surpasses Bombay’ because the report was ‘better printed, better bound, better arranged, contains more facts, and is more readable’ than the one produced for the Bombay Presidency.¹⁹⁹

By 1910, claims that Calcutta was the ‘second city of the Empire’ had begun to be made more frequently, even though its position as the capital of India had yet to be relinquished. A report in *Englishman’s Overland Mail* reveals that:

While Calcutta and Bombay have been wrangling over the title of the First City in India and the distinction of being the second city in the Empire, a rival has been silently steeling a march over them and bids fair to succeed in annexing the reputation of being the second largest city in the Empire.²⁰⁰

This shadowy city was not, surprisingly, Glasgow, but Birmingham. The India-based paper was certain that ‘Calcutta and Bombay will not let their rival wrest their laurel from them

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 223.

¹⁹⁹ ‘There is one thing in which Bengal surpasses Bombay’, *Times of India*, 26 May 1884, p.4.

²⁰⁰ ‘The Week’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 16 June 1910, p. 1.

without an effort.’²⁰¹ Indeed, to fend off their competitors, the journalist recommended that ‘now is the time for marshalling out all the statistics about birth-rates and death-rates, the number of mills, bridges, gardens and beautiful buildings.’²⁰² This neatly summarises the grounds on which Bombay waged war on Calcutta’s claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire’, and affirms that a developed civic culture, indicated by the ‘gardens and beautiful buildings’ was an important part of civic status, which will be discussed in the next chapter. The *Englishman’s Overland Mail* report counters that ‘the question of good drains and roads might well be omitted’, because, on these grounds, Calcutta would be found lacking. Importantly, the report concluded that ‘at the present juncture when an outsider is contesting the title of being the second city in the Empire we have no doubt Calcutta and Bombay will combine and forget personal differences to retain an evergreen topic of discussion for India.’²⁰³ Competition between Calcutta and Bombay did not wane, and instead of rhetorically rallying against a common rival – Birmingham – the paper continues to position them in direct competitions with each other. This contrasts rhetoric in Glaswegian papers which often sought to dispel any idea that the city needed to compete with Edinburgh.

Contemporary comparisons between Glasgow and Edinburgh and Bombay and Calcutta have highlighted the different layers of identities which were at play in each city. Comparisons between the city’s capacity to create and maintain cultural assets in the secondary capitals, Edinburgh and Calcutta, incited competition and active responses from Glasgow and Bombay. The ‘second city of the Empire’ was therefore a way of encouraging citizens in the latter two cities to support actions to improve the cultural fabric of the city, in order for it to compare more favourably with their competitors to the East. In terms of the ‘other’, second city rhetoric was one way of creating a distinct identity, which was true of Calcutta too, as its claim was based on the fact it had these cultural and administrative assets. On the other hand, the Scott Celebrations have shown that civic leaders in Glasgow used the ‘second city of the Empire’ to assert a claim to Scotland’s national heritage and identity. Culture, unlike a historical past, was malleable and therefore could be improved upon.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

Conclusions

This chapter has shown that the key facets to claims to be the ‘second city of the Empire’ can be grouped under four areas; population, administrative profile, commerce and industry, and a developed civic culture. Rhetorically, the ‘second city of the Empire’ was therefore the most populous, politically important and commercially successful. Crucially, the presence and quality of certain cultural institutions were used to justify or discredit claims to be the second city, which centred on these factors. What was fitting of the city of that status was defined by other cities but also the particular environments posed by Glasgow and Calcutta.

Glasgow’s civic elite led an assiduous and effective campaign to promote the city as the ‘second city of the Empire’, and, as a result, commentators who reflected on the city tended to incorporate this notion too. Whereas Glasgow’s image had been framed in close connection with the ‘second city of Empire’ epithet from the mid-nineteenth century, Calcutta was not regularly promoted in this way until the turn of the next century. Mainly, it has been argued, because the status of the city rested strongly on its position as the ‘Metropolis of India’ and secondary capital to London, but with the rise of Nationalism in the city at the turn of the century, this rationale was brought into flux. Consequently, the ‘second city of the Empire’ acted to remind Calcutta’s citizens, and those outside it, that the metropole had a vital role to play in the British Empire. Indeed, as a survey of the Hansard records has shown, Glasgow was the city most consistently referred to as the second city from the 1860s onwards, whilst Calcutta was not actively connected to the title in this setting until the 1900s. Though this survey has been far from exhaustive, it is clear that Glasgow’s civic elite certainly sought to differentiate the city’s role within Scotland, Britain and the Empire through projections of the ‘second city of Empire’ title, which shaped impressions of the city more widely. Second city rhetoric was therefore a competitive field, which was informed by the cities that were being compared. As Chapter Six will explore, George Curzon, 1st Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, Viceroy of India at the turn of the twentieth century, was keen to place Calcutta in a competitive comparative arena with other capital cities, particularly those in Europe.

Chapter Two - Comparing civic infrastructure in the second cities of the Empire c. 1850 - 1910

Unlike other rhetorical adages discussed in the previous chapter – whether the ‘City of Palaces’ or ‘Dear Green Place’, the ‘second city of the Empire’ necessarily invited comparisons between different urban centres. The key characteristics of a second city, namely population, administrative role, and commerce and industry engendered a toolkit that facilitated comparisons between significant cities. These can be thought of as the trappings of a viable second city, which included a town hall, university, public museum, galleries, and libraries, as well as other desirable spaces, such as public parks and botanical gardens. In line with MacKenzie’s call for greater consideration of ‘the messages conveyed by built structures’ in imperial cities, this chapter analyses the styling of cultural infrastructure in Glasgow and Calcutta.²⁰⁴ Indeed, R. J. Morris and Richard Rodger argue that ‘civic pretensions were physically located in conspicuous town buildings.’²⁰⁵ Town buildings were aspirational, and thus provide a useful way to explore the civic confidence and defensiveness that was so intrinsic to second city status. Glasgow in particular became ‘a city of self-consciously grand public buildings,’ which were linked to its position within the Empire.²⁰⁶ Calcutta was endowed with the trappings of a capital city, including its Government House (1803), Town Hall (1813), Public Library (1836), Universities – Presidency College of Bengal (1855) and University of Calcutta (1857), General Post Office (1867), Imperial Museum (1866), and Imperial Library (1903). The comparative historicity of many of these civic and cultural institutions later became part of Calcutta’s claim to the ‘second city of the Empire’, so that whilst they were built around the mid-century, this infrastructure would become part of the city’s defensive rhetoric at the turn of the twentieth.

The lack or perceived unworthiness of a civic institution was used to discredit second city claims. Cultural institutions, especially high-quality ones, were an indication of an advanced municipal body and an educated and engaged citizenship, because citizens often had to invest their time, money and energy into the institution to make it successful. There was an expectation that museums and galleries would offer ‘complete’ collections – a marker of quality and utility, which meant that cultural and collecting strategies were a key

²⁰⁴ MacKenzie, *The British Empire through buildings*, p.6.

²⁰⁵ R. J. Morris and Richard Rodger, (eds), *The Victorian City A Reader in British Urban History 1820 – 1914* (London: Longman, 1993), 21.

²⁰⁶ MacKenzie, *The British Empire through buildings*, p.3.

ingredient in the making of claims to be a second city. For example, many commentators suggested that the absence of a suitable public library in Glasgow destabilised the city's imperial status.²⁰⁷ In 1890 at 'the annual meeting of Stirling's and Glasgow's Public Library', Professor Andrew Cecil Bradley (1851 – 1935), who had recently moved from University College, Liverpool, to the University of Glasgow, observed that:

He saw no reason why a city should be fond of being the second biggest city in the empire, and he had been accustomed to say to friends in Liverpool, "Don't talk about being the second city in the empire until you have a university such as the University of Glasgow." Perhaps he might say here "Don't talk about being the second city of the empire until we have a great free library like the library in Liverpool."²⁰⁸

Bradley gets to the crux of second city rhetoric: it could be used to mean whatever the commentator wanted it to mean and, in this case, the perceived quality of the city's university or library was seen to reflect the credibility of its claim. This sort of commentary was used to encourage the establishment or improvement of cultural institutions. Actual motivations to develop cultural infrastructure were, however, multifaceted, and included; national and municipal political trends, civic competition, promoting the city's image, nurturing civic pride, and a need to elevate the lives of other citizens, particularly following increased democratisation in Britain.

Other criticisms about the high concentration of poverty and social vices, that were levied at both Calcutta and Glasgow, also provided impetus for change. As I. G. C. Hutchison surmises, given the 'huge and sustained pressure of urban population growth' urban infrastructure 'would struggle, even with the most active responses.'²⁰⁹ This chapter therefore addresses ways that comparisons between cities encouraged responses and critiques towards second city claims, which reflected on the prevalence of vice and poverty. In turn, critiques stimulated varied responses, one of which was to propagate municipal improvement works.

In Glasgow, building this civic and cultural infrastructure was motivated and justified at different times by comparisons with local Scottish cities, British industrial cities – like Manchester or Liverpool, and by second cities of other European empires. Cultural infrastructure and civic improvement works were a tangible way of demonstrating

²⁰⁷ 'Glasgow Public Libraries Association' *The Scotsman*, 9 November 1886, p. 6.; W. E. Garrett Fisher, 'Glasgow – A Model Municipality', *Fortnightly Review* 57 (1895), p. 609; A Lover of Books, 'Glasgow and Liverpool', *Liverpool Mercury*, 7 September, 1895, p.6.

²⁰⁸ 'Stirling's and Glasgow Public Library', *Glasgow Herald*, 9 April 1890, p.4.

²⁰⁹ I. G. C. Hutchison, *Industry, Reform and Empire Scotland, 1790 – 1880* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), p.95.

Glasgow's rising status within the perceived hierarchy of imperial cities. Amongst imperial provincial cities, Glasgow therefore transitioned from being a follower to a leader of cultural infrastructure, across the second half of the nineteenth-century, with momentum building from the 1860s. In line with this growing civic confidence, Glasgow's second city rhetoric incorporated ideas about progress and improvement. That said, innovations such as the People's Palace or the new Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, can also be read as showing a certain civic defensiveness – a bid to maintain imperial significance through the possession of leading cultural infrastructure.

Calcutta provides a complex case study because of the layered governmental bodies responsible for different aspects of it – composed of the Government of India, the Government of Bengal, and the Calcutta Corporation. Civic cultural infrastructure in the colonial context was further complicated by the understanding that not all of the city's inhabitants were considered members of its citizenship. As Swati Chattopadhyay argues, 'in political terms, under colonialism, Indians could only be subjects, not citizens.'²¹⁰ Consequently, who was permitted into these civic spaces sheds light on who was seen to contribute positively to the citizenship, and therefore strengthen the city's position within the Empire. Yet, Calcutta was littered with 'commercial, trade and professional associations, literary and scientific associations, ethnic organizations and caste associations, charitable societies, sport and recreational clubs and property owners' and citizens' groups, such as ward associations and rate payers' committees.'²¹¹ In fact, during the nineteenth-century, it 'possessed more voluntary associations per head of literate population than most European cities of comparable size', which reflects layered hybridity between public and private enterprise, as well as civic confidence and defensiveness. Confident because different groups were able to meet within the parameters of colonial control, and defensive because residents in the city were keen to establish organisations which would compare favourably with their European counterparts.

Race was also a key issue which impacted Calcutta's colonial and historicised image as the centre of 'English' rule. The city's superiority over Bombay was partly argued on the basis that Calcutta had a larger 'white' presence, which were seen to reflect a more cosmopolitan and modern society. On the reverse, Irish migration into Glasgow was

²¹⁰ Swati Chattopadhyay, 'Politics, Planning, and Subjection, Anticolonial Nationalism and Public Space in Colonial Calcutta' in *City Halls and Civic Materialism, Towards a Global History of Urban Public Space* ed. by Swati Chattopadhyay and Jeremy White (London: Routledge, 2014), p.205.

²¹¹ Chris Furedy, 'Interest Groups and Municipal Management in Calcutta, 1875 – 1890', *Historical Papers/Communications historiques*, 8: 1 (1973), p.191.

deemed to equate to social ills, such as poverty and drunkenness, and therefore hampered the city's national and imperial status.

Consequently, this chapter elucidates the symbiotic relationship between the development of cultural infrastructure and second city rhetoric, in order to demonstrate that, whilst arguably the most important, public museums were not the only way that civic imperial aspirations became embroiled in public institutions.

Trappings of a 'second city of the Empire'

Although there were many important trappings in a purported 'second city of the Empire', this section takes the town halls in Glasgow and Calcutta as key examples of the convergence of second city rhetoric with civic infrastructure, and, the spaces where citizenship and imperial aspirations intermingled.²¹² Indeed, Chattopadhyay argues that the Town Hall became part of the 'early nineteenth century British vision of Calcutta' as the capital 'that sought to impress the power of the ruling elite on the landscape.'²¹³

Calcutta's Town Hall (pictured below) was proposed in 1792 to provide a public space for the city's inhabitants to meet, and was later completed in 1813.²¹⁴ As shown by Appendix II, it was located near other colonial power-wielding buildings, and its privileged position alongside the new Government House and the Supreme Court forged a political centre. Following the construction of these governmental buildings, Matheson noted that during his visit in 1860, though 'great improvements' were still required, 'the capital of our Indian empire' was 'much more suitable [...] for the important purpose it subserves' owing to the institutions which were being developed at the time (the University, Post Office and Imperial Museum).²¹⁵ These structures were subsequently dismissed as 'a vast ugly pile of buildings – the Imperial Secretariat – where the administration of the Empire is conducted during the winter months,' suggesting that they were more suited to function than beautifying the Empire.²¹⁶ MacKenzie assesses that 'imperial power invariably seeks to spread the characteristics of its cultural and intellectual pre-eminence across the extent of its empire.'²¹⁷ In this case, the Town Hall was progressed to house and display statues of

²¹² See Groten, 'Glasgow's new town hall', for recent scholarship published after I completed my research.

²¹³ Chattopadhyay, 'Politics', p.200.

²¹⁴ Ibid., p.199.

²¹⁵ Matheson, *England to Delhi*, p. 240.

²¹⁶ Forrest, *Cities of India*, p. 288.

²¹⁷ MacKenzie, *The British Empire through buildings*, p.1.

Lord Cornwallis and Lord Wellesley, the former governor general of the East India Company, which had been sent from England. Interestingly, more than a meeting place, this Town Hall was intended to secure a narrative for the city, based on the story Britons told themselves about Calcutta, discussed in the previous chapter. Moreover, it provides an example of aesthetic concerns driving the formation of a colonial building. Since 1998, the Town Hall has been used for the Kolkata Panorama, ‘India’s first high-tech story-telling museum on the history of Kolkata, built by the Kolkata Museum Society (a Kolkata Municipal Corporation Project).’²¹⁸ This, Chattopadhyay considers was ‘a tableau of Calcutta’s history and a visual narrative of anticolonial nationalism’, which, ‘in a poignant way the museumification of Town Hall returned the space to its original function.’²¹⁹ When I visited in the Autumn of 2018 it was undergoing restoration work, with plans to redevelop the space for a new phase in its storytelling.



Figure 2.1 Town Hall of Calcutta, 1858-61

²¹⁸ ‘Kolkata Panorama’, *Kolkata Municipal Corporation*,
<<https://www.kmcgov.in/KMCPortal/jsp/KolkataPanorama.jsp>>[accessed 16 March 2021].

²¹⁹ Chattopadhyay, ‘Politics’, p. 199.

The town hall is a uniquely potent symbol of European self-importance on the subcontinent, initially designed for civic rather than governmental purposes, as a space for relationships and networks to blossom. As this photograph shows, the design was classical, styled by Colonel John Garstin of the Engineers, ‘in excess of even the typical palatial scale of public and private buildings in the city.’²²⁰ Chattopadhyay persuasively argues that ‘the notion that these building ideas were completely imported from England [...] is based on the neo-classical “look” of the buildings, with no attempt to document and examine plans and sections.’²²¹ Mirroring this hybridity, *Thackers Guide* notes that ‘the funds for building the Town Hall were raised by a series of annual lotteries organised under the patronage of the Government of India during the years 1806 to 1808’.²²² Whilst this funded the exterior, the interior was paid for by the Government of India.²²³ In 1867, the Calcutta Municipality took over the building from the Justices of the Peace.²²⁴ As well as propagating obvious messages about colonial power, the space was used for a wide range of events, including; the usual banquets, balls, dinner receptions, and memorial meetings’, as well as ‘concerts, theatres, art and photography exhibitions, examinations prize distribution, convocation ceremonies for schools and colleges, and meetings of several elite associations.’²²⁵ This was a fundamentally multi-purpose space. During the week, the Town Hall was open to the public so that they could view the statues in the lower hall. *Thacker’s Guide* shows that by 1906, the collection of ‘monuments and statues’ had grown significantly and included a ‘white marble statue of Maharaja Ramanath Tagore’ who had died in 1871.²²⁶ The statuary also included a monument to Lord Cornwallis, ‘in the guise of a Roman general’ and a ‘statue of the Marquess of Hastings’, which had since been ‘removed to Dalhousie Square’, and a ‘marble statue of Warren Hastings’ stood to the south, but was intended for removal to a more salubrious setting at the Victoria Memorial Hall.²²⁷

Comparing the Town Hall alongside other civic and administrative structures built in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, highlights the importance of purpose in colonial buildings. Meaning was, in this sense, created from within as much as from external facades.

²²⁰ Ibid., p.201.

²²¹ Chattopadhyay, ‘Blurring Boundaries’, p.154.

²²² Rev. W. K. Firminger, *Thacker’s Guide to Calcutta* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co., 1906), p. 44.

²²³ Chattopadhyay, ‘Politics’, p.201.

²²⁴ Ibid., p.203.

²²⁵ Chattopadhyay, ‘Politics’, p.206.

²²⁶ Firminger, *Thacker’s Guide*, p.203.

²²⁷ Ibid.



Figure 2.2 Government House photographed 1850s – 1870s by Francis Frith ©Victoria & Albert Museum, London



Figure 2.3 Metcalfe Hall, Calcutta photographed 1850s – 1870s by Francis Frith ©Victoria & Albert Museum, London



Figure 2.4 The University of Calcutta photographed 1850s – 1870s by Francis Frith ©Victoria & Albert Museum, London

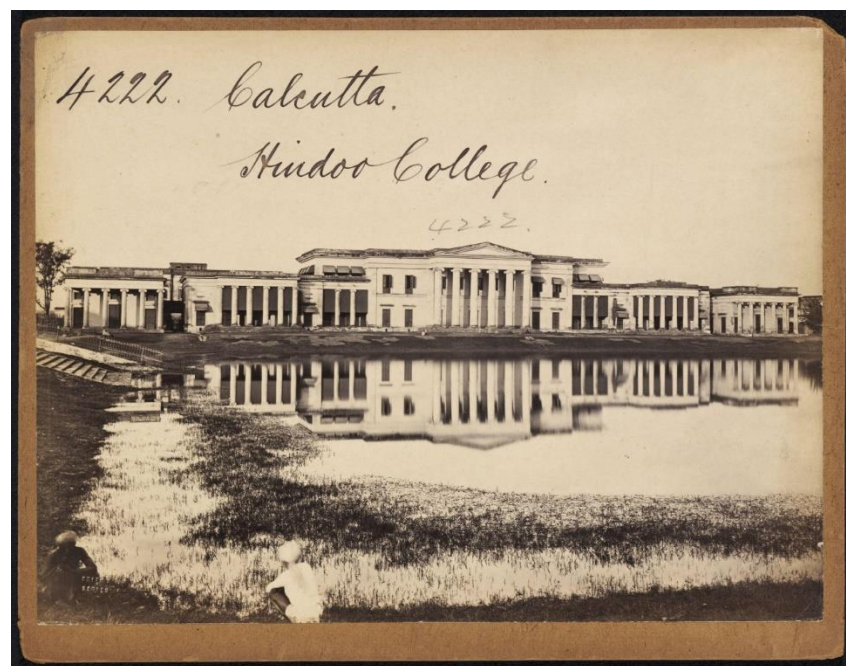


Figure 2.5 Hindoo College, Calcutta photographed 1850s – 1870s by Francis Frith ©Victoria & Albert Museum, London

Together, these buildings made up the trappings of a colonial capital, which Calcutta relied on for its status. Even after the removal of the capital to Delhi, they provided the physical evidence that Calcutta had been the Empire's priority in India. As a result, the formation of the urban space influenced how second city rhetoric was manifested in Calcutta.



Figure 2.6 *Glasgow Municipal Buildings*, Mitchell Library, GC f 914.1435 STR

Whilst Calcutta's Town Hall was subsequently incorporated into notions of the 'second city of the Empire', many decades after its original construction, as I will argue below, Glasgow's Victorian iteration was always and deliberately intertwined with assertions of and aspirations towards the title. Above is an illustration of the Glasgow City Chambers, which were begun in 1883, and inaugurated by Queen Victoria during her trip to open the city's International Exhibition in 1888. These new Italianate buildings were a conspicuous statement of the city's increased wealth and status by the 1880s. Indeed, the city needed a 'suitable custom-designed premises to accommodate the ever-expanding bureaucracy' and, as Maver surmises, 'there was ultimately the added factor of maintaining Glasgow's status.'²²⁸ As Appendix II shows, they were centrally located in George Square as a much-needed focal point for municipal power. Indeed, as Morris and Rodger argue, they 'became a symbol' of Glasgow, and, by the turn of the twentieth-century, demonstrations were held there to 'lay symbolic claim to power within the city' – a

²²⁸ Maver, *Glasgow*, p. 155.

tradition which continues today.²²⁹ An exploration of the civic pageantry surrounding the laying of the foundation stone in 1883 has revealed the deliberately assertive messaging of the City Chambers. Maver describes it as ‘a tangible expression of Glasgow’s civic self-confidence towards the end of the nineteenth century.’²³⁰ Significantly, this expression was one which a huge proportion of Glasgow’s population took up enthusiastically.

No ceremony was spared in the proceedings. As the *Illustrated London News* reported; ‘A masonic procession, and a procession of the building trades, the textile industries, the metal workers, shipwrights, and miscellaneous trades, with the people in the employ of the Corporation and the Clyde Trust, passed through some of the principal streets.’²³¹ Every surface around George Square was awash with onlookers to whom James Brown of 76 St. Vincent Street, had advertised the sale of opera and field glasses in the *Glasgow Evening Citizen*.²³² This popular appeal, according to the press, translated to ‘over 200,000 spectators – the “biggest” affair of the kind that has ever taken place in Glasgow.’²³³ In fact, varying businesses had chosen to close or close early on 6th October to ensure mass spectatorship.²³⁴ In the evening there was also a ‘banquet, and a conversazione’ for the few, and ‘pyrotechnic displays were given in the public parks, Glasgow-green, Kelvin-grove, the Alexandra and Queen’s Park’ for the many.²³⁵ Such civic pageantry was not without its critics: indeed the *John o’Groat Journal* observed that ‘some economists are already grumbling at the expense, which is calculated to come to something like a penny in the £. But if the affair proves a gigantic success [...] the grumble will have little chance of being heard.’²³⁶ Others, were only concerned about the weather being favourable.²³⁷

Conscious of civic aspirations, John Ure, the Lord Provost (1824 – 1901), ‘in laying the foundation-stone, said this was the sixth time since 1626 that a new municipal structure had to be erected larger than its predecessor.’²³⁸ In doing so, he acknowledged both the city’s rapidly increasing population, a sign of its strength as the second city, and the municipality’s power and dedication to improving Glasgow. Marked both for the present and for posterity, the new municipal buildings were integral to Glasgow’s claim to

²²⁹ Morris and Rodger, *The Victorian City*, pp.8-9.

²³⁰ Maver, *Glasgow*, p. 157.

²³¹ ‘The New Municipal Buildings, *Illustrated London News*, 13 October 1883, p.14.

²³² ‘Laying Foundation Stone’, *Glasgow Evening Citizen*, 5 October 1883, p.2.

²³³ ‘The Glasgow Municipal Buildings’, *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 13 October 1883, p.6.

²³⁴ ‘Laying the Foundation Stone of Glasgow Municipal Buildings’, *Dundee Advertiser*, 5 October 1883, p.1.

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ ‘Municipal Buildings Foundation Stone’, *John O’Groats Journal*, 4 October 1883, p.6.

²³⁷ ‘The Municipal Buildings Demonstration’, *Glasgow Evening Citizen*, 6 October 1883, p.2.

²³⁸ *Dundee Advertiser*, 8 October 1883, p.6.

be the ‘second city of the Empire’. As the *Glasgow Evening Citizen* intimated it was hoped it would ‘be at once a day to be enjoyed and a day to remember – remembered, that is, by many as a spectacle of great crowds made happy to an extent historical in our Glasgow annals.’²³⁹ This hybridity between modernity and historicity was, as the previous chapter has discussed, important for how the ‘second city of the Empire’ was conceived in Glasgow.

Some of these seemingly wholly public institutions were actually hybrid spaces in which the public and private intermingled, both proving essential to their functionality, which will be discussed in the museum context in Chapter Four with relation to the development of museums in the 1880s. This hybridity was a way of eliciting private funds for public projects. Whereas Calcutta’s Town Hall derived gravitas from its age, the administrations in Bombay and Glasgow decided that huge expenditure on a new municipal centre could be justified on the basis that the building would be a viable method for showcasing the city’s status. Newspaper discussions reveal that there was a close connection between Bombay’s claim to the ‘second city of the Empire’ and the emergence of grand civic architecture. In a report examining proposals for new municipal building it was thought ‘six or eight lakhs of rupees’ to be ‘too insufficient’ for such structures belonging to ‘the Municipality of the second city in the Empire.’²⁴⁰ Consequently, from the initial sum, the ‘proposed expenditure’ for Bombay rose so that it was ‘suggested that we ought to spend something like fifteen lakhs, and even more, if we are to have a building worthy of *Urbs prima in Indis*.’²⁴¹ This epithet translates to the first city in India, which suggests that there were those in Bombay who considered the city to hold a premier position. This ‘proud motto for Bombay’ was purportedly invented by James Mackenzie Maclean, author of the 1875 *Guide to Bombay*. It is important to note that this competitive civic rhetoric was being created by colonial officials. In his guide, he stated that ‘Bombay is still, however, more populous than Calcutta or Madras, and in point of numbers is entitled to the rank of the second city in the British Empire.’²⁴² The *Times of India* argued that *Urbs prima in Indis* had ‘not conferred an unmixed blessing on the city’ because it was ‘dragged in as an apology and a justification for extravagance.’²⁴³ Furthermore, Bombay

²³⁹ *Glasgow Evening Citizen*, 5 October 1883, p.2.

²⁴⁰ ‘The Proposed New Municipal Hall’, *Times of India*, 9 April 1888, p. 5.; approximately £2.5 million today.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² J. M. Maclean, *Maclean’s Guid to Bombay* (Bombay: Steam Press, 1875), p.78.

²⁴³ *Times of India*, 9 April 1888, p. 5.

felt that they ‘must live up to our name – never mind the cost’, and certainly a similar sentiment can be seen to have justified the cost of Glasgow Municipal Buildings.²⁴⁴

Simultaneous with Glasgow, Bombay’s civic leaders were increasingly concerned that their city’s institutions should befit its claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire’, which reveals something about its competition with Calcutta too. In 1884, *The Indian Times* asked whether ‘Bombay will ever have gardens worthy of the second city in the Empire.’²⁴⁵ In 1885, it was alleged that twenty years previously Mr Dosabhooy Framjee had exclaimed ‘“Fifteen museums in London Alone!...and Bombay, the second city in the Empire, struggling to get one!”’²⁴⁶ In 1888, the same paper despaired that ‘Bombay, the second city of the Empire, seems incapable of starting a Zoological garden,’ which was presumably inspired by jealousy towards Calcutta.²⁴⁷ The main qualm on this occasion was that Kurachi had a small zoological garden ‘of considerable scientific value’, yet ‘petty, social, and official obstacles’ prevented the same for Bombay. It is curious, though perhaps not surprising, that by the mid-1880s, Calcutta was equipped with noteworthy botanical gardens, its Imperial Museum had incorporated the Bengal Economic Museum, the city had hosted India’s first International Exhibition and, it had zoological gardens too.²⁴⁸ In Bombay, like Glasgow, the city’s claim to be the second of the Empire was used by newspapers to justify public expenditure on civic buildings, and raise further private enterprise to assist such projects. As the next chapter will investigate, this tactic was deployed in the Glasgow museum context, though not until it had already been established, which suggests that second city rhetoric was oftentimes used to procure improvements for existing structures.

Indeed, returning to Calcutta’s Town Hall, this time in the opening decades of the twentieth century, newspaper reports show that Calcutta’s citizens deployed second city rhetoric in a bid to deliver the city with a new Town Hall. A report on a meeting of the Calcutta Corporation in the *Englishman’s Overland Mail* reveals that, by 1909, ‘the fate of the present unsightly and unsafe Town Hall’ had ‘been before the Calcutta public for some

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ ‘There is one thing in which Bengal surpasses Bombay’, *Times of India*, 26 May 1884, p.4.

²⁴⁶ ‘In reference to our remarks upon the Albert and Victoria Museum’, *Times of India*, 9 October 1885, p. 4.

²⁴⁷ ‘The Bombay Government, as we announced the other day, have refused to accede to the request of the Natural History Society to grant them the use of the waste and marshy ground at the foot of Chowpatty, for the purposes of a Zoological Garden.’ *Times of India*, 12 October 1888, p.4.

²⁴⁸ The Zoological Gardens owed their existence to ‘the great energy of Sir Richard Temple’, whom Forrest described as ‘a strong administrator and a man of genius.’²⁴⁸ Temple (1826 – 1902) was the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal between 1874 and 1877 had begun his career in India with the East India Company in January 1847.

time.’²⁴⁹ At one point ‘it was considered a kind of white elephant’ kept by the Corporation ‘rather for its rarity than for its use.’²⁵⁰ Scathingly, it continued that ‘there is not such another Town Hall in the Empire and not one quite so useless.’²⁵¹ Despite its degraded state and very infrequent use, the Town Hall was seemingly retained because of its historical significance. Importantly, Calcutta’s historicity was a key facet of claims made to be the ‘second city of the Empire’ by the turn of the twentieth century. By contrast, Glasgow’s historicity was based on its medieval links, and anything after that was mostly removed to make way for progress, as illustrated by the recurrent replacements of the city’s town hall advertised by Ure. In this way, the Town Hall was a symbol for Calcutta within the imperial machine – previously crucial, but increasingly redundant. In previous times, they claim, Commissioners used to ‘regularly’ propose a ‘new Town Hall in some central locality and worthy of the traditions of a great city.’ The article makes reference to the Town Hall as ‘the scene of “protest” meetings’, which may also have provided motivation for the people that sought to replace it. They argued that ‘now in every great town there are buildings round which historical and sentimental associations cluster’, but Calcutta’s Town Hall was not worthy of the same treatment.²⁵² Indeed, they hoped that this sort of sentimentality would be rebuffed by those Commissioners with ‘any kind of civic pride’ so they would get on with ‘the business of giving Calcutta a Town Hall worthy of the second city in the Empire.’²⁵³ Underlying this debate was inherent colonial anxiety, which was further reflected in the second city claims made in favour of Calcutta after the turn of the century that were based on its comparatively historical links. Really, ‘historical’ in this context meant a connection to the origins of English colonialism in India, so, what is packaged here as sentimentality was a desire to maintain the lineage that the Town Hall symbolised. It was linked in so many ways to the fabrication of Calcutta’s British past, a space where decisions were made about the city. If the colonial elite started removing monuments like the Town Hall, they would be sending subliminal messages that what had been created could be uncreated. Even if the intention was to replace it with a more becoming structure, the demolition of such a potent symbol of colonial and municipal power would suggest that other, less potent symbols could also be raised to the ground. To remove it would have been a confident gesture, to keep it was essentially civic and colonial defensiveness.

²⁴⁹ ‘The Town Hall’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 22 April 1909, p. 3.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Ibid.

²⁵³ Ibid.

Indeed, it is telling that further calls in the early twentieth century for a new City Hall were not taken up in subsequent years. Wilmot Corfield had previously written to the *Englishman's Overland Mail* to offer his views on the Victoria Memorial Scheme, discussed in Chapter Six. He used this mode of communication with his fellow Calcutta residents again in 1907 to discuss his ideas for a new City Hall, because 'the newspapers alone are open to the non-official citizen for the expression of his views.'²⁵⁴ He felt that any reticence on the issue of cost should be set aside for 'so important a building as a City Hall for an enormous city like ours.'²⁵⁵ To further his point, he utilised a line of argument used frequently in Glasgow and Bombay, that if Calcutta was to compete effectively with other comparable cities then civic improvements were vital. Specifically, 'Manchester spent over a million sterling on her City Hall and Calcutta claims to be the second City of the Empire! Manchester not being the first.'²⁵⁶

How civic and cultural institutions were tied to the second city epithet sheds light on the ways civic pride was perceived and developed from the mid-nineteenth century and into the twentieth. In Glasgow the allegedly unique qualities of its citizens were an integral part of its assertions to be the 'second city of the Empire.' Its prolific industry, for example, would not, according to this narrative, have been impossible without the natural ambition and dedication of the Glaswegian people. In Calcutta, this notion of civic pride took much longer to visibly manifest, because, unlike in Glasgow, there was not a clear idea of what the ideal Calcuttan should be. Incorporating a colonised population into a model of the 'second city of the Empire' was not a priority until Calcutta's status rested more heavily on its burgeoning population. A report following the death of King Edward in 1910 observed that the civic pride, which had hitherto been absent, was starting to emerge on the streets of Calcutta. Importantly, this was framed around the growing number of civic buildings, and second city rhetoric:

A great deal has been done in recent years, chiefly as the result of private enterprise, in the way of beautifying Calcutta. One result of the accession year by year of stately edifices has been to create in Calcutta a new civic pride. A dozen years ago Calcutta, in spite of her enormous population and vast commerce, was hardly able to create a thrill of pride even in the breasts of her most permanent inhabitants. But that is changing today, and phrases like "the second city in the Empire," "of no mean city am I," "Mistress of the Eastern Seas," are constantly on the lips of citizens and residents.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁴ Wilmot Corfield, 'My Scheme', *Englishman's Overland Mail*, 21 November 1907, p. 17.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Ibid.

²⁵⁷ 'A King Edward Memorial', *Englishman's Overland Mail*, 23 June 1910, p. 3.

There are several things to notice here, firstly that the erection of these ‘stately edifices’ had largely been the product of ‘private enterprise’ rather than state, provincial or municipal governments, thus stressing the hybridity of such spaces. The author goes on to state that ‘civic pride is an asset of the greatest value’ for securing ‘law, order, duty, discipline and restraint’. In this way, civic pride was perceived to have benefits for the city, particularly as a mode of obtaining colonial order and differentiating urban environments from each other, through the buildings it inspired individuals to fund. These different epithets were no doubt a means of negotiating growing anxiety in Calcutta.

Critiquing and responses to second city claims

Beyond the self-styled grandeur of Glasgow and Calcutta’s administrative centres lay an altogether different story, one characterised by deprivation more than refinement. Whilst colonial and civic elites went to great pains to provide the appropriate cultural trappings to embolden each city’s position within the imperial network, often, these were not the aspects which drew the most attention. Rather, a large number of column inches and travel paragraphs were reserved for the abject vice and poverty in the Empire’s second cities. Though poverty could be considered one of the unavoidable ramifications of a large and growing population, especially in industrialised cities like Glasgow and Calcutta, its prevalence on the urban landscape was critiqued extensively. Whilst the well-off relied heavily on the poor, and industry depended on cheap labour, social commentaries in travelogues and newspapers suggest that poverty and immorality were far from accepted aspects of commercial cities. All cities, including London, contained poverty, but claims made about Glasgow and Calcutta invited questions about what was really fitting for the ‘second city of the Empire’, or, indeed, the ‘Metropolis of India’. The juxtaposition of delights and poverty was integral to urban centres which deployed second city rhetoric, and yet it posed problems with the epithet itself. How could the British Empire express pride in its second city, if it was typified by poverty? Second city rhetoric necessarily included all of the city’s people, regardless of their wealth, class, religion or gender, because a claim to the title always relied, at least partly, on a significant population. How that population lived was therefore vitally tied to claims, particularly as rapid population growth, prompted by Irish in-migration in Glasgow’s case, was seen to negatively impact on the wellbeing of the city as a whole.

How best to deal with the nation's poor was a topic of much discussion and debate within Victorian Britain, with institutions such as the infamous workhouse inaugurated during this period. Just three years before Victoria's reign, the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act was brought into force, which, David Englander has called 'the single most important piece of social legislation ever enacted.'²⁵⁸ Its tendrils were far reaching and 'touched almost every aspect of life and labour in Victorian Britain', and consequently, it recast the 'nature of social obligation and dependency' which characterised the nineteenth century.²⁵⁹ Issues such as the deserving and undeserving poor gave rise to social activism; the Temperance Movement, for example, promoted abstinence from alcohol as a key step to removing vice from the nation.

In Scotland, the Temperance Movement was particularly strong. Temperance was actively promoted in Glasgow; the Scottish Temperance League, for example, presented a diagram they had prepared 'showing Expenditure on Alcoholic Liquors' to the City Industrial Museum in 1886.²⁶⁰ Consequently, it had a big following in Glasgow, resulting in fifty councillors elected from the Progressive Union, which took 'up the question of temperance in a very energetic manner' in 1896.²⁶¹ Indeed, the 'political success of the temperance movement', Maver argues, illustrates the effective 'cultivation of a much bigger and less predictable section of the voting population.'²⁶² However, 'some critics suggested that it smacked too much of social control under the guise of the godly imperative.'²⁶³ The Glasgow Corporation could not shy away from the conditions of its poorest citizens, and councillors therefore looked for changes which could be affected to improve living conditions and propagate the city's effectiveness. Driven by an 'evangelical impulse' related to Scottish Presbyterianism, the Glasgow Corporation aimed 'to project distinctive moral values on behaviour, especially by instilling such socially desirable qualities as self-control and moderation.'²⁶⁴ The perceived morality of the city's citizens was also discussed in conjunction with its claims to be the 'second city of the Empire'. Cardiff's *Evening Express* noted that it 'has recently established its claim to be called the second city of the United Kingdom, and, after Calcutta and Bombay, the second city of the

²⁵⁸ David Englander, *Poverty and Poor Law Reform in Britain: From Chadwick to Booth, 1834 – 1914* (London: Routledge, 2013), p.1.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

²⁶⁰ *Kelvingrove Museum and Corporation Galleries of Art, Glasgow. Report for the year 1886* (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1886), p.10.

²⁶¹ 'Teetotal Glasgow Councillors' *Evening Express* [Cardiff], 20 November 1896, p.4.

²⁶² Maver, *Glasgow*, p.145.

²⁶³ Ibid., p.147.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., p.83.

Empire’, but, following the city’s municipal elections, it would also be able to claim to be “the most teetotal city of the Empire” too.²⁶⁵

Reversing the gaze from India to the Empire’s metropolis, Burton illustrates that few Indian travellers failed to comment ‘on the poverty, the homelessness and the contrasts between rich and poor’ in London. The capital, particularly from the perspective of those living under British rule in the colonies, was a surprising hotbed of vice. This brought into dispute the idea, which Indian commentators were particularly subjected to as colonial citizens, that London was a centre of progress.²⁶⁶ The abundance of poverty in the first city mirrored the fundamental hybridity of purported second cities, because it seemed unlikely that an urban centre could be prosperous and devoid of suffering, even if it was the capital of the Empire. Though divisions of wealth within cities are not uncommon, this stark contrast expounds the varied responses to the city evidenced in travel narratives. In London, the East End attracted migrant populations, such as the significant Jewish population, which added a racial dynamic to the city’s spatial divisions. There was an ‘impression that the newcomers were the cause of a general deterioration in living conditions in the area.’²⁶⁷ In Glasgow too, the city was divided East and West mirroring London’s split down to Charing Cross. Populating the poorest areas to the East were Irish migrants. At its height in 1851, the Irish population amounted to 7.2 per cent of Scotland’s population.²⁶⁸ Geraldine Vaughan notes that despite their status as ‘subjects of the United Kingdom’, those resident in Scotland during the nineteenth century were often referred to as ‘aliens’.²⁶⁹ In Glasgow, anti-Catholic sentiment emanating from the threat Irish Catholics represented to Presbyterian Scotland, meant that the Catholic poor were blamed for social problems in the city.²⁷⁰

Calcutta, as the capital, became a focal point for examining what the British imperial state was providing for its subjects. In Calcutta there were ‘ambiguous expectations’ about who was responsible for ‘poor areas’ precisely because of ‘the city’s role as the imperial capital of India.’²⁷¹ Most commentators on Calcutta directed their ire at

²⁶⁵ ‘Teetotal Glasgow Councillors’ *Evening Express* [Cardiff], 20 November 1896, p.4.

²⁶⁶ Antoinette Burton, ‘Making a Spectacle of Empire: Indian Travellers in Fin-de-Siècle London’, *History Workshop Journal* 42 (1996), p.134.

²⁶⁷ Laura Vaughan, ‘Nationalities, race and religion’ in *Mapping Society: The Spatial Dimensions of Social Cartography* (London: UCL Press, 2018), p.146.

²⁶⁸ Geraldine Vaughan, *The ‘Local’ Irish in the West of Scotland, 1851- 1921* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p.2.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.2.

²⁷¹ Christine Furedy, ‘Whose responsibility? Dilemmas of Calcutta’s Bustee Policy in the Nineteenth Century’, *South Asia* 5 (1982), p. 24.

the conditions found in Black Town, which were thought to be primitive at best and a blight on the colonial administration at worst. Yet, visitors to the city were often most anxious to see Black Town, if only to comment on the inferior state of its narrow streets when compared to the wide boulevards of White Town, only a stone's throw away, which further drew the rhetorical line between the two. As Stirling iterates, 'the native portion of the town is a direct contrast to the European portion' - the City of Palaces compared to 'a succession of huts made of mud or bamboo.'²⁷² If the 'City of Palaces' only encapsulated a distinct portion of the city, then the 'second city of the Empire' placed Calcutta within a different rhetorical framework; one which necessarily involved all its people. Low observed that Calcutta had a 'great native town' but it was 'not one of which white Calcutta affects to be proud.'²⁷³ Highlighting the city's hybridity, he furthers that the 'native town' has 'the squalor of the East, without its picturesque colour – a nest of mean streets, unpaved, dirty, and shabby, lined with dingy shops and malodorous hovels.'²⁷⁴ Pointing to the peculiarity of Calcutta, he argues that, unlike 'its rival on the West coast', which was 'almost ceasing to be a white man's town', the 'Bengal capital is still the seat of a highly affluent European community.'²⁷⁵ Assertions of Calcutta's Englishness or whiteness suggests that second city rhetoric was implicated in racial defensiveness.

The defence of Glasgow's reputation mounted by expatriates resident in Adelaide, Australia, reveal examples of existing civic pride, as well as the defensive agendas that were linked to civic reputation, and intimately connected to the development of museums. This episode demonstrates that attempts to centre an image of Glasgow exclusively in terms of its dirt and poverty were actively rebutted by Scottish readers, who argued that, whilst unfortunate, these by-products were essential accompaniments to prosperity. Firstly, famed French humourist Léon Paul Blouet using the nom-de-plume Max O'Rell published *Friend MacDonald* in 1887, which gave Glasgow an especially scathing review, calling it 'the dirtiest, blackest, most repulsive-looking nest that it was ever given to man to inhabit.'²⁷⁶ Dirt was of course a necessary consequence of industry and providing people with respite from it formed one of the Glasgow Corporation's core objectives. O'Rell compared the city to 'the dungeon where Satan shuts up those who do not behave themselves.'²⁷⁷ He claimed that the 'vomiting flames and great clouds of smoke' combined

²⁷² Stirling, *A Descriptive Reading*, p.6.

²⁷³ Low, *A Vision of India*, pp. 216 – 217.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., p.216.

²⁷⁶ Max O'Rell, *Friend MacDonald* (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co, 1887), p.144.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

with ‘the humidity of the streets’ to create ‘a black, sticky mud that clogs your footsteps.’²⁷⁸ This highly unpleasant image influenced other writers, and one special correspondent in a letter to the Editor of the *Express and Telegraph* in Adelaide in November 1887, used notably harsh passages from *Friend Macdonald* to corroborate claims he had made a year earlier. In this previous article, the special correspondent had cause to ‘pass severe strictures’ on ‘the vice and poverty’ he had observed in Glasgow, which had been met with ‘strong denials’ from some of his ‘Scotch friends’.²⁷⁹

These strong denials were in response to an article published in *The South Australian Advertiser* on 23rd November 1886 entitled ‘Colonists in Scotland.’²⁸⁰ Whist he conceded that ‘Glasgow is unquestionably a wonderful city from a commercial point of view’, he thought ‘the poverty and vice’ to be ‘simply appalling.’²⁸¹ Whilst the commercial aspects of the city had afforded it ‘some colossal buildings, shops, hotels, warehouses, and private dwellings’ making it a ‘very fine city’, ‘its vice and poverty’ were, to his mind, ‘on a par with its magnificence.’²⁸² The people also fell victim to his caustic pen - ‘Vice, poverty, drunkenness, and squalor stare one in the face on all hands.’ Men and women were ‘intoxicated, and reeling about and fighting on every side’, and children, were all ‘pummelling one another in the gutter.’²⁸³ This damning report presents the stark juxtaposition between commercial prosperity and immense poverty, without necessarily discrediting its claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire’. Instead, it indicates the shocking reality that, really, a second city was inevitably both. The Scottish population in Adelaide would not, however, let the matter rest.

‘One who knows Glasgow’ did not deny the presence of ‘vice and misery in Glasgow’, but wished to remind O’Rell that a ‘city with over half a million of inhabitants can’t be entirely free from vice’ and Glasgow would ‘compare favourably with any city her size.’²⁸⁴ Moreover, M. Wilson argued that everyone would ‘like to see more smoke hovering our fair city of Adelaide, since wealth, progress, and an extension of commerce are so closely associated with it.’²⁸⁵ To his mind, the Glasgow model was one to be emulated not disparaged, particularly as Glasgow was known ‘to be the second city in the

²⁷⁸ Ibid., p.145.

²⁷⁹ Special Correspondent, ‘The City of Glasgow’, *Express and Telegraph* [Adelaide], 21 November 1887, p.2.

²⁸⁰ Special Reporter to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, ‘Colonist in Scotland’, *The South Australian Advertiser*, 23 November 1886, p.5.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Ibid., p.6.

²⁸³ Ibid., p. 5.

²⁸⁴ One Who Knows Glasgow, ‘To the Editor’, *Express and Telegraph* [Adelaide], 23 November 1887, p.7.

²⁸⁵ M. Wilson, ‘To the Editor’, *Express and Telegraph* [Adelaide], 23 November 1887, p.7.

empire.’²⁸⁶ Similarly, ‘An occasional Visitor to Glasgow’ thought that if the ‘works and manufactures’ of that city were ‘transferred’ to South Australia, there would be few that would not ‘cheerfully welcome a considerable quantity of similar dirt and other drawbacks’ if Glasgow’s wealth was guaranteed.²⁸⁷ It is notable that several of these defences were mounted on commercial grounds. A ‘Glasca laddie’ regretted that writers like O’Reil made ‘expressions derogatory’ of Glasgow, when ‘as a British speaking people’ they had ‘so few such cities to boast of.’²⁸⁸ ‘British speaking’, as an expression has not been encountered elsewhere, which may indicate that it emerged in colonial settings like Australia to reflect identifying with the British Empire. Another commentator adding fuel to the fire, noted that “‘Let Glasgow flourish” is the motto on her coat of arms, and she will continue in every good and noble deed to flourish in spite of such totally unfounded statements’ by O’Reil and the special correspondent.²⁸⁹ From this, it is clear that there were Empire wide perceptions about Glasgow, and civic rhetoric, like the ‘second city of the Empire’ was designed to mask its problems, but, in doing so, invited commentary and comparisons with other cities. To conclude the fierce defence of Glasgow’s name within the Australian dominion, the newspaper Editor stated that he would be ‘very careful’ when he published anything ‘about Glasgow in the future if every Scotchman in the colony feels it his duty to reply.’²⁹⁰ These impassioned responses indicate that Bute may have been right when he proclaimed that there could not be a Scotchman anywhere in the Empire who would be without ‘pride’ and ‘affection’ for ‘the commercial metropolis of his country.’²⁹¹ This episode occurred a year before Glasgow’s 1888 International Exhibition, which was a major marketing strategy to improve the city’s image on the world stage, and in some ways a response to the proliferation of bad press connected to vice and poverty. These responses in Adelaide provide evidence that civic sensitivities to detrimental claims about Glasgow, were defensive of the city’s position within the imperial network.

Certainly, the stark divide between civic splendour and architectural ostentation, discussed in the previous section, and, the squalor and poverty, discussed here, drew questions about their validity as second cities more sharply into consideration. The promotion of the civic assets, which had been established and developed by the civic and

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ ‘An Occasional Visitor to Glasgow’, *Express and Telegraph* [Adelaide], 23 November 1887, p.4.

²⁸⁸ M. Wilson, ‘To the Editor’, *Express and Telegraph* [Adelaide], 23 November 1887, p.7.

²⁸⁹ One Who Knows Glasgow, ‘To the Editor’, *Express and Telegraph*, 23 November 1887, p.7

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

²⁹¹ *Glasgow Herald*, 10 August 1871, p. 2.

colonial elite in Glasgow and Calcutta was intended to overshadow and tackle the proliferation of poverty and vice within both cities.

Improving the ‘second city of the Empire’

Improvement works in urban centres, which were instigated by the municipality were obviously designed to enhance living conditions, but such schemes were also, equally obviously, intended to boost the image of the city. As the previous section has shown, poverty and other forms of urban strife were concentrated in Calcutta and Glasgow, which necessitated improvement works of varying kinds.²⁹² Some of these, like the Loch Katrine waterworks in Glasgow, were widely publicised to highlight successful municipal innovation. Whilst social issues were prevalent in both cities, the colonial context significantly altered the way these were dealt with. Indeed, these improvement works contributed to the parameters of second city status. The questions raised about how Glasgow or Calcutta could claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire’ if they were hotbeds of vice and poverty, were rebuffed by examples which demonstrated that the municipality were dealing with the issues effectively. Particularly, as second city rhetoric actively encouraged comparisons between different imperial provincial cities. Inciting second city rhetoric was used by various civic and colonial elites to stimulate and justify change in Glasgow and Calcutta, which formed the basis for rationalising the newly forming public museums, discussed in the following chapter.

Second city rhetoric often converged with civic improvements when the works were propagated in newspapers, and then again when commentators appraised the relative improvement achieved. Using one of Glasgow’s most famous improvement works – the delivery of fresh clean water to the city from Loch Katrine back in 1860, reveals how a municipal project became embedded in Glasgow’s model for the ‘second city of the Empire.’ Firstly, Katrine is a Highland freshwater loch and one of the Trossachs’ scenic attractions, some forty miles north of Glasgow, thus utilising this resource to solve an important problem was praiseworthy in itself, but to do so without causing serious damage to the natural environment was applauded across the world. In Scotland, it both literally and figuratively linked Glasgow to the Highlands, which, in a similar way to Scott, were seen to epitomise Scotland, as discussed in the previous chapter. Commemorating this

²⁹² For Glasgow see Maver, *Glasgow*.

achievement, which had raised its orchestrator Lord Provost Robert Stewart to the ‘pantheon of municipal heroes’, necessitated a physical monument.²⁹³ The Stewart Memorial Fountain, pictured below, was created to honour the project and remains a favourite feature of the city’s premier west end green space, Kelvingrove Park. Atop the fountain sits the ‘Lady of the Lake’, and the tiers below are similarly awash with river imagery. Scott’s bestselling 1810 poem of the same name was set in Loch Katrine and the Trossachs, so its inclusion was a deliberate attempt to tie Glasgow to wider Scottish imagery, and more especially symbolism connected with the Highlands. Note also the University of Glasgow in the background with its unfinished tower and spire.

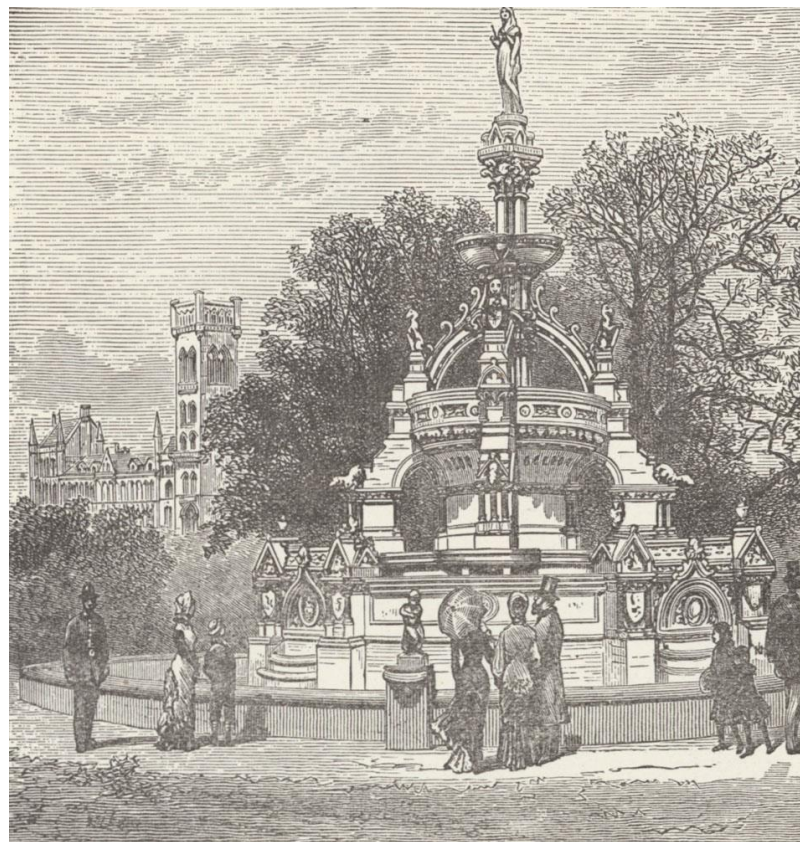


Figure 2.7 The Stewart Memorial Fountain in Kelvingrove Park in 1872, Mitchell Library, GC f 914.1435 STR

Whilst the new waterworks at Loch Katrine had been inaugurated by the Queen in 1859, the fountain was not unveiled until 1872.²⁹⁴ The time lapse signifies that Glasgow’s civic culture had developed significantly by the 1870s, so that it seemed important to retrospectively celebrate the city’s achievement in a public way. At the ceremony, Bailie Salmon, the Convenor of the Parks Committee, expressed his delight that

²⁹³ Maver, ‘Glasgow’s public parks’, 323.

²⁹⁴ ‘Inauguration by her Majesty of the Glasgow and Loch Katrine Waterworks, *North Wales Chronicle*, 22 October 1859, p.7.

it had been gifted by ‘one of the public bodies of the city’.²⁹⁵ Whilst he acknowledged that the Town Council had ‘done wonders for the city of Glasgow’, none more striking than the ‘great water scheme’, it had ‘not yet done enough for the elevation of the citizens.’²⁹⁶ This he thought, should generally take the form of ‘providing fountains, music in the parks, and the like’ so ‘the taste of the people might be improved.’²⁹⁷ Taste may be elusive, but the message was clear, this fountain was just the beginning of Glasgow’s quest for cultural improvement. Salmon told the assembled party that it was a sign ‘the Town Council was beginning to see the necessity of supplying us with other things than those which are absolutely essential.’²⁹⁸ Though the water supply was of course essential, the fountain itself was for the people’s pleasure. It would act to remind them of what Glaswegian endeavour was capable of, and more specifically, the Town Council. In fact, the fountain was tasked with commemorating ‘the services rendered in connection’ with the ‘great work by the late Lord Provost Stewart’, to make a positive example of individual dedicated civic endeavour.²⁹⁹ In this vein, Salmon went on to be one of the city’s greatest advocates for a public museum. Though the fountain was initially a clear sign of Glasgow municipal aspirations, by 1877, *The Aberystwyth Observer* connected the water supply from the ‘charming Loch Katrine’, which was ‘sending 40 gallons of pure water per day’ to Glasgow with the city’s claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire.’³⁰⁰ Surprisingly, ‘Loch Katrine is not one whit less beautiful’ for its contributions to ‘a dirty and thirsty city’, in fact ‘it has acquired a new charm’ by ‘becoming unspeakably useful as well as surpassingly beautiful.’³⁰¹ Consequently, this essential municipal work was layered with cultural significance, so that the fountain became part of Glasgow’s cultural infrastructure, which continued to receive positive comment for decades to come.³⁰²

Towards the close of the century, one of the most deliberate attempts by the Glasgow Corporation to unite its civic mission with the city’s aspirations for cultural status was the establishment of the People’s Palace in 1898. Compared to other civic institutions in Glasgow, this one was designed to enhance the lives of the notably deprived community in the East End. Whereas the City Industrial Museum had a directive to educate Glasgow’s citizens on local, national and imperial industrial products, the People’s Palace had issues

²⁹⁵ ‘Inauguration of the Loch Katrine Memorial Fountain’, *Glasgow Herald*, 15 August 1872, p. 3.

²⁹⁶ Maver, ‘Glasgow’s public parks’, p. 323.

²⁹⁷ Ibid.

²⁹⁸ *Glasgow Herald*, 15 August 1872, p. 3.

²⁹⁹ ‘A Memorial fountain’, *The Scotsman*, 15 August 1872, p.4.

³⁰⁰ Diogenes, ‘Notes on things Noteworthy’, *The Aberystwyth Observer*, 7 July 1877, p.4..

³⁰¹ Ibid.

³⁰² For example: ‘More Water for the “Second City”’, *The Sphere*, 28 June 1924, p.34.

of social class at its heart. In a bid to counteract criticism that the Corporation had continually prioritised the affluent West End, the People's Palace was positioned on Glasgow Green, in a 'praiseworthy attempt' to improve 'the lives of the poor, and of the class who earn their livelihood by hard manual labour, living at the same time in cheerless dwellings and uninteresting surroundings.'³⁰³ Yet, it was also an attempt to control the narrative of Glasgow Green – a space regularly used for political and social dissent. Politically, this new cultural institution was a beacon of municipal socialism, which made an overt statement that public funds were being used for public good in the poorer parts of the city. Ostensibly it was for 'the intellectual and social improvement and recreation of the inhabitants of the East-end', but, the motivations of Liberal Unionism, which was a strong directive among Glasgow municipal elites, were more complex. Indeed, Robert Crawford, who proposed the construction of the People's Palace in 1891 was an 'ardent Liberal Unionist.'³⁰⁴ Crawford (pictured below) was the Chairman of the Committee on the Gallery and Museum of Art.



Figure 2.8 Councillor Robert Crawford by George Henry (1903) © Glasgow Museums

³⁰³ 'The Glasgow People's Palace Museum and Winter Garden', *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 22 January 1898, p.8.

³⁰⁴ Maver, *Glasgow*, pp.153-154.

Crawford gave a lecture to the Ruskin Society of Glasgow, in which he orated ‘the duty of the Municipalities in relation to Art’, which he considered to be a ‘thorny and difficult issue.’³⁰⁵ His choice of the Ruskin Society elucidates some of the perceptions the Corporation was trying to counteract by introducing an art institution into the East End. Followers of John Ruskin (1819 – 1900), had formed themselves into a Society in Glasgow in 1879, with the intention of bringing like-minded men together to discuss Ruskin’s ideas about art and society.³⁰⁶ An article in a book of press clippings kept by the Society highlights the unlikelihood of such a fellowship ‘in a city supposed to be given up in a preeminent degree to money-getting.’³⁰⁷ Especially, as Ruskin himself ‘thunders against the evil influence of machinery’ and ‘detests the commercialism that is understood to let Glasgow flourish.’³⁰⁸ Yet, the conceptualisation of the People’s Palace was intended to address Glasgow’s ‘reputation for poverty of aesthetic taste’, whilst retaining its commercial outputs and imperial involvement.³⁰⁹ Even the existence of a Ruskin Society in Glasgow was an indicator that citizens were looking to obtain the cultural capital, characteristic of second city status.

Crawford appealed to his audience for help, ‘not as art critics [...] but simply as fellow citizens’, suggesting that he was hopeful they would be civically minded.³¹⁰ Across the breadth of Glasgow society – from the ‘poor dwellers in our wretched slums to the highest region of imaginative and creative Art,’ particularly he intimated in ‘a crowded industrial and commercial city’, all should have access to ‘elevating pleasure of the best and highest kind.’³¹¹ Faced with ‘filth, laziness, ignorance, crime, disease, and death’, the ‘primary element’ of this space needed to ‘be the popular one – namely, to provide such means of artistic cultivation and enjoyment as can be freely and fully partaken by every citizen.’³¹² Alongside zealous and long-standing campaigns for temperance, the People’s Palace was conceived under the dubious notion that ‘the way to stop drunkenness is to compete in attractiveness with the public-house.’³¹³ To best attract this audience, Crawford

³⁰⁵ Robert Crawford, *The People’s Palace of The Arts for the City of Glasgow; A lecture delivered to the Ruskin Society of Glasgow* (Glasgow: Ruskin Society, 1891), p. 3, *Glasgow Museums Resource Centre, Glasgow*.

³⁰⁶ For work on Ruskin Societies in industrial English cities see Amy Woodson-Boulton, *Transformative Beauty: Art Museums in Industrial Britain* (Stanford Scholarship Online: 2013).

³⁰⁷ ‘Press cuttings from Ruskin Society, Glasgow’, *University of Glasgow Special Collections, Glasgow*, MS. Gen. 1093/2.

³⁰⁸ Ibid.

³⁰⁹ Ibid.

³¹⁰ Crawford, *The People’s Palace*, p. 3.

³¹¹ Ibid., p.4.

³¹² Ibid.

³¹³ Garrett Fisher, ‘Glasgow’, p. 615.

recommended ‘attractive surroundings, fresh air, trees, grass, flowers, and birds’, and suggested; ‘Let your buildings and its contents be a diamond set in pearls, Art and Nature intertwined.’ Certainly, as Maver determines, the People’s Place was ‘part of a renewed determination to enhance the urban landscape,’ and make the city more liveable.³¹⁴ As with Glasgow’s other cultural civic ventures, second city rhetoric was not used in this hypothetical stage, but later became enmeshed with appraisals of the institution. Unlike the City Industrial Museum, which had an increasingly imperial remit, the People’s Palace met local social objectives, but in doing so contributed to wider ideas about Glasgow as an imperial municipality.



Figure 2.9 People’s Palace 1905, Mitchell Library, C1703

It was opened to the public in 1898 by Lord Rosebery. Reporting on the event, *The Pall Mall Gazette* noted that it was a ‘Palace’ of two halves – one being the building of red Dumfries stone containing galleries for a museum, and, the second being a Winter Garden, akin to a large conservatory, attached at the rear. This second portion was a sought after feature for public events, as the roof shielded visitors from the worst of Glasgow weather. The paper thought it ‘an event of some importance in the annals of the “second city of the Empire.”’³¹⁵ Considering that the new Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, which will be discussed in Chapter Six, was also underway at this time, this comment is significant.

³¹⁴ Maver, *Glasgow*, p. 157.

³¹⁵ *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 22 January 1898, p. 8.

This relatively modest structure, certainly in comparison to the new galleries, was considered a step in the right direction for Glasgow's aspirations as the second city because of its social remit.

A report on the opening entitled 'Lord Rosebery on Municipal Progress', which appeared in several newspapers, elucidates the hybridity symbolised by the People's Palace project.³¹⁶ It noted that Rosebery's speech 'left his Glaswegian fellow-burgesses impressed with the belief that, despite their minor difficulties about tramways, they were decidedly a people of progression and enlightenment.'³¹⁷ This usefully distils the way cultural institutions were used to propagate a specific image of the city in Glasgow, and were also layered with other meanings as civic improvement works. Encouragingly, the report proclaimed that 'No municipality has evidenced greater desire for progression, has more clearly and resolutely led the way towards the accomplishment of civic happiness and independence than that of St Mungo.'³¹⁸ Glasgow's canon of social symbols was deployed to illustrate the city's historicity, tied in this case with its 'desire for progression', which mirrors the hybridity of second city rhetoric. In response to the civic nature of the People's Palace, Rosebery 'declared that he would sooner advise a man to devote his time and talent to municipal than to Imperial affairs.'³¹⁹ As a zealous imperialist, this was certainly a turn of phrase, but, by raising the issue, he brought the empire to the People's Palace. Drawing in Britain's other leading municipalities, he argued that 'Corporations were fast becoming alive to the fact that the sanitation of the mind required attention as well as the sanitation of the body' – following Salmon's recommendation a quarter century before, and perfectly paralleling the Katrine waterworks and the subsequent memorial. Perhaps this is why Rosebery noted that Glasgow was leading the way and could 'lay claim to pioneering [...] the moral and physical' and would hopefully turn more to the 'intellectual aspect of citizen life.'³²⁰ At the 'luncheon' that followed the opening, Rosebery told those assembled that 'the second city of the Empire, as it is, can claim a record for hard Municipal work and pure Municipal government', which was 'accorded to few Corporations.'³²¹ By the turn of the twentieth century, Glasgow's civic improvements had become the envy of

³¹⁶ For example: 'Lord Rosebery on Municipal Progress' *Falkirk Herald*, 26 January 1898, p.4; 'Lord Rosebery on Municipal Progress', *Linlithgowshire Gazette*, 29 January 1898, p.4.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Ibid.

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ 'A People's Palace for Glasgow. Opening by Lord Rosebery', *London Evening Standard*, 24 January 1898, p.3.

municipalities across the British Empire – ‘a showpiece of municipal enterprise.’³²² Alongside the People’s Palace, the *Fife Free Press* noted that ‘nearly six miles of new streets’ were ‘illustrative of the progress of the second city in the empire, Glasgow.’³²³ At this juncture, Glasgow’s second city rhetoric became centred around municipal improvement and progress. In 1899 John K. McDowell, for example, advocated that children should be taught about ‘those activities which have made Glasgow the first municipality in the world and the second city in the British empire’ so they could endeavour to recreate their forebears successes.³²⁴ The People’s Palace provided evidence that Glasgow was the leading example of municipal enterprise and civic confidence, which was tied to its second city claim and should therefore be emulated.

Calcutta’s second city rhetoric, was, by the turn of the twentieth century, similarly connected to municipal improvements, though in a very different way to Glasgow. Whereas Glasgow’s civic elites made claim to the ‘second city of the Empire’ to draw attention to positive improvements, and in return improvements solidified claims, Calcutta’s used the title to try and inspire change for the city. A meeting of the Calcutta Trades Association at the Dalhousie Institute, reported on in the *Englishman’s Overland Mail* in February 1903 framed proposed improvements to Calcutta around its claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire.’³²⁵ The Master, F. A. Larmour presented the Committee’s report from the year 1902, which included reflections on the previous year; the conclusion of the Boer War, ‘plenty and prosperity’ in India with only threats of famine in ‘some districts’, the daily progress of the His Majesty the King-Emperor, the ‘glories of that magnificent function’ the Durbar in Delhi, and the Exhibition of Indian Arts and Manufactures. The state of Calcutta, was, however, the primary focus of the Committee’s report which lamented that:

It seemed as if Calcutta, the capital of India, and the second city of the British Empire, was in the position of the sick man with many doctors, all of whom agreed that he was sick, but disagreed as to the methods of making him well.³²⁶

One of the core problems was that, ‘between the Corporation, the Government of Bengal, the Government of India and the Secretary of State, things were apparently allowed to go

³²² W.H. Fraser, ‘Municipal Socialism and Social Policy’ in *The Victorian City: A Reader in British Urban History, 1820-1914* ed. by R.J. Morris and Richard Rodger (London: Longman, 1993), p. 258.

³²³ ‘As Illustrative’, *Fife Free Press*, 24 September 1898, p.4.

³²⁴ John K. McDowell, *People’s history of Glasgow: an encyclopaedic record of the city from the prehistoric period to the present day*, second edition (Glasgow: Hay Nisbet and Co. Ltd., 1899), preface.

³²⁵ ‘Calcutta Trades Association. Annual General Meeting’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 19 February 1903, p.11.

³²⁶ Ibid.

on much in their old way and the prospect of improvement was remote.³²⁷ These different bodies constituted the ‘many doctors’, which had failed to materially improve conditions in Calcutta, their reference here suggests a critique of disunited governance. Governance of the Metropolis of India distinctly lacked the apparent homogeneity of the Glasgow Corporation. These layered governmental structures resulted in colonial neglect, as it could be difficult to discern where responsibility for improvements lay. Yet the Committee was optimistic that change was finally afoot due to the Viceroy being ‘personally and deeply interested in the welfare of Calcutta.’³²⁸ The Viceroy at this time was Curzon, whose main area of interest centred on the history of British imperialism, and, his decision to prioritise the Victoria Memorial, quite literally, over other projects which may have helped the population, discussed in Chapter Six, demonstrates, his improvements would always centre on the “show” aspects of Calcutta. As Stephen L. Keck has discerned, whilst Curzon ‘did evince the panache of imperial arrogance, he was also sensitive to issues involving the history, heritage, and needs of the imperial state.’³²⁹ That said, his ‘advocacy of empire, often accompanied by vivid pageantry and egoism, reflected a belief that British power could and would bring the fruits of peace and prosperity to subject peoples.’³³⁰ Cannadine’s assessment that British imperialists actively pursued British hierarchies through personal status seems apt in the Calcutta context.³³¹

Indeed, by the time of the report, Curzon had, very tellingly, shown great attention to the presentability of ‘the exterior of Calcutta’, or the “show” parts of the City’, which elevated the state of the empire but not its citizens.³³² These improvements involved increased street lighting around Government House, Dalhousie Square and ‘Chowringhi’. Yet paving stones to the detriment of ‘native foot passengers’ were laid, even though ‘naked feet scorched by the heat of the pavement’. Certainly, only those areas within ‘the immediate vicinity of Government House is made to look smart’, while those ‘with stone’s throw of that edifice remain as they were with no attempt whatever at any improvement of any sort.’ This was an approach typical of many which sought to improve Calcutta for the benefit of onlookers more than those that lived there.

³²⁷ Ibid.

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ Stephen L. Keck, “‘It has now passed for ever into our hands’: Lord Curzon and the Construction of Imperial Heritage in Colonial Burma”, *Journal of Burma Studies* 11 (2007), p.51.

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹ Cannadine, *Ornamentalism*.

³³² *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 19 February 1903, p.11.

For Calcutta to be ‘improved and remodelled’ its citizens needed to ‘pay willingly and cheerfully’ to promote the cause, which they had been failing to do. Lamour described himself as a ‘Champion and apologist for the Corporation’ and the lack of spending resulted in a distinct shortfall in improvement across the city. Significantly, he stated ‘we pride ourselves on being the second City of the Empire, we point to the improvements made in the first City of the Empire, and we ask why we cannot emulate London.’ On this front, it would appear that only London’s vice and poverty was replicable in the Metropolis of India. This contradicts the European example used in Dickson’s argument, outlined in the Introduction, that second cities attempted to differentiate themselves from the first city. Instead, the civic elite in Calcutta wished to emulate the successful improvements made in London. As money was at the forefront of these issues, it is interesting that Larmour mentioned London and not another city, like Glasgow, with pretensions to be the ‘second city of the Empire’, which may have had more traction for emulation.

While Glasgow had a vibrant civic culture, which included and allowed for criticism of the Glasgow Corporation, Calcutta did not. Consequently, only white, elite colonial men tended to articulate their concerns publicly. By the turn of the twentieth century, however, the Calcutta Corporation noted its own shortfalls:

While we all acknowledge that very much remains to be done to make Calcutta worthy of her place as the second city of the Empire and the Capital City of the East, I think it will be generally admitted that the Corporation, in spite of all the grumbling that one hears, has done much solid work during the past two years.³³³

The Calcutta Improvement Trust was established in 1911 to improve conditions in Calcutta, but, in 1915, the *Englishman’s Overland Mail* reported that it was far from universally revered.³³⁴ Lord Carmichael, Lieutenant- Governor of Bengal between 1912 and 1917, who presided over the meeting, considered that ‘here in Calcutta, the second city of the Empire, we certainly ought to be interested in town-planning. We are so, I think. I hear lots of criticism of the Improvement Trust, both from Indians and from Englishmen, from all kinds of different points of view.’³³⁵ The report provided a summary of ‘a very interesting lecture’ on town planning by Professor Patrick Geddes (1854-1932) given at the Town Hall, which highlights one of the ways this civic space was used.³³⁶ By this point, moves to improve the city were surely angled towards retaining status within the imperial

³³³ Ibid., pp. 11 – 12.

³³⁴ ‘Town Planning Who it Would improve Calcutta’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 20 November 1915, p. 10.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Ibid.

network after the removal of the capital to Delhi. In this period, ‘successive British governments in Calcutta became increasingly concerned with the links between the health of its inhabitants and the cleanliness of the city’, so schemes previously used in cities like Glasgow, for example slum clearances, were implemented.³³⁷ Geddes was a seminal Scottish urban planner, known for his highly innovative designs which had transformed other major centres, most famously Edinburgh.³³⁸ Described by Helen Meller as an ‘urban troubleshooter’, Geddes, while in Calcutta proposed more “hybrid” ideas for health and hygiene.³³⁹ Asking for assistance from Geddes suggests that innovation in Calcutta was born of defensiveness and anxiety, directed towards growing Nationalism in the city, and the loss of its capital status in 1911.

Conclusions

Incitement of the ‘second city of the Empire’ was variously connected to a wide range of civic buildings and improvement works as a way of defending existing status and confidently aspiring to more. Reading civic buildings and cultural infrastructure in Glasgow and Calcutta through the prism of second city rhetoric, provides a useful means of comparison, which had traction across the Empire. What was considered worthy of Glasgow and Calcutta explicitly, and the ‘second city of the Empire’ implicitly, in terms of civic buildings, had ramifications for other urban centres too, as civic administrations aspired towards them.

As my discussion of the People’s Palace has shown, public museums in Glasgow were intended to be used by all citizens, partly in the hope that these spaces would provide an attractive and moral alternative to the public house and other morally unacceptable activities that both denoted poverty and contributed to it. In Calcutta, the Town Hall was seen as a potent symbol of English endeavour in the city, but also its failings to expand with the aspirations of the city. In this vein, the key sites discussed in this chapter were used either to justify second city claims, or prompt public spending to create or improve the existing cultural offering, based on what was available in other cities. Attempts by the Glasgow Corporation to create an urban landscape which was appropriate to a leading

³³⁷ Martin Beattie, ‘Sir Patrick Geddes and Barra Bazaar: competing visions, ambivalence and contradiction,’ *Journal of Architecture* 9 (2004), 131-150.

³³⁸ Helen Meller, ‘Geddes, Sir Patrick’, in *ODNB*, online edn 2008 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/33361>> [accessed 28 April 2021]

³³⁹ Beattie, ‘Sir Patrick Geddes,’ 131-150.

imperial provincial city, were therefore framed around securing the ‘second city of the Empire’ title, despite the title’s unstable and malleable nature. Second city rhetoric often came first and the civic infrastructure was then augmented to match this image, as shown by the example of Glasgow’s City Chambers. That said, the prevalence of vice and poverty would always make it difficult to fully legitimise public spending in this direction, when the city corporations had sanitation, disease, and malnutrition to contend with.

Mary P. Ryan draws attention to ‘the protean passions public buildings inspired’, and with this in mind, further analysis of the key examples outlined in this chapter, can help us understand the colonial and imperial provincial context within which civic pride grew.³⁴⁰ Moreover, civic improvement works, including public museums, were intended to have social consequences, such as the ameliorative effects of education and culture in Glasgow.

³⁴⁰ Mary P. Ryan, “‘A Laudable Pride in the Whole of Us’”: City Halls and Civic Materialism’ *City Halls and Civic Materialism, Towards a Global History of Urban Public Space* ed. by Swati Chattopadhyay and Jeremy White (London: Routledge, 2014) , p.18.

Chapter Three - Establishing Public Museums ‘worthy of the city’

Building on the previous chapter, which addressed ways that second city rhetoric was used to justify developments to civic infrastructure in Glasgow and Calcutta, this chapter looks specifically at the formation of these cities’ first public museums. Unlike other elements of second city status, which differed between cities, public museums became a common feature in most major urban centres across the second half of the nineteenth century. The newly emerging museum space provided opportunities for delivering messages about the provincial and aspiring second city to local, national, and imperial audiences. Extending postcolonial approaches to incorporate a deeper understanding of the ‘key impulses driving the establishment of museums’ to highlight the complexities of specific urban settings is vital.³⁴¹ Notably, public museums were established in Calcutta and Glasgow at similar times. The Government of India ratified proposals for Calcutta’s new Imperial Museum in 1866 and opened it fully to the public in 1878, while the Glasgow Town Council approved the Kelvingrove Museum in 1868, and opened it in 1870. Although this is consistent with a broader trend, the fact that arguments for public museums found purchase at similar times in both cities is important, because, in both cases, despite their numerous differences, it was claimed that cities of their status were incomplete without such an institution.

In these early stages, second city rhetoric was not used ostensibly to justify public expenditure on a museum, instead, motivation centred on emulating successes in comparable cities, whether other capitals or nearby urban centres. Consequently, the cities which Glasgow and Calcutta’s civic elites chose to compare against their own, sheds light on their perceived positions within the imperial network. Museums became entwined in the ways people told stories about their city, which were increasingly inflected with civic and imperial aspirations. Significantly, what was considered fitting of the city changed over time, so that second city rhetoric was deployed to justify expanding Glasgow’s museum in 1872. Similarly, Calcutta’s museum transitioned from a desirable feature of a colonial capital, to a central institution for discharging imperial policy.

This chapter addresses three key research questions, firstly, what were the motivations for establishing public museums in Glasgow and Calcutta? Secondly, how were civic and imperial aspirations implicated in these motivations? Lastly, how did the

³⁴¹ Longair and McAleer (eds.), *Curating Empire*, p.2

public respond to these civic and imperial edifices? It is divided into four thematic and largely chronological sections to deal with both institutions in tandem.

Proposing a Public Museum in Glasgow and Calcutta

How and why arguments were made in favour of the public museum project from the mid-nineteenth century onwards is intimately linked to evolving articulations of local, national and imperial status. Neither the Imperial Museum in Calcutta nor Kelvingrove Museum in Glasgow emerged in a vacuum; their formation was stimulated by the arrival of museums elsewhere. Still, the decisions to move forward with public museums in Glasgow and Calcutta followed their own distinct trajectories. It was implied that as a secondary capital, Calcutta required a public museum just as much as other capitals, and arguably more so given the colonial context. Yet in Glasgow, it was reasoned that a city of its status was incomplete without a museum, considering Dundee and Paisley, as well as Liverpool and Manchester, already had their own institutions. Whilst comparisons with other urban centres was a driving factor in both cases, indeed the prevalence of such institutions elsewhere helps to explain why decisive action was taken in the 1860s, the motivations in Glasgow and Calcutta were directly linked to each city's local political, social, and architectural environments.

Arguably, this process was mostly emulative but with competitive components, particularly between Edinburgh and Glasgow. Who advocated and then approved the museum is therefore significant. Waterfield discusses 'the complex motives' which drove the establishment of museums and galleries, and 'the powerful philanthropic movements, private and public, that believed that they were transforming British cities from hideous chaos into models of civic virtue.'³⁴² The momentum behind early civic museums in Britain was thus not necessarily driven by imperial aspirations. Indeed, the Imperial and Kelvingrove Museums were fuelled by distinct objectives led by local needs. Amit Kumar Gupta comes to this conclusion regarding the Imperial Museum which, despite its name and its origin as the Asiatic Society's museum, was, he argues, designed 'as a "public"

³⁴² Waterfield, *The People's Galleries*, pp.4-5.

space rather than as an “imperial” edifice.’³⁴³ Whilst my research suggests it certainly was imperial, the move to make it a public institution was certainly transformational.³⁴⁴

Public museums became part of the civic agenda in cities beyond the metropole and secondary capitals when it was possible for town councils to tax their citizens to pay for them. This model was then transposed to the colonial setting surprisingly quickly.³⁴⁵ Originally, the Public Libraries and Museums Act of 1850 applied exclusively to England, and was extended to Scotland and Ireland in 1854 after a series of setbacks.³⁴⁶ Stanley M. Max argues that ‘the passage of the act was significant as a barometer of Victorian attitudes towards reform.’³⁴⁷ Conservative Members mostly opposed the Act; the infamous Colonel de Laet Waldo Sibthorp, for example, argued that ‘however excellent food for the mind might be, food for the body was what was now most wanted for the people.’³⁴⁸ Whilst he was known for his ‘uncompromising’ ultra-Tory and ultra-Protestant views, taxation for a seemingly inessential service when poverty was so prevalent, was a sentiment which resonated with other Members.³⁴⁹

In line with many other social reforms, the Public Libraries and Museums Act was propelled by an individual – William Ewart (1798-1869), the MP for Dumfries Burghs, with the intention of improving ‘the economic and social status of the lower classes.’³⁵⁰ Though born in Liverpool, Ewart returned to his Scottish roots when he ran for the Dumfries burghs seat in 1841, where he stayed for the next twenty-seven years.³⁵¹ In fact, it was very common for proponents of the modern museum to come from outside the metropole. To justify taxation, individuals from the provinces were regularly required to articulate the benefits of museums for provincial audiences. Like other Victorian reformers, Ewart was dedicated to improving education for the working classes and promoting ‘temperate and moral habits’, thus the emerging museum space was shaped by

³⁴³ Amit Kumar Gupta, ‘The “Public” Indian Museum, Calcutta, 1858 – 1878’, *Indian Historical Review* 47 (2020), 99-114.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

³⁴⁵ The Government Central Museum, Madras was founded in 1850 and the Central Museum of Natural History, Economy, Geology, Industry and Art, Bombay was established in 1855.

³⁴⁶ ‘Free Public Libraries’, *The Scottish Review* (July, 1859), pp. 263 – 275.

³⁴⁷ Stanley M. Max, ‘Tory Reaction to the Public Libraries Bill, 1850’, *The Journal of Library History*, 19 (1984), 504.

³⁴⁸ House of Commons, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates: The Official Report* (13 March 1850, vol. 109, cols. 838-50) [Online] <<https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1850/mar/13/public-libraries-and-museums-bills>> [accessed 27 April 2021]

³⁴⁹ John Wolffe, ‘Sibthorp, Charles de Laet Waldo [known as Colonel Sibthorp]’, *ODNB* online edn. 2014 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/25507>> [accessed 27 April 2021]

³⁵⁰ S.M. Farrell, ‘William Ewart (1780-1869)’, in *ODNB*, online edn. 2014 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9011>> [accessed 27 April 2021]

³⁵¹ Ibid.

ideals of social regulation and ‘elevation’.³⁵² From their earliest iterations, and certainly in Glasgow, ‘public museum space was very commonly long associated with moral improvement’ where members of different classes could mix, educate and improve themselves.³⁵³ This approach to social improvement can be seen as particularly provincial, because the need to consolidate existing prestige was felt more keenly than in the metropole, where forerunner institutions had already been established.

Ewart stipulated that the Government would not be expected to provide any assistance, instead, the proposed Bill simply asked, ‘that those popular institutions might be legally founded by the people, supported by the people, and enjoyed by the people.’³⁵⁴ The Act thus provided the legal framework for municipalities to establish their own public libraries and museums, which would best serve their own citizens. It was essential that citizens supported the project, as they were often called upon to provide supplementary funds beyond the rate contributions. Until this point, museums outside London either belonged to private individuals, or were attached to learned societies, or universities. Hereafter, public museums were funded through local or central taxation and were, crucially, ‘open to the public free of charge.’³⁵⁵ These differed from private collections that were open to the public, such as the University of Glasgow’s Hunterian Museum or the Asiatic Society’s Museum in Calcutta, and embodied a key shift which brought museums under the remit of civic and state governing bodies. As well as being publicly funded and free to enter, their collections largely belonged to the city, nation, or empire, and were therefore a reflection of that gradation’s power and prestige.

In Glasgow, establishing a public museum took several attempts from town councillors because the motion had to be approved by both the elected body and the citizens. In 1860, Councillor Bailie John Blackie (later Lord Provost between 1863 and 1866), unsuccessfully proposed ‘to establish a library and museum by taxation, because they had no other means in their power to establish any such institutions’.³⁵⁶ This comment refers to Glasgow’s lack of either a private society willing to donate their collection to the city, or a private benefactor to provide funds for the purpose. Blackie tried again in 1863,

³⁵² Max, ‘Tory Reaction’, p. 507.

³⁵³ Christopher Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum in Nineteenth Century Britain* (London: Routledge, 2016), p.59.

³⁵⁴ House of Commons, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates: The Official Report* (14 February 1850, vol.108, cols. 759-63) [Online] < <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1850/feb/14/public-libraries-and-museums> [accessed 22 March 2021]

³⁵⁵ ‘Public Libraries Act (Ireland), 1855’ in *Free Libraries and Newsrooms, Their Formation and Management* by John Davis Mullins (London: Henry Sotheran and Co., 1879), p.26; ‘Mr Cowper, M.P., and the Public Libraries Act’, *Sheffield Independent*, 27 October 1855, p.9.

³⁵⁶ ‘The Public Libraries and Museums’, *Glasgow Sentinel*, 7 February 1863, p.5.

arguing that a public institution could provide ‘a comprehensiveness and a completeness unattainable in any private collection.’³⁵⁷ The idea of a ‘complete’ collection will be addressed in following chapter; here, it is important to note that a public museum was believed to provide an opportunity for a different type of collection, usually only possible in the metropolis. Following a push from Blackie, the Town Council agreed to appoint a committee to ‘inquire into the position of the public libraries and museums of Glasgow’, to see how well the ‘wants and requirements of the citizens’ were being met.³⁵⁸ This would allow the Council to discern whether the ‘departments of learning and science’ were served in the city ‘compared with other large cities and towns, both on the continent of Europe and in America’, as well as in Scotland.³⁵⁹ Consequently, unfavourable comparisons with other cities provided distinct motivation for establishing a museum in Glasgow. *The Scotsman*’s coverage of this Council meeting includes the Lord Provost’s reference to Glasgow as ‘the second city in the empire’, whilst sending the city’s regards to the Prince of Wales on his marriage.³⁶⁰ Interestingly, this shows that Glasgow’s civic leaders were deploying second city rhetoric, though specifically not in the museum context.

That said, the building blocks for the vocabulary were certainly present in opening discussions, particularly the comparative elements. The press noted that public libraries were ‘of value in all important towns’ and ‘especially so’ in ‘the city of Glasgow’.³⁶¹ The *Glasgow Morning Journal* sought to place Glasgow among the upper echelons of cities, in a context which could be construed as local, national, or, indeed, global. Though this reference is to libraries, the Act included museums and therefore the two were ‘intimately connected’.³⁶² Significantly, Glasgow’s existing Public Library founded by William Stirling in 1785 did not meet the requirements of ‘a large town’, when compared to the library provisions made by ‘the public spirit’ in Manchester and Liverpool – England’s ‘two chief cities.’³⁶³ Manchester was ‘the first to adopt the Act in 1852’, followed by Liverpool in 1860, where a Free Library was combined with a Museum.³⁶⁴ Manchester and Liverpool were viewed as comparable cities, and therefore their museum models could be easily transposed to Glasgow. Indeed, Glasgow’s *North British Daily Mail* argued that Manchester’s library revealed ‘the rapid usefulness of such an institution [...] in a large

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ ‘Public Libraries and Museums’, *Glasgow Morning Journal*, 6 February 1863, p. 2.,

³⁶⁰ ‘Glasgow Town Council’, *The Scotsman*, 6 February 1863, p.3.

³⁶¹ *Glasgow Morning Journal*, 6 February 1863, p. 2.,

³⁶² ‘A Free Public Library for Glasgow’, *Glasgow Herald*, 16 January 1864, p.3.

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ Ibid; Liverpool’, *Bradford Observer*, 25 October 1860, p. 7; ‘The Liverpool Free Library and Museum’, *Belfast News-Letter*, 22 October 1860, p. 4.

city’, suggesting that Glaswegian civic elites were keen to recreate successes found elsewhere.³⁶⁵

When the Council’s inquiry was completed, it revealed ‘how far Glasgow’ was ‘behind cities of equal magnitude, and even others of far less resource or pretension’, so that the Town Council asserted that surely, no citizen of Glasgow:

will be content to remain without an institution which the large towns of every civilised country in the world have found to be indispensable, and which is in some respect a test of their culture and enlightenment.³⁶⁶

This perfectly encapsulates the dual drive for establishing a public institution in Glasgow at this time – to show the city to be the modern centre it claimed to be, and, to position it in a more respectable cultural and intellectual framework, both of which had ramifications for the city’s status more broadly. It posits a Free Library and Museum as Glasgow’s missing piece of cultural infrastructure, which all her citizens could be proud of and participate in. At this point, it was believed that Glasgow’s museum needed to be fitting of a British industrial city, hence comparisons with England’s ‘chief cities’. A museum would therefore help to defend the reputation Glasgow had gained as an important city within Britain. Following their findings, ‘the Glasgow Town Council was highly favourable to the establishment of a free library and museum.’³⁶⁷

The report elicited a profoundly enthusiastic press response. Flanders has illustrated that ‘museums and art galleries were a “media event”’ in nineteenth-century Britain’, and therefore ‘the role of newspapers in “reporting this “event” cannot be ignored.’³⁶⁸ In these early stages, such reports were laden with commentary yet low on consensus. One of the scheme’s advocates, the *Glasgow Saturday Post*, proclaimed that a Free Library and Museum would advantage ‘the whole population without distinction of age, sex, class, or profession.’³⁶⁹ It presented a utopian ideal of an egalitarian institution for the enjoyment of all who called Glasgow home. Pointedly, it noted that, just ‘as a man is judged by his works or a tree by its fruits, so a great town takes its character from its institutions.’³⁷⁰ The press coverage shows that civic leaders were keen to spark interest in the city’s cultural institutions amongst the wider population. Moreover, citizens should be concerned

³⁶⁵ ‘At the opening of the Exhibition of the Products of Art and Industry’, *North British Daily Mail*, 10 September 1868, p.2.

³⁶⁶ ‘Free Library and Museum in Glasgow’, *Glasgow Saturday Post*, 23 January 1864, p.1.

³⁶⁷ ‘The Proposed Free Library and Museum’, *Paisley Herald and Renfrewshire Advertiser*, 23 March 1867, p.1.

³⁶⁸ Flanders, ‘Early museums’, p. 72.

³⁶⁹ ‘Free Library and Museum in Glasgow’, *Glasgow Saturday Post*, 23 January 1864, p.1.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

because, if ‘brought to the test [...] the intellectual reputation of Glasgow would not at the present moment stand very high.’³⁷¹ However, the *Post* argued that nowhere beyond Glasgow, ‘have art and science produced greater miracles, and in few cities in the world, we believe, is the great body of the population distinguished by greater intelligence or a more inquiring and cultivated spirit.’³⁷² This provincial sentimentality implored that the city’s great ‘material wealth’ and ‘commercial progress’ be matched by its cultural assets to best nurture the would-be inventors and great thinkers in their midst.³⁷³ The paper asserted that ‘a Free Library and Museum, on a scale worthy of the town, would supply this want.’³⁷⁴ Anxious Glaswegians continued to make defensive comments about the city’s cultural footing behind Edinburgh throughout the following decades.³⁷⁵ Clearly, the arguments made in favour of a public museum in the Glasgow context were linked to cultural comparisons with other urban centres, and therefore this space was posited as an opportunity for projecting new messages about the city.

Museums thus emerged as a means of delineating status between cities, but, in Glasgow, as the Council’s report rightly concluded, it was ‘essentially a question for the citizens [...] as they must determine it by their individual votes’, so it was vital for the wider enfranchised public to understand the value of a new institution too.³⁷⁶ Proposals in Glasgow differed from other Scottish towns because they were not prompted by a substantial philanthropic gift. In 1869, for example, the Dundee Free Library Museum was opened following a gift from a private society, and the ‘memorial stone’ was laid in Paisley for its Free Library and Museum.³⁷⁷ Even amongst industrial cities in Scotland, there was no set path to establishing a public museum, which affirms the need to look at each within their individual contexts.³⁷⁸ The close proximity of these developments in Scottish industrial centres suggests that, with regards to public museums, a critical momentum had been reached. Notably, because neither a collection was gifted, nor a government grant procured, Glasgow’s museum resulted from civic enterprise, which led to a heavy reliance

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ For example: ‘But old beliefs are hard to kill. It was but the other day that a true son of Edinburgh looked round our Exhibition patronisingly and murmured, “Very good for Glasgow – but vulgar of course!”’ T. Raffles Davison, *Pen and Ink Notes at the Glasgow Exhibition* (London: J. S. Virtue & Co., 1888), p.15.

³⁷⁶ ‘A Free Public Library for Glasgow’, *Glasgow Herald*, 16 January 1864, p. 3.

³⁷⁷ ‘Paisley Free Library and Museum’, *Glasgow Herald*, 28 April 1869, p. 4; ‘Opening of the Dundee Free Library Museum’, *Dundee Courier*, 17 August 1869, p. 3.

³⁷⁸ Longair and McAleer, *Curating Empire*, p. 3.

on individual donations.³⁷⁹ Edinburgh, by contrast, had already benefited from a specific Act of Parliament, which allowed the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland's collection to transition into the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland in 1851. In 1854, an Act of Parliament established funding for the Industrial Museum of Scotland, which opened in Edinburgh's Argyll Place in 1862.³⁸⁰ Some contemporaries thought that the founding of Edinburgh's Industrial Museum was the real impetus for establishing a museum in Glasgow, rather than the proposed social benefits. Edinburgh, as the capital of Scotland, was prioritised financially over Glasgow by the British Government, which highlights that conventional measurements of status were important within museum development. As this thesis postulates, the deployment of second city rhetoric by Glasgow elites in connection with its public museum was a means of redressing the traditional hierarchy, so that whilst it was not the capital, its status necessitated valuable cultural assets, which reinforced an image of the city as different, but, crucially, not unequal to Edinburgh or any other city.

Whereas Edinburgh was granted funds for its public museums, Glasgow's citizens created and funded their museum themselves. This was marketed as an example of Glasgow's unique resourcefulness. 'S.V' claimed that, surely, 'we in Glasgow would be prouder of such an institution being begun and completed by ourselves than by a grant that would cover the whole expense.'³⁸¹ Indeed, the number of Glasgow manufacturers who had donated material to Edinburgh's Industrial Museum was used as evidence that they would be able to create a viable institution in their own city.³⁸² Despite Edinburgh's privileged position over Glasgow, Scotland itself was still seen as secondary to England. In August 1859, Adam Black (1784 – 1874), Liberal MP for Edinburgh, rose to 'vindicate Scotland' from the charge of 'constantly attempting to get hold of the public purse.'³⁸³ He argued that whenever an issue of 'national benefit', like a museum, was brought up and the 'locality happened to be in Scotland' it was 'denounced... as a Scotch job.' This suggests that any claims made by Glasgow to be the 'second city of the Empire' at this juncture would have been derided in the Commons. Interestingly, he was half of the A. and C. Black publishing partnership, which held the copyright for *Encyclopaedia Britannica* from

³⁷⁹ S.V., 'Proposed Economic Museum in Glasgow', *Glasgow Herald*, 31 October 1868, p. 6.

³⁸⁰ Dublin was later similarly endowed with a national museum through an Act of Parliament in 1877.

³⁸¹ *Glasgow Herald*, 31 October 1868, p. 6.

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ House of Commons, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates: The Official Report* (5 August 1859, vol. 155, cols. 1043-5) [Online] <<https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1859/aug/05/wats-and-means-report>> [accessed 17 January 2020]

1827, again, highlighting the multiplicity of actors with a stake in developing civic infrastructure.³⁸⁴

In stark contrast to the councillor-led efforts in Glasgow, but more closely comparable with the history of Edinburgh's Society of Antiquaries, the Government of India was implored by the Asiatic Society of Bengal to take over its valuable collection for safekeeping. The Society's proposal to gift their extensive collection in 1856 (resubmitted in 1858) was, ostensibly, to facilitate an Imperial Museum. In reality, they were motivated by a need to relieve themselves of the financial burden of maintaining it themselves. Their argument to the Government was waged along three lines; the Metropolis of India needed a museum; scientific endeavours could be achieved more easily if the city's collections were brought together under one roof; and, fundamentally, the Society could not afford the collection's upkeep and, if the Government did not take over financially, the valuable materials would be lost. It is highly likely that the financial pressures the Asiatic Society faced led them to conceive other benefits, as much to convince themselves as the Government of India. Their pitch to the Government therefore centred on the opportunity offered by a public museum to enhance the status of Calcutta, as the Metropolis of India, because to not endow the colonial capital would be negligent.

The Asiatic Society had been established in 1784 by Anglo-Welshman William Jones, and was quickly and enthusiastically supported by other European men in Calcutta. It was an Orientalist endeavour, centred on inquiries into Indian medicine, botany, science, music and religion. To this end, members collected materials from across India, which eventually resulted in the Asiatic Society Museum in 1814. This earlier institution substantiates claims that the Imperial Museum was the first museum in India. Indeed, Edward Balfour, the officer in charge of the Madras museum, drew the distinction between the Asiatic Society's 'oldest museum in India' and Madras' museum, which was the first 'institution of the state.'³⁸⁵ This narrative of Calcutta having the oldest museum is important and will be returned to later. As a private scholarly society, the Asiatic Society's gift to the Government of India presents a more conventional route for the establishment of a public institution than Glasgow's. Whilst such gifts provided significant advantages, they also meant that the new institution was in large part directed by the existing collection, which had been formulated for different reasons. Edward Said's distinction between his

³⁸⁴ Gordon F. Millar, 'Black, Adam', (2009), in *ODNB*, online edn, 2009 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/2491>> [accessed 27 April 2021]

³⁸⁵ Edward Balfour, *Catalogue of the Government Central Museum, Madras* (Madras: Military Male Orphan Asylum Press, 1855), p.iii.

Orientalism and Orientalism – ‘the discipline by which the Orient was (and is) approached systematically, as a topic of learning, discovery, and practice’ is very useful in this context.³⁸⁶ The Asiatic Society’s collection was dictated by the latter, and was therefore not wholly suited for transitioning into the imperial collection of India.

Guha-Thakurta distinguishes between the Imperial Museum’s ‘two quite separate points of beginning’, the first being the Asiatic Society Museum, and the second, being part ‘of the first systematised British initiatives towards the survey and documentation of Indian antiquities.’³⁸⁷ Both of these points have received scholarly attention, but drawing the imperial phase of its development into a comparative frame with Glasgow’s first public museum reveals that defensiveness of different kinds was a core driver in both cities. The ‘complex motives’ behind philanthropic donations which drove museum development in British cities, can be equally applied to Calcutta.³⁸⁸ Unlike cities in Britain however, there was no precedent in India for such a philanthropic transaction, and, consequently, negotiations were protracted and difficult between the Asiatic Society, a private society, and the Government of India, a state body. The dynamic between private and state collections and collecting strategies will be discussed in the next section, and the delineations between civic, public, and private collections, which this created, will be explored further in Chapter Four.

Shifting the Asiatic Society’s museum from private to public hands would affix greater value to the endeavours of their society. Learned societies were noted parts of significant British cities, and were transposed to the colonies. The Asiatic Society prided itself on its long history and referred to itself as ‘the oldest of the Literary and Scientific bodies in the East’.³⁸⁹ In a letter to the Government of India, the Society stressed the ‘many difficulties’ they had encountered in their bid ‘to advance the cause of knowledge,’ which evidences an interesting dynamic between Calcutta as both an important metropole and a provincial city.³⁹⁰ Whilst Glaswegian commentators were anxious to compete well against other provincial cities on the basis of their cultural civic infrastructure, Calcutta’s Asiatic Society arguably feared a lack of connection to the wider British intellectual world,

³⁸⁶ Said, *Orientalism*, p.73.

³⁸⁷ Tapati Guha-Thakurta, ‘The Museum in the Colony, collecting, conserving, classifying’, in *No Touching, No Spitting, No Praying – the Museum in South Asia* ed. by Saloni Mathur and Kavita Singh (New Delhi: Routledge, 2015), p.45.

³⁸⁸ Waterfield, *The People’s Galleries*, pp.4-5.

³⁸⁹ From Secretary to the Asiatic Society of Bengal to C. Beadon, Secretary to the Government of India, 8 October 1858 in ‘Further correspondence with the Asiatic Society regarding a proposition made by the Society for the establishment of an Imperial Museum at Calcutta’, 10 September 1859, p.2, L-P-3-1072, File No. 125, *British Library, London*.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

particularly the one centred in the metropole. Yet, the Society considered that their hard work ‘may generally bear favourable comparison with the records of the learned societies of Europe.’³⁹¹ They wanted recognition in Europe for their contributions to knowledge, and their collection was the biggest reflection of their individual and group efforts. The colonial setting forced comparisons with Europe, whereas for Glasgow, the British provincial setting largely encouraged parallels with other similarly situated cities. A state museum for the development of science in Calcutta challenged the idea that such enterprises should be confined to London.

From the outset, this institution was expected to further embed the colonial project in Calcutta. It was posited as a key trapping for the capital of British rule in India to demonstrate that colonial governance was long-term and fully integrated. In 1858, the Asiatic Society reasoned that:

The motives which have led the Governments of all other civilized nations to establish Museums at their capitals apply with equal force in the case of British India. Nor would arguments be wanting to show that the obligations on the British Government to endow a Museum at Calcutta have even more than usual cogency. For if such a patronage of Science is fitting in a national Government like that of England, which affects no greater wisdom, no superior wisdom, no superior civilisation, no larger liberality, than the mass of the citizens, does it not become a paramount duty in this country where the rulers are a handful of foreigners who claim for themselves the ability, if not the will, of taking lead in all improvements.³⁹²

This is an explicit statement that museums should be used to justify and project imperial power. Firstly, Calcutta’s position as the capital of India is emphasised to necessitate the provision of a state-led museum. The Society argued that Calcutta should be regarded in the same light as any other capital of, or run by, ‘civilized nations.’ An Imperial Museum would elevate Calcutta’s status from a colonial capital to one more comparable with other secondary capitals, like Edinburgh and Dublin. It is highly likely that members of the Asiatic Society would have been aware that Edinburgh’s new Industrial Museum of Scotland had been established in 1854. This museum, like other national museums, was centrally funded and clearly the Asiatic Society considered this sort of provision applicable to Calcutta, too. Arguably, the need for a museum was even more pressing in an colonial context than a British one especially, given the period of high colonial anxiety and instability during the aftermath of the 1857 Indian mutiny-rebellion. If foreign rulers aimed to ‘lead in all improvements’, they had a great responsibility to

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² ‘Proposed establishment of a Public Museum at Calcutta’ in Home Department, October 1859, File No. 49, *National Archives of India, Delhi*.

establish a museum and thus highlight the benefits of colonial rule to an unconvinced population. It was therefore not just desirable, but as a letter from the Asiatic Society to the Government in April 1859 reveals, ‘a duty of the Government to establish in the Metropolis an Imperial Museum.’³⁹³ Calcutta’s primacy within India was justification for the state-funded public museum to be placed there.

The Asiatic Society Council acknowledged that a ‘considerable outlay’ would be needed ‘in order to establish and maintain a public Museum on a scale befitting the requirements of science and worthy of the Metropolis of India.’³⁹⁴ Already then, one of the core differences between the early public museums in Glasgow and Calcutta comes to the fore – what was considered ‘worthy’ differed, but, in both cases, contemporaries forged a link between the style of public museum and the status of the city. In a similar way to the lexicon used to promote the museum project in Glasgow, the language used by the Asiatic Society to lobby interest was closely associated with second city rhetoric.

Whilst the mutiny-rebellion delayed the Government of India’s ability to accept the Asiatic Society’s proposal, deciding to commit to a public museum was partly prompted by the need to re-establish colonial rule in a way that suggested longevity and economic prosperity. Savithri Preetha Nair notes, public museums in the colonies were ‘primarily’ envisaged as ‘an agent of economic progress’ and consequently, the ‘social argument for them did not receive serious attention’ until the closing stages of the nineteenth century.³⁹⁵ Contrastingly, in Glasgow, the social argument – namely, that a public museum would provide the working classes with a means of educating and elevating themselves – was consistently emphasised. That said, the economic advantages of a working population better educated in industrial matters was certainly implied in Glasgow. This ‘interplay between economic and social enlightenment ideals’ within public museums, including those in the colonies, shaped the collection which was created, and, consequently, ‘played a crucial role in the nature of knowledge produced in the colony.’³⁹⁶ The Asiatic Society’s extensive demands further postponed the project until 1864, when it was recorded in a letter to the Secretary of State for India that ‘negotiations between Government and the

³⁹³ ‘Application from the Asiatic Society of Bengal for a further grant of R200 in addition to the now contributed towards the support of the Society’s Museum’, May 1859 in Proceedings of the Home Department, Files. 21/32, *NAI*

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁹⁵ Savithri Preetha Nair, ‘Edgar Thurston at the Madras Museum (1885-1909): the multiple careers of a colonial museum curator’ in *Curating Empire: Museums and The British Imperial Experience*, ed. by Sarah Longair and John McAleer (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), p. 168.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

Asiatic Society' were 'complete' and they were prepared 'to carry out the transfer.'³⁹⁷ Calcutta's first public museum was officially instigated through the Indian Museum Act of 1866. The building was assigned to the Public Works Department, which meant that due to the scale of the project and other commitments, the museum did not fully open to the public until 1878.

Whilst Calcutta's new museum required state sanction, Glasgow's needed the support of the people. The Public Libraries and Museums Act necessitated that a meeting of citizens was called and the 'majority of such meeting rules the adoption or non-adoption of the Act.'³⁹⁸ These meetings were paid for by the ratepayers, regardless of the outcome.³⁹⁹ A meeting was called in Glasgow in December 1868, which was attended by less than one-hundred people, suggesting either a significant lack of enthusiasm or a particularly harsh bout of bad weather, or a combination of the two.⁴⁰⁰ Thus a decision, which was supposed to take into account the sentiment of the city's diverse population, was dictated by a select few. In support of its implementation, Councillor J. L. Lang led the meeting and explained the nature of the project 'at great length', before commenting on how well it had worked in other towns. Again, how well Glasgow compared with other towns was used to elicit support for the museum. According to the *Glasgow Herald*, the audience were 'pretty evenly divided for and against the scheme' as –

some thought free libraries of the utmost importance and of immediate necessity, and others urged that the burden of taxation was already too urgent for the ratepayers to bear, and could not be added to with advantage to this community.⁴⁰¹

Objections partly arose from questions about who was going to have to pay for it. Similarly, in Paisley, a Mr Anderson argued that 'a museum might be a very nice thing, but a sixth part of the inhabitants would get no advantage from a library and museum, and the whole town would have to pay for them.'⁴⁰² In this instance, his main objection was the notion that he would be taxed on behalf of his lower income tenants. Whilst it was legal to levy taxes to establish and maintain a public museum, it was not universally welcomed, particularly in commercially-minded places like Paisley and Glasgow. The public institution was a new entity, and many could not see the additional value that would be

³⁹⁷ 'Forming an Imperial Museum' in Home Department, October/December 1864, No.79, *British Library*

³⁹⁸ 'Proposed Free Libraries and Museums for Glasgow', *The Glasgow Daily Herald*, 23 December, 1868, p.4.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² 'Free Library and Museum for Paisley', *Glasgow Herald*, 6 February 1867, p.4.

gained from this model over the philanthropic model. Nevertheless, the motion passed, and it was agreed that the Glasgow Town Council would establish a public museum. The Kelvingrove House was selected for this purpose, stripped and fitted for museum display before opening to the public in 1870.⁴⁰³

Safe Havens and New Repositories

Whereas the Imperial Museum was designed to better accommodate existing institutions, the Kelvingrove Museum had to be seen as a departure from the city's existing institutions. In both cases, the 'public' aspect was vital, but in different ways. The Imperial Museum was known interchangeably as the Indian Museum, likewise, Kelvingrove Museum was also known as Kelvingrove House, and, promptly as the City Industrial Museum.

Returning to Blackie's comment about public museums providing 'a comprehensiveness and a completeness' not possible in a private institution, this section reflects on the unique appeals of public collections in Calcutta and Glasgow.⁴⁰⁴ As discussed, the Imperial Museum was initially conceived to solve the Asiatic Society's financial and storage problems, and thus save its collection from disintegration. Glasgow's public museum was devised to solve a far less tangible problem – to provide Glaswegians with a means of freely educating themselves, and to elevate the image of the city in the process. In this way, both museums were new repositories, which posed their own distinct opportunities. Unpacking the ways the new museums shaped the collections, and how the collections shaped the museums in return, contextualises the institutions which remain in our cities today. While the Imperial Museum was rationalised as an intellectual project run by intellectual colonialists, Glasgow's museum was conceptualised as a civic-led enterprise, and not much else. It was born of civic vanity, whereby the priority was to have a museum rather than worry about what would go in it. While the Imperial Museum needed to be purpose built in order to improve upon the Asiatic Society's existing accommodation and affirm Calcutta's position as the capital of British India, in Glasgow, the emphasis on speed and keeping costs down meant that they could simply adapt an existing structure – Kelvingrove House in the West End Park. Consequently, it is a key example of Glasgow civic defensiveness. The ideals of 'comprehensiveness' and

⁴⁰³ *Report on the condition and progress of the City Industrial Museum, Glasgow, for the year 1876* (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1876).

⁴⁰⁴ *Glasgow Sentinel*, 7 February 1863, p.5.

‘completeness’, advertised by Blackie, were certainly not achieved. In reality, Glasgow’s public museum did not flourish in the same way as the city’s private collections. Indeed, as the following chapters will explore, the haphazard methods used to procure a collection had significant repercussions for the development of the museum, and its future iteration, the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum. The Imperial Museum was a conscious product of the nucleus collections, and the state ownership afforded a more systematic and wide-ranging collecting strategy.

Looking first to Calcutta, the Imperial Museum, importantly, drew several different projects under one roof, so, whilst the Asiatic Society’s collection provided the nucleus, it was never ‘a single homogenous organism’.⁴⁰⁵ Instead, it was made up of different sections led by different curators who collected their materials in multi-faceted ways, which were paid for through different revenue streams. The official tome published to celebrate the museum’s centenary in 1914 recorded that it was ‘an association of scientific and artistic sections bound together by a common aim.’⁴⁰⁶ In addition to the Asiatic Society, the Imperial Museum also contained the Geological Survey of India’s Museum of Geology, which, from 1856, had had its own rooms at No. 1 Hastings Street. In the Geological Survey’s Annual Report for 1863-64, its superintendent, Thomas Oldham, noted that ‘it is impossible to make our valuable collections as useful or accessible as they ought to be, while the Museum is confined to small badly lighted rooms limited in number.’⁴⁰⁷ Moreover, the ‘collection of minerals’ was still ‘very incomplete’, whilst the ‘collection of fossils increase so rapidly’ there was ‘not room for the proper exhibition of a large position of them.’⁴⁰⁸ Clearly, a purpose-built institution, facilitated by better state funding was attractive, as it would enhance the Geological Survey’s capacity to develop scientific knowledge in the metropolis. At this stage of the empire, MacKenzie has argued that there was a degree of ‘cross-imperial cooperation’ in fields relating to knowledge development, such as science, the environment, medicine, and, crucially, museums.⁴⁰⁹ Evidence from the Museum of Geology supports this hypothesis. The Annual Report describes different instances of specimen exchanges between the museum and the Imperial Mineral Cabinet, Vienna, for example. Calcutta’s position as a long-standing centre for these forms of

⁴⁰⁵ *The Indian Museum, 1814-1914* (Calcutta: Trustees of the Indian Museum, 1914), preface.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁷ *Annual Report of the Geological Survey of India, and of the Museum of Geology, Calcutta, for the year 1863-64* (Calcutta: Military Orphan Press, 1863), p.8.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁹ John M. Mackenzie, ‘European Imperialism: A ‘Zone of Cooperation Rather than Competition?’ in *Imperial Cooperation and Transfer 1870 – 1930, Empires and Encounters* ed. by Volker Barth and Roland Cvetkovski (Bloomsbury Academic: London, 2015), p.40.

knowledge production and exchange, was incorporated into its claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire’.

Pictured below is a rare image inside the Asiatic Society’s Museum, which appeared in the *Illustrated London News* in 1851. The scene depicts the new aerolite display. Aerolites were classified as geological specimens, and this one was a ‘beautiful ash colour, friable, soft, and gritty, and somewhat resembles pumice.’⁴¹⁰ The rooms themselves contained a huge variety of specimens, seemingly categorised into different rooms, but the emphasis of the illustration is clearly the interest generated amongst the Native Princes of India.

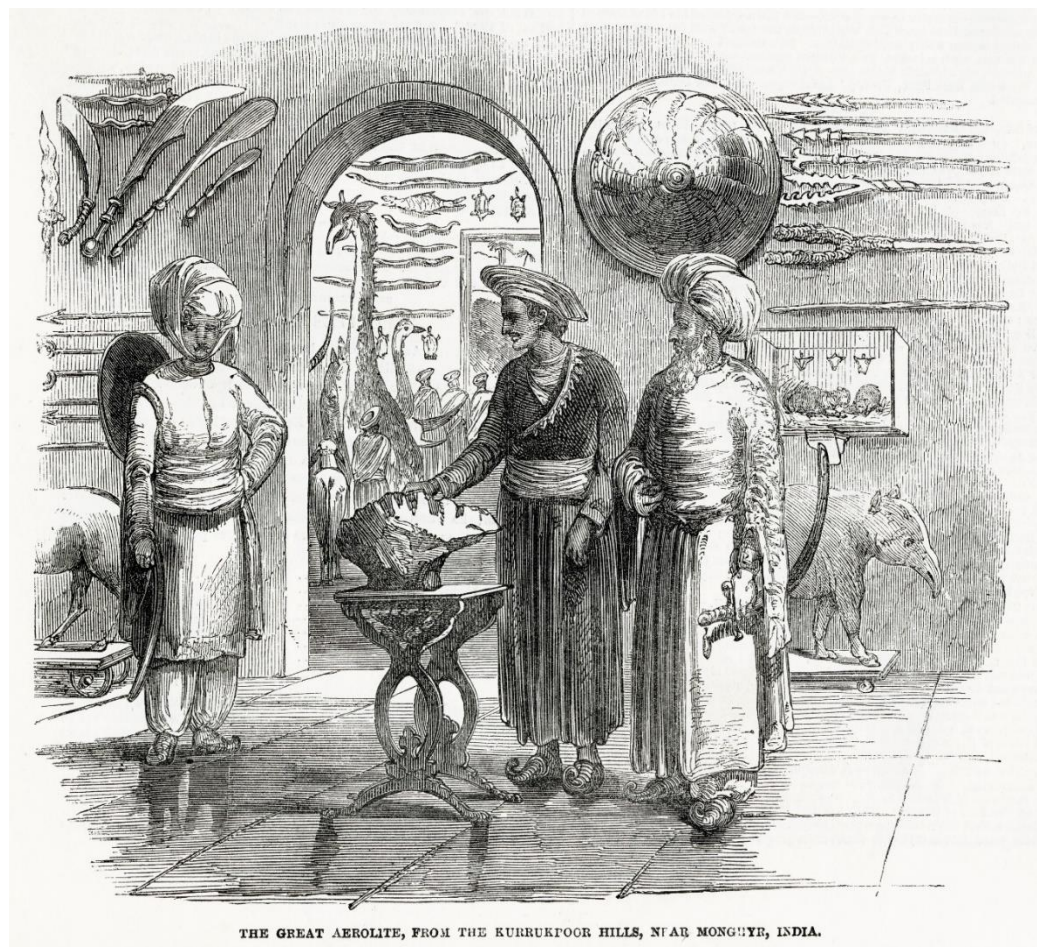


Figure 3.1 The Great Aerolite, from the Kurrukpoor Hills, India. The museum of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta, 1851 © Illustrated London News Ltd/Mary Evans.

⁴¹⁰ ‘Aerolites in India’, *Illustrated London News*, 13 December 1851, pp.699-700.

A reviewer of the centennial text *The Indian Museum* wrote that:

Only Anglo-Indians who [...] can recall the days when in the early middle ‘seventies’ – the natural history and antiquarian collections of the Asiatic Society of Bengal were crammed into an ordinary-sized dwelling-house[...] are capable of realising and appreciating the contrast between the present and the past in respect to the status of science and art in the City of Palaces.⁴¹¹

Had the existing accommodation provided by the Asiatic Society for the collection been more commodious, the need for a public museum may not have been considered so pressing. Moreover, had the collection which was transferred to the Government of India been smaller in size and narrower in scope, the new public institution would, in all likelihood, have been more modest too. This highlights some of the key means by which the Asiatic Society’s collection influenced the physicality and timing of the Imperial Museum. The reviewer continues; ‘In housing in this magnificent and lavish style the valuable collections illustrating the natural history, geology, archaeology, and ethnology of British India, the Indian Government has done its duty in a manner worthy of praise.’⁴¹² There is a huge tension between the idea of ‘British India’ and the ‘Indian Government’. The author, however, was involved in the arranging of the galleries, which perhaps tempers this lavish commendation.

The Glasgow Town Council’s problems were reversed, they had an empty space which needed filling. The city had ‘already two museums’ – the Hunterian at the University of Glasgow and the Andersonian Museum, ‘but the general public, to a certain extent, are excluded from them.’⁴¹³ As University museums, their only means of generating revenue was ‘the objectionable one of charging at the door’, which inevitably restricted access to those with reduced means.⁴¹⁴ The Andersonian opened in 1831 at Anderson’s University as a result of John Anderson’s gifted collection of natural history specimens and scientific apparatus in 1796. From its title alone, it was an institution intimately connected with its founder. Similarly, the Hunterian, which originated from famed anatomist, William Hunter’s large gift to the University of Glasgow in 1781, opened to the public in 1807.⁴¹⁵ These older, deliberate collections were well-respected, and often written about in travelogues which curiously omitting the Kelvingrove Museum.⁴¹⁶

⁴¹¹ R. L., ‘The Indian Museum, 1814 – 1914’, *Nature* 94 (1914), pp. 476 – 477.

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ Adam and Charles Black, *Black’s Picturesque Tourist of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1865), p. 374; J.D., ‘Public Museum for Glasgow’, *Glasgow Herald*, 30 July 1870, p.6.

⁴¹⁴ ‘Hunterian Museum Cost of Corporation Museums, To the Editor of the Glasgow Herald’, *Glasgow Herald*, 18 October 1869, p.6.

⁴¹⁵ Black, *Black’s Picturesque*, p.374.

⁴¹⁶ For example: T.N. Mukharji, *A Visit to Europe*, Third Edition (Calcutta: Bangabasi Steam Machine Press, 1902), p.292.

Importantly, these were spaces designed principally for the scholar and the student, not the worker or leisure-maker.

Consequently, the public museum had to be seen to offer something different, but there was some animosity from the more established museums. Indeed, the *Scotsman* reported that the Kelvingrove ‘project seems to have excited some jealousy in certain quarters, as pointing towards a rivalry with existing museums at the University and Andersonian Institution.’⁴¹⁷ On this note, John Young, Keeper of the Hunterian Museum and vocal critic of the new Kelvingrove Museum, argued that Glasgow did not need more institutions but financial assistance for the ones it already had. He considered that money raised by the Town Council would be better spent subsidising the existing Museums, because they could purchase ‘free days’ for the citizens at both institutions, as a ‘cheaper and more effectual way of supplying public instruction’ than a new museum.⁴¹⁸ Moreover, he wanted specific justification for the additional financial burden a new institution would place on the ratepayers, which the council had ‘moderately estimated’ to be £500 yearly.⁴¹⁹ Thus the Town Council’s museum needed to be seen to provide citizens with something not already provided for in the city. Arguably, its uniqueness came from the fact that it was publicly owned, and would serve as a repository for whatever collections its citizens felt compelled to donate. This raises further questions about why the Town Council chose to create their own museum. If public instruction was the primary concern, then facilitating free access to existing museums may have been a far quicker and smoother route, but, if Glasgow was to compare favourably with other cities, establishing a public institution through civic endeavour was seemingly unavoidable.

Optimistically, ‘J.D.’ wrote to the *Glasgow Herald* in July 1870 to say that he had ‘visited the museum at present being formed in Kelvingrove House’, and it had occurred to him ‘that it would be a valuable thing if a public museum could be got for Glasgow – the commercial capital of Scotland, and the centre of innumerable manufactures.’⁴²⁰ J.D.’s next comments suggest that the connectedness between the Town Council and the new museum had not been emphasised, because they note that:

⁴¹⁷ ‘The Alexandra Park, Glasgow’, *The Scotsman*, 9 September 1870, p.6.

⁴¹⁸ ‘Hunterian Museum Cost of Corporation Museums, To the Editor of the Glasgow Herald’, *Glasgow Herald*, 18 October 1869, p.6.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

⁴²⁰ J.D., ‘Public Museum for Glasgow’, *Glasgow Herald*, 30 July 1870, p.6.

if either the Corporation or some public-spirited person were to grant the use of a central commodious building, and solicit specimens of arts and manufactures, curiosities &c., from the public, that the call would be heartily responded to, and we might soon have as good and instructive a museum as the one in Edinburgh, or the various excellent ones in the Metropolis.⁴²¹

Importantly, unlike other comparable towns, Glasgow had an advantage because it already had a public art gallery – the McLellan Galleries. When Archibald McLellan (1795 – 1854), owner of a successful coachbuilding company and town councillor, died and left his collection of paintings and sculptures to the city, the Town Council became the somewhat unwilling custodian of his incomplete Sauchiehall Street galleries.⁴²² Unwilling, because McLellan's estate had accrued significant debts and his collections were put up for sale in order to repay them. Ultimately, it was decided on 15th May 1856 that the Town Council should buy the collection and the buildings for £44,500, to make good on McLellan's wishes.⁴²³ This decision rested on the pervading idea of the 'morally instructive role of art', which was popular at the time.⁴²⁴ The huge expense caused by the bequest did, however, fuel resistance within the Town Council to any proposals for new public institutions, which sheds light on the protracted debates about a new museum and library.

In future histories of Glasgow's cultural developments, however, the McLellan Galleries took on almost mythic status, as they showed the city to be ahead of the curve and in possession of a valuable art collection. Moreover, dating the city's connection with civic cultural enterprise back to the McLellan Galleries was infinitely more impressive than the haphazard beginnings suggested by the Kelvingrove Museum. Indeed, in *Glasgow, Its Municipal Organization and Administrations* from 1896, it was purported that 'no municipal museum in the United Kingdom can lay claim to an age which carries it out of the range of living memory', but in Glasgow, 'the beginning of the municipal connection with museum undertakings' began with the McLellan Galleries.⁴²⁵ As described by the Lord Provost, James Bell and Glasgow's civic curator, James Paton, McLellan encapsulated much of what the ideal Glasgow man ought to be. He was:

⁴²¹ Ibid.

⁴²² John Morrison, 'Victorian Municipal Patronage, The foundation and management of Glasgow Corporation Galleries 1854 – 1888', *Journal of the History of Collections* 8: 1 (1996), p.94.

⁴²³ James Bell and James Paton, *Glasgow Its Municipal Organization and Administrations* (Glasgow: J. MacLehose & Sons, 1896).

⁴²⁴ Morrison, 'Victorian', p.94.

⁴²⁵ Bell and Paton, *Glasgow*, p.350.

A man of enlightened public spirit, a town councillor and magistrate who interested himself in all movements for the beautification of his native city, and for the promotion of art and culture in the community. He was possessed of wide knowledge, catholic sympathies, and keen critical discrimination in art; and the best part of his life, as well as of his means, he devoted to the accumulation of the remarkable collection of pictures and other works of art he left behind him.⁴²⁶

He also financed his collection through his own commercial endeavours as a coachbuilder, and his life trajectory therefore offered something of a template for other Glaswegians to follow. Here was a figure with broad cultural interests and artistic intelligence. His legacy was that of a true advocate for Glasgow's development, which reflected the story leaders wanted to tell about the city as a beacon of civic-led enterprise.

The collection brought together for the Kelvingrove Museum was significantly less impressive than the collection in the McLellan Galleries or the University museums. Looking back on the origins of Kelvingrove, Paton and Bailie Dickson purported that it was 'begun without any well-defined idea of its scope, purpose, and limitations.'⁴²⁷ Instead, the collection was sourced from individual benefactors without a cogent sense of direction beyond filling the space. To convince citizens to donate their collections to the museum, the Town Council placed a notice in the *Glasgow Evening Citizen* inviting 'the co-operation of the Citizens by DONATION or LOAN, in forming a Collection fitted to interest and instruct the frequenters of the Park, and to be an attractive resort' for the 'general Public'.⁴²⁸ It was declared that the museum was 'NOW OPEN for the Reception of Objects for Exhibition and placed under the Superintendence of a Resident Curator', particularly invited were objects under the headings:

Works of Art; Natural Objects of a rare or instructive kind; Minerals and Fossils; Specimens of Animal, Vegetable and Mineral Substances used in the Industries of the City; Specimens of Iron and Steel Manufacture illustrating their Processes; Specimens illustrating the Chemical and other Manufactures of the City; Models of Machines, Locomotives, Steamboats, Ships, &c; Antiquities; Curiosities; Implements; Weapons and Dresses of Uncivilised Races, &c, &c.⁴²⁹

This list suggests that the new museum was open to anything at all the citizens were willing to donate. This was a far from systematic process, fuelled by desperation to fill a space the city had decided to create, as quickly as possible. Had civic competition not been

⁴²⁶ Ibid., 349.

⁴²⁷ Bailie Dickson and James Paton, *The Present Position of the Museum and Art Galleries of Glasgow* (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1886), p.8.

⁴²⁸ 'Museum, Kelvingrove Park', *Glasgow Evening Citizen*, 14 July 1870, p.1.

⁴²⁹ Ibid

such a driving factor, and time therefore not been of the essence, perhaps the Town Council would have been able to take a more considered approach to the collecting process. Objects were welcomed from a wide range of areas, some more expected than others. Materials connected to industry in the city and natural specimens are unsurprising. Indeed, local institutions, like Glasgow's, were more likely to follow the ideas set out by Ewart in 1850, owing to what was available, so that their:

contents would be illustrative of the local and natural history of the places in which they were established. They would be most valuable to the future historian, as furnishing not only works illustrative of the locality in the libraries, but as preserving in the museums samples of the natural curiosities of the neighbourhood.⁴³⁰

These new institutions were, in Ewart's conception, intended to capture the particularities of their localities, thus creating a space where citizens could educate themselves on things that were useful to them. Consequently, 'specimens of animal, vegetable and mineral substances' used in Glasgow's industries sat within expectations for provincial museums. The calls for antiquities and curiosities, as well as 'weapons and dresses of uncivilised races' suggests that the Town Council were hopeful that they would receive some imperial items which would distinguish Glasgow's collection favourably amongst comparable provincial institutions. Even at this early stage, it is clear that these new institutions could be appropriated to promote local sentiments and civic pride, not only through their existence, but through their contents too. Whilst provincial museums were created to service the local people that were paying for them, and educate them on local natural and industrial history, these institutions also needed to provide an attractive experience. By drawing attention to other areas, such as art or curiosities, the Town Council invited Glasgow's citizens to advertise the city's global connections in a formal public space. By 1872, it was reported that two of the galleries were 'devoted entirely to specimens of the manufactures of Glasgow.'⁴³¹ The *Glasgow Herald* reported that 'although still incomplete, the Museum is now furnished with a very fair collection of objects in natural history, antiquities, and manufacturers.'⁴³² Though clearly there had been some success in eliciting specimens from outside of Glasgow too, as the 'most interesting case' was reportedly the collection of 'ancient glass and pottery' from Cyprus, which had been 'contributed by Mr R. Hamilton Lang, British Consul at Cyprus'.⁴³³ In the 'hope that

⁴³⁰ House of Commons, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates: The Official Report* (14 February 1850, vol. 108, cols. 759-63) [Online] Mr Ewart, <<https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1850/feb/14/public-libraries-and-museums>> [accessed 12 October 2019]

⁴³¹ 'Kelvingrove House Museum', *Glasgow Herald*, 14 March 1872, p. 4.

⁴³² Ibid.

⁴³³ Ibid.

further publicity may lead to fresh contributions', the *Glasgow Herald* described the Museum's 'origin and present contents' for its readers.⁴³⁴

To encourage donations, readers were assured that their objects would be 'distinguished by the Names of the Contributors.'⁴³⁵ As a citizen-led project, only the citizens could make it a success. Contributors were also mentioned in newspaper reports, which suggests that some citizens may have been motivated by opportunities for public gratification. The *Glasgow Evening Post*, for example, describes contributions from Dr J. Dongall 'three cases of rare and curious shells, which have been collected in the vicinity of Glasgow', Councillor Bain gave 'a fine case of minerals', and Robert Adam, Esq. of Carron 'presented a similar contribution.'⁴³⁶ These individuals make the emergence of the Kelvingrove Museum feel very personal. Despite relying on donations for their new museum, the Town Council Minutes reveal that some members of the Council, along with their friends had 'various things that would be very valuable for exhibition' but the Parks Committee responsible for the museum 'did not wish these as a gift, but would be satisfied with them as a loan.'⁴³⁷ Members of the Asiatic Society had similarly wished to be credited for each of their contributions to the Imperial collection, however, in Calcutta, this was as much about the Society gaining credence, as individual members.

Finding the right personnel to staff such museums proved problematic in both Glasgow and Calcutta. Indeed, as Oldham fretted, 'the difficulty in obtaining properly qualified assistants daily increases.'⁴³⁸ Though he was not wanting for applicants, 'few or none are found who have had the preliminary training and education likely to fit them for such duties.'⁴³⁹ For the Imperial Museum's curator, Dr John Anderson, 'a medically trained Scot' with a particular interest in natural history was selected. Before Calcutta, he had 'held the Professorship of Natural Science in the Free Church College at Edinburgh', which suggests he came from a traditional scholarly background.⁴⁴⁰ He was appointed in September 1866, more than a decade before the museum opened to the public.⁴⁴¹ MacKenzie observes that Anderson 'steered the museum towards its emergence as a fully-fledged imperial institution in a new and dedicated building.'⁴⁴² From 1867, the

⁴³⁴ Ibid.

⁴³⁵ 'Museum. Kelvingrove House', *Glasgow Evening Citizen*, 14 July 1870, p.1.

⁴³⁶ 'Kelvingrove Museum', *Glasgow Evening Post*, 11 July 1870, p. 3.

⁴³⁷ 'Town Council Proceedings', *Glasgow Herald*, 2 September 1870, p. 3.

⁴³⁸ *Annual Report of the Geological Survey of India, 1863-64*, p.10.

⁴³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁴¹ *Indian Museum*, p. 7.

⁴⁴² MacKenzie, *Museums and Empire*, p.237.

Government agreed to create an additional post of Assistant Curator to aid Anderson with the organisation of the museum, and specifically to arrange the zoological section. The post was filled by Mr James Wood-Mason, an Englishman with connections to Sir Joseph Hooker, Director of Kew, highlighting the importance of networks within museums.

To select a curator for their new museum, the Glasgow Council placed a notice in the newspapers asking for ‘a person competent to take charge of the Museum’.⁴⁴³ They reportedly received ‘no fewer than 980 applicants’.⁴⁴⁴ Though ‘the inducements were not very enticing’, namely ‘£60 a-year with a free house’, ‘many of the candidates for the situation were men of education and of highly respectable family connexions.’⁴⁴⁵ Following ‘several meetings’ dedicated to the ‘difficult and delicate task’, the list was whittled down to four names; Messrs James Stewart and Alexander Wilson, Glasgow; Mr Ayton, teacher, Forres; and Mr. Thomson, head gamekeeper to the Earl of Dundonald.⁴⁴⁶ From this list, the last was selected ‘as the most eligible for the Curatorship on account of his general scientific attainments, and particularly for his knowledge of natural history.’⁴⁴⁷ A gamekeeper was an interesting choice for Kelvingrove’s first curator, but nevertheless Mr. James Thomson was appointed to the role in 1870. His appointment suggests that professional credentials in the field of museum work were not considered essential for the duties he would be performing.

Thomson’s selection could have a deliberate attempt to redress criticism that Glasgow had only decided to fit up a public museum to compete with Edinburgh. Young, for example, wrote to the editor of the *Glasgow Herald* to explain retrospectively why he had originally opposed Kelvingrove Museum.⁴⁴⁸ He claimed that ‘several of its promoters were evidently under the impression that it was their duty to produce in the west a counterpart of the Edinburgh Industrial Museum.’⁴⁴⁹ This suggests that there were some, or perhaps many, who had sought to establish a museum in Glasgow to compete with, rather than emulate, Edinburgh. Thomson’s selection over someone with industrial credentials appears to counteract this view. Moreover, Glasgow did not have the means to formulate a collection that would compare favourably to those in Edinburgh’s national museums. Young reasoned that an ‘industrial, zoological, and antiquarian collection, could only have

⁴⁴³ ‘Curator of Kelvingrove House Museum’, *Glasgow Evening Citizen*, 23 February 1870, p. 3.

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁸ John Young, ‘City Industrial Museum’, *Glasgow Herald*, 3 May 1873, p.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.

been formed at great expense', unless they employed the 'Edinburgh method' and simply built on a university collection. This had not, however, been open to the Glasgow Town Council because the Andersonian and Hunterian Museums were both under 'trust deeds', and therefore transferring their collections to other institutions would have been a 'costly and troublesome process.'⁴⁵⁰ Instead, Glasgow could either have attempted 'a general collection' or 'restrict their efforts to the speedy development of a specially industrial museum.'⁴⁵¹ Even in 1863, Bailie Blackie was awake to the limitations of the proposed public museum collection in Glasgow, because, as a provincial institution it 'may not be able to attain the perfection of such museums as those of vegetable substances and products at Kew, or of practical geology in Jermyn Street, or the rising industrial museum and Kensington.'⁴⁵² This not only shows an awareness of collections held in the metropolis, but suggests a level of provincial angst, which could be compared to colonial angst in Calcutta. Over the subsequent decades, aspirations for Glasgow's public museums grew considerably, in line with provincial institutions elsewhere, which brought its collections onto a closer comparative field with those held in London, as discussed in the following chapters.

'Open to the Public Free of Charge'

Turning to how the Imperial and Kelvingrove Museums were appraised by contemporaries, this section employs newspaper reports to capture something of the visitor experience. The Asiatic Society had proposed that the new museum 'ought to find its abode in the best part of the city.'⁴⁵³ Today, the Indian Museum is separated from the Maidan by Jawaharlal Nehru Road and the Park Street Flyover, but, in the nineteenth century, it faced directly onto the open stretch of the Maidan. The museum extended across 312 feet along the Chowringhee – 'the chief thoroughfare between the commercial and the residential quarters of Calcutta', becoming 'of the most conspicuous sites in the city.' Contrastingly in Glasgow, the park landscape surrounding Kelvingrove House has remained relatively unchanged, though, as Chapter Six explores, the house itself was demolished in 1900.

⁴⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid.

⁴⁵² 'Public Libraries and Museums', *Glasgow Morning Journal*, 6 February 1863, p.2.

⁴⁵³ 'Proposed establishment of a Public Museum at Calcutta' in Home Department, October 1859, File No. 49, p.4, NAI.

It is hard to ignore the visual and political statement made by the Imperial Museum's façade. In concordance with MacKenzie's argument, Calcutta's museum accurately reflected the character of the city; it was as necessarily imperial as the capital of British India's administrators, lawyers and scholars.⁴⁵⁴ Notably, it was built to contribute to a wider suite of government buildings. The *Bombay Gazette* reported that many 'civil buildings' were underway in Calcutta at the same time as the Imperial Museum.⁴⁵⁵ Other institutions included, a 'New building for the High Court at Calcutta' and 'the new University Building at Calcutta', which also received significant government funding. The chosen architect for the Museum, W. L. Granville, was also responsible for the High Court and General Post Office.⁴⁵⁶ Thus the Imperial Museum was just one of the trappings of a capital city which was lavished on Calcutta during the late 1860s. Arguably, this flurry of state-funded building exercises highlights both colonial anxiety and a new confidence.

Positioned side by side (pictured below), the Imperial and Kelvingrove Museums were obviously vastly different in scale, but there is a surprising sense of similarity between the two buildings.

⁴⁵⁴ Mackenzie, *Museums*, p.236.

⁴⁵⁵ 'Examination of the Public Works estimate for 1868-69', *Bombay Gazette*, 11 June 1869, p. 2.

⁴⁵⁶ *Indian Museum*, p.124.



Figure 3.2 Imperial Museum, Calcutta, photographed 1850s – 1870s ©Victoria & Albert Museum, London



Figure 3.3 Kelvingrove House, c.1860, reproduced with permission of Glasgow Museums

Whilst one is of course a substantial imperial edifice and the other a country house, both feature a central entrance framed by pillars, both have protruding east and west wings, and both are squarely sat on the landscape surrounded by a peppering of trees. At the time it was built, the Imperial Museum was ‘one of the largest’ buildings in Calcutta, and though the same could not be said of Kelvingrove House, it did have historical significance.⁴⁵⁷

Kelvingrove House was built between 1782 to 1790 by Lord Provost Patrick Colquhoun, and was later gifted to the Glasgow Council in 1852, whereby much of the land was used to create the West End Park.⁴⁵⁸ To turn it into a museum, the mansion was ‘thoroughly overhauled’ and the interior was ‘almost entirely remodelled’.⁴⁵⁹ This included ‘structural alterations’ to facilitate exhibition galleries, which are not visible from the exterior. Inside was divided into four halls – ‘South Hall, ground floor, archaeology; north Hall, same floor, geology; South Hall, first floor, natural history; North Hall, on the same floor, mechanics and models.’ Internally, ‘as far as possible, the Museum has been arranged on the progressive principle, by way of giving to it a certain educational value.’⁴⁶⁰ What this ‘progressive principle’ was is hard to ascertain, but presumably this was intended to highlight sequential developments. Despite its limited scope, the new Kelvingrove Museum managed to ‘interest the masses.’⁴⁶¹ Indeed, on a visit to the Museum, the ‘Rambling Reporter’ for the *Glasgow Herald* noted that the ‘general impression’ was ‘very promising’ and there were ‘one or two cases which could do honour even to an imperial collection.’⁴⁶² This gives the impression that Glasgow’s collection was aspiring towards an imperial standard, and that the collection would grow more closely akin to those in the metropole.

Importantly, the Kelvingrove Museum succeeded in becoming ‘a popular place of resort’, which is supported by its inclusion in a list of entertainments for the Glasgow Fair in July 1871.⁴⁶³ The Glasgow Fair is city-wide holiday still observed by some today, but now simply as a day off, and not the carnival of events nineteenth-century Glaswegians would have enjoyed. Indeed, alongside the ‘customary facilities at the Andersonian Museum, the Corporation Galleries and the Botanic Gardens’, the collection at the

⁴⁵⁷ *The Indian Museum*, p.7.

⁴⁵⁸ Colquhoun, the so-called “Father of Glasgow”, promoted Glasgow’s trade and manufacturing. His businesses traded in commodities which relied on enslaved labour. Kelvingrove House was built with these proceeds.

⁴⁵⁹ ‘Kelvingrove Museum’, *Glasgow Evening Post*, 11 July 1870, p.3.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶¹ ‘Kelvingrove Museum’, *Glasgow Evening Post*, 11 July 1870, p.3.

⁴⁶² ‘Kelvingrove House Museum’, *Glasgow Herald*, 14 March 1872, p.4.

⁴⁶³ ‘The Glasgow Fair’, *Glasgow Herald*, 12 July 1871, p.4.

Kelvingrove Museum was ‘well worthy of inspection’ after some ‘interesting additions.’⁴⁶⁴ Later that year, the *Scotsman* noted that the Kelvingrove rooms had already ‘become a favourite place of resort, especially for the working classes, who frequent the park in large numbers on summer evenings.’⁴⁶⁵ Its popularity amongst the working classes was emphasised in press coverage. Indeed, ‘a plea for shopkeepers’ assistants’ stated that ‘much credit is due to Councillor MacBean for being the means of providing a museum and music for the recreation of our working men’, but these entertainments were not accessible to all.⁴⁶⁶ Those working as retail shopkeepers’ assistants were, for example, unable to visit the museum because of their working hours, leaving them nothing to do but ‘mope from Monday morning to Saturday evening between his place of business and his bed.’ The writer asked for support from city councillors to secure ‘the recreation, education, and healthful interests of a class of people’ who had thus far been unable to secure shorter hours. Access to the museum was thus considered a civic right, rather than a luxury for the few. Indeed, part the rationale for establishing a civic-run public museum was that Glasgow’s citizens were not served by the existing institutions, such as the Hunterian Museum, which was seen as somewhat elitist.

The Imperial Museum was notably less popular. Despite the grand edifice, it opened incrementally. A letter to the Editor of the *Indian Daily News* in 1877 reported that ‘A portion of the “Imperial Museum” in Calcutta was opened on Monday, containing the geological collection from the old museum in Hastings’ Street.’⁴⁶⁷ This facet of the collection was opened to the public before other parts of the museum, which did not open for another year. The correspondent argued that ‘If it is premature to criticise the building or the collection, it must be considered premature to open it yet, and therefore any remarks are justifiable.’⁴⁶⁸ Whilst the geological collection had found a more capacious setting in the ‘three lower rooms on the Sudder Street side of the building’, it was ‘plain almost to ugliness’, made more ‘apparent from the walls being so high.’ It was not just its apparent ugliness, however, which caught the author’s attention, indeed, there were ‘numerous cracks through the walls – one of which opens that you can put your hand in – from the ground-floor to the roof.’ His description significantly contrasts the optimistic and encouraging tone provided by the ‘Rambling Reporter’ in Glasgow. In fact, he had

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁵ *The Scotsman*, 9 September 1870, p.6.

⁴⁶⁶ One who Envies the Working Man, ‘A Plea for Shopkeepers’ Assistants’, *Glasgow Herald*, 2 May 1874, p.7.

⁴⁶⁷ Galena, ‘The Imperial Museum’, *Indian Daily News*, 26 January 1877, p. 15.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid.

numerous damning judgements to pass; ‘the building outside is heavy in design, and lacks the finish which a professional architect would have lavished on it throughout the entrance and interior’; ‘the massive porch, large enough to have permitted a stair-case up the walls, scarcely gives room for the rough drivers of Calcutta carriages to drive through’; ‘already the plaster seems to have got the small-pox, and is dropping off like a building twenty years old,’ and, ‘there is a great attempt at making a grand “palace,” but at the same time there is a great measure of meanness.’ This was a damning review for an institution which had cost the public purse so dearly and occupied one of the finest spots on the Maidan. In particular, he continues:

Looked at from a distance, the entire building has a heavy appearance of a square mass of masonry, without any light and shade, or affording any relief to the eye from a monotony of detail only equalled by a London “assurance office,” which by a way are generally far more artistic in design, or to the other buildings nearly completed in Chowringhee.⁴⁶⁹

Criticism levied at the Imperial Museum were really criticisms of the Government of India, and governance in India more generally. Expectations for the Imperial Museum were considerably higher than those of the Kelvingrove Museum, which received a far kinder response in the local press. Stylistically and ideologically, the Imperial Museum was an administrative building, rather than a cultural centre. It was also a vehicle for affirming British colonial control in India. In 1878, the *Falkirk Herald* reported that ‘A statue of her Majesty in the Imperial Museum at Calcutta was unveiled by the Viceroy on the 1st January. This is the gift of the Maharajah of Burdwan.’⁴⁷⁰ This was important because Victoria had been proclaimed the Empress of India in 1877. However, the article claimed that ‘the natives appear generally to regard the matter with indifference.’ Yet, Bengalis ‘invariably termed’ the Indian Museum “‘jadu-gahr” (home of magic), which highlights that the governing body could not prescribe how the space would be used.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁰ ‘A statue of her Majesty’, *Falkirk Herald*, 31 January 1878, p.3.

⁴⁷¹ R.L. ‘The Indian Museum’, *Nature*, p. 477.

Second City Rhetoric and Kelvingrove Museum

Much as the Asiatic Society's museum had become too cramped to be useful, Glasgow's collection quickly outgrew Kelvingrove House. Within a few years of opening in 1870, calls were being made to build an extension to give the collection room to grow. In their haste to establish a museum, the Town Council had failed to create a space which could adapt with the city's aspirations. The Committee's call for donations had been enthusiastically answered, so that by 1873, the museum was 'full to overflowing' leaving 'hundreds of would be contributors [...] denied the pleasure of aiding in the instruction and amusement of their fellow citizens.'⁴⁷² Councillor Hugh MacBean, one of the museum's most ardent supporters, noted that:

no one can visit the rooms...without feeling regret that something really worthy of the city cannot be presented to the jaded thousands who seek to exchange the crowded streets for the little attractions to be found in the Park.⁴⁷³

In keeping with Glasgow's social objectives, outlined in the previous chapter, Kelvingrove Museum was supposed to provide people with a viable alternative to the public house, but, clearly there were those like MacBean, which thought it needed to move beyond its social function. Pictured below, clutching his crowning achievement, MacBean was described as 'most zealous in endeavouring to extend the museum.'⁴⁷⁴ From the report on the 1874 municipal elections, it is clear his work was appreciated, as he was 'honoured by a unanimous re-election' and returned 'without opposition, having rendered important services in the establishment of the Museum in Kelvingrove Park.'⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷² H. MacBean, 'Letter to the Editor', *Glasgow Herald*, 21 February 1873, p.4.

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ 'Town Council Proceedings', *Glasgow Herald*, 6 March 1874, p.4.

⁴⁷⁵ 'The Municipal Elections', *Glasgow Herald*, 22 October 1874, p.3.

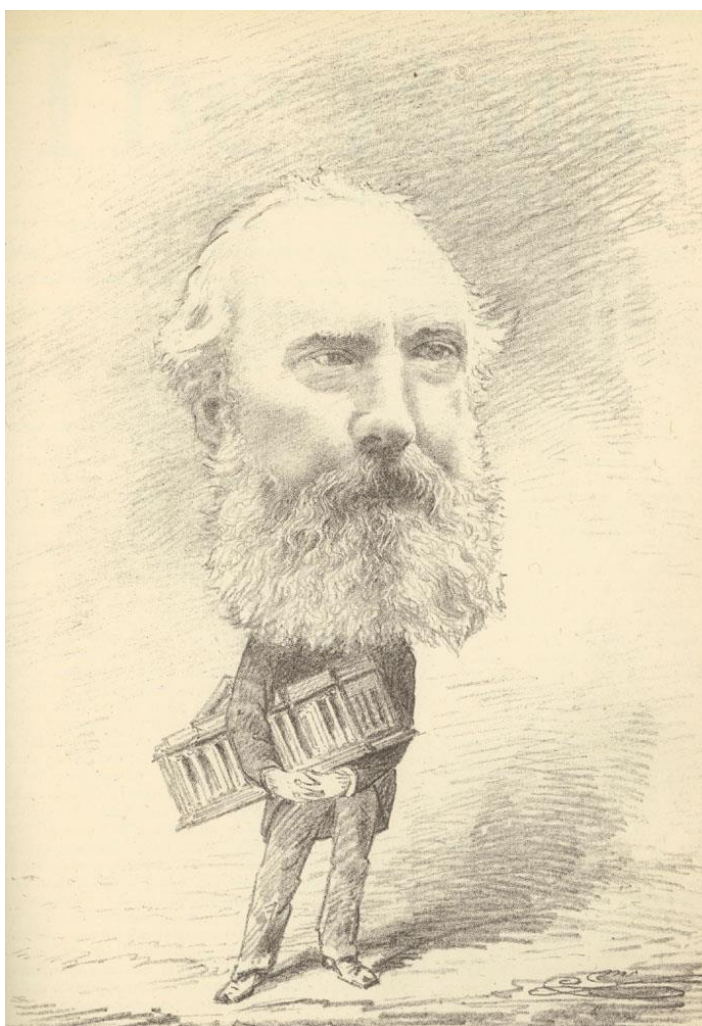


Figure 3.4 Hugh MacBean Mitchell Library, 920.04BAI

MacBean was not alone in seeing the Museum as a temporary space. William Wallace wrote to the *Glasgow Herald* to say that, ‘as a citizen of Glasgow’ he had felt ‘shame’ when he had learned of ‘Kelvingrove House being converted into a Museum’, and felt sure it could not ‘be more than a receptacle for a few curiosities and antiquarian nick-nacks.’⁴⁷⁶ He thought the Museum was ‘at best but the nucleus of an institution which Glasgow citizens of the future will be proud to show their country friends.’⁴⁷⁷ Importantly, the public collection needed a home before it could begin to accumulate, and suggestions that the Museum should be developed further indicates growing civic confidence in Glasgow. Yet, on his visit to the Museum, he found ‘a series of specimens illustrating chemical manufactures’ to ‘compare favourably with any similar collection in Great Britain.’⁴⁷⁸ Wallace, on this occasion, claimed his expertise on the basis that he had recently returned from a trip to visit the ‘collections at South Kensington and other Metropolitan

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁷ William Wallace, ‘The Kelvingrove Museum’, *Glasgow Herald*, 8 May 1873, p.7

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid.

Institutions' in London.⁴⁷⁹ As the next chapter will explore, provincial curators increasingly aspired to emulate the displays in metropolitan museums.

Despite the evident need for further space within the existing building, in February 1874 the Glasgow Town Council ruled that no public fund was available to provide an extension, but the money could be raised by voluntary private subscription.⁴⁸⁰ This highlights the hybridity between a public and private institution which pervaded the lifespan of the Kelvingrove Museum. It may have been a public museum, but the heavy, almost exclusive reliance on private donations in these early years illustrates the blurred boundaries between the two. The Town Council Sub-Committee responsible for the Museum acknowledged that 'the space for exhibition in the Museum is exhausted; that such an Institution, as a means of imparting education and enjoyment to the community, is most valuable', and therefore the 'accommodation should be extended.'⁴⁸¹ In March, the Town Council met to discuss the issue, which was reported in the *Glasgow Herald*.⁴⁸² Councillors presented different ideas about how to develop the museum project in Glasgow, beyond an extension to Kelvingrove. On the one hand, MacBean 'wished to get subscriptions from his friends and the friends of the Museum.' Whereas Mr Scott agreed to the extension but thought that there must be 'a better mode of procedure...than that of a private contribution', suggesting a small tax instead. More importantly however, he observed the 'the West-End Museum was a sectional affair, and too small for the needs of the case', and, 'if it was thought advisable to have sectional museums, one might be set down in the east, one in the south, another in the north, as well as the one in the west end of the city.'⁴⁸³ This was a novel idea to ensure 'the entire community might have an opportunity of participating' in the 'advantages' of a public museum. Contrastingly, Bailie Craig 'thought it was better to have one museum, in which the whole collection of the city might be seen at one visit, than to have sectional buildings over the city.' The juxtaposition of these ideas highlights two distinct approaches to public museums in Glasgow – either a museum was for the enjoyment and instruction of all its citizens, or it should be a great civic edifice to impress the city's onlookers. Later, as the Town Council became financially able, Glasgow was bestowed both with different museums across the city, and with an impressive civic and cultural monument – the new Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, which is the subject of Chapter Six. At this time however, Bailie Moir noted that

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁰ *Report on the condition and progress of the City Industrial Museum, Glasgow, for the year 1876*, p. 4.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid.

⁴⁸² 'Town Council Proceedings', *Glasgow Herald*, 6 March 1874, p.4.

⁴⁸³ Ibid.

Kelvingrove House was not ‘the most suitably placed for a museum for the city’ because it was at ‘one of the extremities of the town’, which was a regular criticism of the West End Park. The Lord Provost concluded that ‘he was sorry to see that there was not more public spirit in Glasgow’, and, unlike Dundee and Paisley, ‘not a single man in Glasgow had come forward to give the people a park or a museum.’⁴⁸⁴ Again, this was a common denunciation of Glasgow’s elite which was mobilised to entice donations.

At this juncture, persuasive rhetoric deployed by the *Glasgow Herald* to encourage citizens to donate generously towards an extension incorporated Glasgow’s status as the ‘second city of the Empire.’⁴⁸⁵ Whilst such rhetoric was notably absent during the establishing stages, appraisals of the museum were quickly connected to the city’s imperial position. Previously, comparisons had been made between Glasgow and England’s ‘chief cities’ and local urban centres. Continuing in this vein, the *Glasgow Herald* enthusiastically encouraged its readers to provide funds by inciting competition with nearby towns. It reminded them that ‘one gentleman in the neighbouring town of Greenock is just now building, of his own free gift, a public museum and lecture hall of equal dimensions with their own.’⁴⁸⁶ To anxious Glaswegian readers, Glasgow was of course a far superior city to Greenock, but it was vital that everyone else knew that too. Alongside Greenock, the paper reported that ‘Paisley, Stirling, and many other places of much less importance than Glasgow’ had been able to establish museums because of ‘similar gifts bestowed upon them by public spirited gentlemen.’ To this, it reasoned that, surely, the ‘merchant princes’ would come to the Committee and the city’s aid, and ‘place ample funds at its disposal for the erection of a building worthy of themselves and of the second city in the empire.’⁴⁸⁷ Thus second city rhetoric was used explicitly to encourage wealthy Glasgow citizens to support the museum. Despite the global links suggested by this rhetoric, the towns cited – Paisley and Stirling, were incredibly local, which suggests that, really, comparisons remained national. The implication was that as even far less significant towns were developing their own museums, Glasgow’s museum needed drastic improvement if it intended to compete with cities that were on a more equal footing. Here, the museum is posited not just as a reflection of the city but of the people of Glasgow, and, crucially, its imperial aspirations. This plea also informs understanding of civic culture at

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁵ ‘Extension of the Kelvingrove Museum’, *Glasgow Herald*, 29 August, 1874, p. 4.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid.

the time, as citizens of Glasgow were encouraged, and perhaps expected, to contribute positively to the built environment and cultural life of the city.

Glasgow's imperial pretensions were seemingly propagated too. Importantly, what was considered worthy of the city, at least rhetorically, had shifted and the museum had to change with it. Like other components for claiming second city status, such as commercial success or population statistics, museum development was based on paradoxical confidence and defensiveness. Using the example cited above, the *Glasgow Herald's* rhetoric incited confidence in Glasgow's deservedness of the 'second city of the empire' accolade, but the Kelvingrove Museum also demonstrates a point of insecurity and inferiority because it compared unfavourably with less significant towns. References to the 'second city of the Empire' in connection with Glasgow and its museum indicate that, whilst the process of museum establishment had hitherto been largely emulative, there was a competitive edge to developments too.

Soon after the Town Council had approved the expansion project on the principal that funds were raised, *the Scotsman* reported that 'the voluntary contributions for the improvement and extension of the Kelvingrove Museum' had reached £4000.⁴⁸⁸ Though brief, the inclusion of this detail affirms Flanders' observation that any developments to museums in the nineteenth-century were considered a media event. Whilst it is difficult to gain insight into how contemporaries responded to museums, press reports at least indicate the sort of information available to the general public. The *Glasgow Herald* produced continual, though sporadic coverage of the museum's developments. Results from *The British Newspaper Archive* suggest that over one hundred and fifty articles were published by the paper on "Kelvingrove Museum" in the 1870s alone. In 1874, the year the memorial-stone for the extension was laid, alongside reports of visitor numbers, numerous long articles were distributed.

With civic fanfare, the Lord Provost laid the memorial stone for the extension in December 1874.⁴⁸⁹ He was accompanied by the 'Magistrates and Council' who 'marched, preceded by the town officers with their halberds', to the platform for the ceremony.⁴⁹⁰ One of the focal voices of this ceremony was of course MacBean, who claimed that seeing the 'foundation-stone of this great industrial institution' was 'one of the happiest hours' of

⁴⁸⁸ 'Municipal', *The Scotsman*, 8 May 1874, p.6.

⁴⁸⁹ 'Extension of Kelvingrove Museum. Laying of Memorial Stone', *Glasgow Herald*, 21 December 1874, p.4.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid.

his life.⁴⁹¹ He asked the assembled party to think back ‘three or four years’ and consider how much ‘the taste for science, art, and education’ had ‘greatly developed during that short period.’⁴⁹² Indeed, MacBean, ‘in conjunction with our energetic curator’, had ‘resolved that in a few years Glasgow should have a museum worthy of itself – that we would rather die in the trenches than fall in our efforts (Cheers).’ Naturally, this occasion provided an opportunity for MacBean to appeal for more donations. He argued that ‘Our cause is good, and we have the merchant princes of Glasgow and neighbouring friends to fall back on for whatever money may yet be required for completion of this noble institution.’ Returning again to the ‘merchant princes’ evokes Glasgow’s global links through the prism of local pride. Indeed, he reflected: ‘What a pity, my Lord Provost, that we have not among us such a noble-hearted citizen as our friends in Paisley, Stirling, and Greenock.’

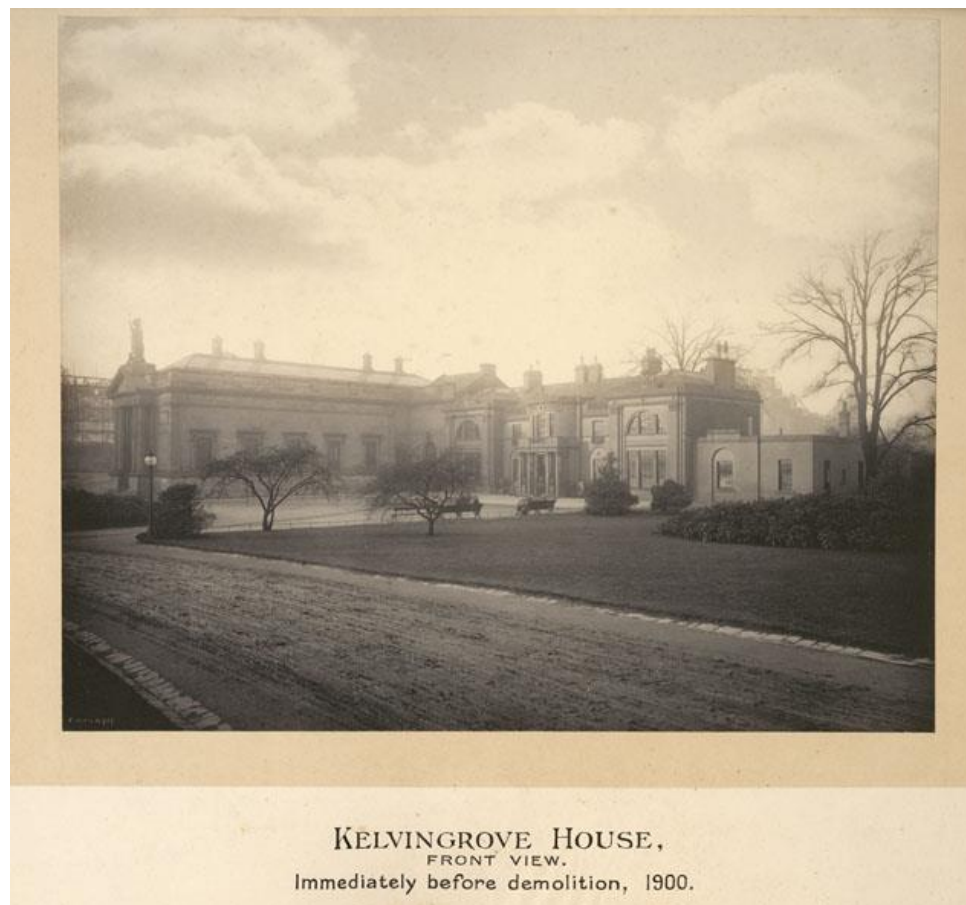


Figure 3.5 Kelvingrove House with its extension on the left, photographed 1900, reproduced with permission of Glasgow Museums

⁴⁹¹ Ibid.

⁴⁹² Ibid.

Yet, these efforts were certainly far from universally praised. Once completed in 1876, the Kelvingrove extension (pictured above) was inaugurated with a *conversazione*, which began with several speeches and ended with ‘tea and coffee and cake and wine.’⁴⁹³ Whilst it had the makings of a jolly civic affair, the festivities occurred under a cloud, because the night before, a meeting of ratepayers at the City Hall had inauspiciously voted against the establishment of a free public library. Moreover, ‘the increased space obtained by the extension did not materially relieve the difficulties’ of using a converted house.⁴⁹⁴ Whilst it was not sufficient for the ever-expanding collection, the extension was a mark of intent whereby the Town Council, who authorised it, and elite citizens, who paid for it, were showing that the museum was an important part of their civic infrastructure which necessitated nurture. Below are photographs of the displays inside the main body and extension of the Museum. They highlight the sheer volume and variety of specimens which were crammed into Kelvingrove House, and show that aspirations for the collection clearly exceeded those of the space.

⁴⁹³ ‘The New Museum, Kelvingrove. Inaugural Ceremony.’ *Glasgow Herald*, 19 April 1876, p.4.

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*



Figure 3.6 Kelvingrove Museum, Foreign Birds reproduced with permission of Glasgow Museums

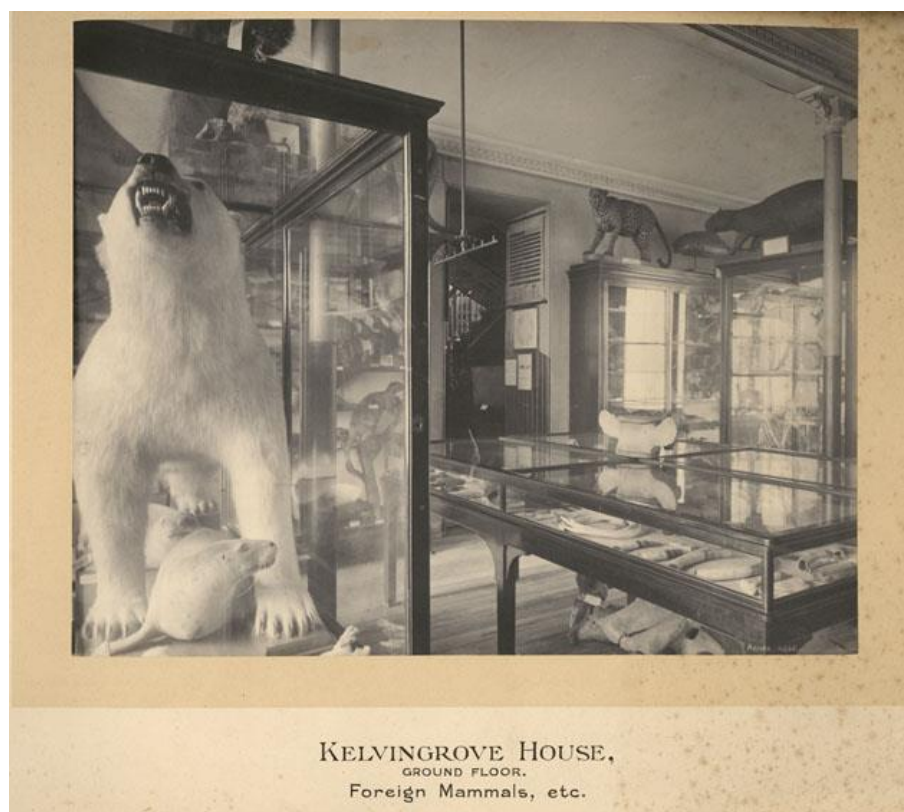


Figure 3.7 Kelvingrove Museum, Foreign Mammals, reproduced with permission of Glasgow Museums

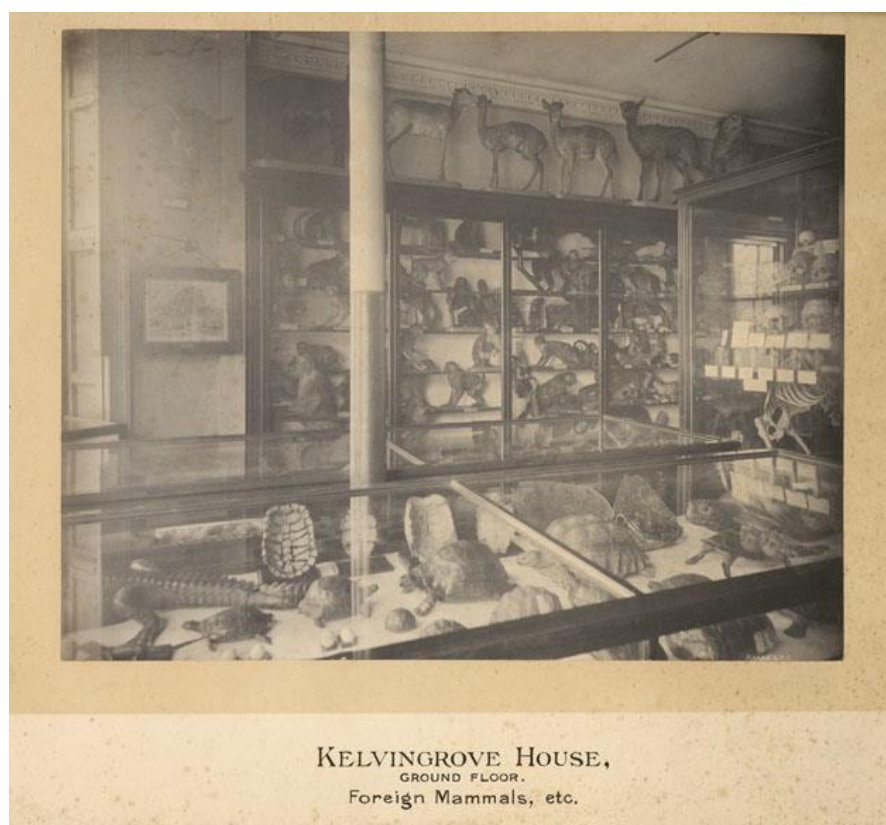


Figure 1.8 Kelvingrove Museum, Foreign Mammals, reproduced with permission of Glasgow Museums



Figure 3.9 Kelvingrove Museum, British Birds, reproduced with permission of Glasgow Museums



Figure 3.10 Kelvingrove Museum, View North with the ornate ceiling of the eighteenth century house clearly visible, reproduced with permission of Glasgow Museums

Significantly, second city rhetoric was also contemporaneously deployed in the private museum context. At a meeting of the Glasgow Geological Society, its vice-president, Mr. E. A. Wunsch argued that their ‘carboniferous series’, was ‘more extensive and more complete than anything similar, either in the British Museum, or in Jermyn Street, or in any other museum at home or abroad.’⁴⁹⁵ Their successes were, similarly to the Kelvingrove, ‘entirely the result of the labour of private individuals.’⁴⁹⁶ He concluded that the arguments for the public utility of museums should fall with ‘tenfold force upon the citizens of the second city in the British empire.’ Importantly, second city rhetoric was deployed to encourage civically-minded actions to support a museum collection. Museum enthusiasts were asking their fellow citizens to think about Glasgow differently and use their own resources to actively assist the city’s imperial aspirations. The extension marked

⁴⁹⁵ ‘The Glasgow Geological Society Conversazione’, *Glasgow Herald*, 7 December 1872, p.4.

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

a new era in the museum's history because it coincided with the arrival of Paton, Glasgow's second civic curator and zealous innovator.

By contrast, the Imperial Museum was a state-funded project and therefore did not require public support in the same way, and thus persuasive rhetoric, like that associated with the 'second city of the Empire', was not deployed by colonial officials to justify the museum's development. Accordingly, the rhetoric surrounding the Victoria Memorial (discussed in Chapter Six) needed to be persuasive because the project relied on private donations, and therefore commentators utilised tropes familiar with the 'second city of the Empire' – Calcutta's connection to the origins of British rule in India, its capital city status, and its population.

Conclusions

Between Glasgow and Calcutta, the application of the public museum model differed significantly in ways which reflected each city's position within the imperial network. Though hugely different, motivations in both urban centres were rooted in the same discussions; important cities, whether colonial capitals or provincial centres, required a public museum that was worthy of the city's status. The comparative framework used here to explore the opening stages of these museums, and carried on through the following chapters, certainly supports the 'need to see individual museums in their specific historical context' identified by Longair and McAleer's volume.⁴⁹⁷ By avoiding 'overarching pronouncements' about the museum as a vehicle for imperial expansion, it has been possible to highlight points of commonality and difference. While the Imperial Museum was funded by the state, Glasgow's museum was paid for by the citizens via a small tax. Moreover, the Government of India received a collection, which derived from the Asiatic Society's scholarly objectives, whereas the Glasgow Town Council had to create one, haphazardly, by individual donations. Where Glasgow's public museum was conjectured to fulfil a purpose not already served by the city's existing institutions by combining education and leisure for its citizens, Calcutta's museum was one of many structures which emerged to fill the numerous holes in this relatively new city. The connections which were made by contemporaries, even in the inaugural stages, between the museum and the status of the city, led into discussions of whether it was fitting of the 'second city of the Empire.'

⁴⁹⁷ Longair and McAleer, (ed.), *Curating Empire*, p.5.

The shift from private to public institution was not absolute, as the following chapter will discuss, yet the notion of what would be collected and displayed was heavily influenced by the changes. In Calcutta, the move encouraged a transition from the assemblages of virtuosi learned men, to a more systematic collection afforded by the Government Surveys of India (Geological, Botanical and Archaeological). As the Asiatic Society articulated, Calcutta needed a state funded museum if it was going to be seen as a capital city. Private collections and museums, though impressive in themselves, did not suggest anything more than individual wealth, whereas a public museum reflected the capacity of the administrative bodies to finance and successfully bring a project to fruition. Furthermore, in line with other contemporary state projects, it would not do to repurpose an existing building to house its new museum, it needed to build one which would mirror the city's status.

The origins of both institutions were solidified into well-established narratives, which were passed from source to source through the decades of the nineteenth century. These concrete foundations were deliberately propagated to strengthen the legitimacy and objectives of the institutions. Calcutta's Imperial Museum was forever tied to the Asiatic Society's museum, not only because it formed the nucleus of the new government museum, but it established a lineage which tied the museum to its location and the history of European intellectual endeavour in India. The Asiatic Society Members pointed towards the right sort of colonial work – the pursuit of knowledge. References to the Imperial or Indian Museum were often accompanied with a version of this narrative:

The history of the Indian Museum is connected very closely with that of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, the nucleus of the Museum having been formed from the large collection contained in the Museum of the Asiatic Society, which was made over to the Indian Government.⁴⁹⁸

This connection between the private society and state enterprise was mutually beneficial, and much like the cultural infrastructure discussed in the previous chapter, helped to substantiate claims that Calcutta was the original centre of British imperial activity in India. Similarly, McLellan's gift to Glasgow was formulated into the origin story for the city's relationship with the public arts. His dual occupations as a coachbuilder and town councillor, as well as his cultivated artistic taste and civic-mindedness, made him the ideal Glasgow citizen. Consequently, the narrative of the McLellan Galleries became tied to the

⁴⁹⁸ W. L. Sclater, 'VI. – On the Indian Museum and its Collection of Birds', *Ibis* 34:1 (1892), pp. 65 – 87.

Kelvingrove Museum.⁴⁹⁹ These cases highlight how stories about the museum's origin were woven into the fabric of the story the city told about itself.

This crucial period of museum development created the infrastructure – the buildings and the nucleus collections – around which ideas about what the museum was for could solidify, and the professional apparatus could emerge. Museums did not emerge in a vacuum and were instead fundamentally shaped by the others springing up around them, not least because those running them operated extensive schemes of knowledge and material exchange. As argued by Waterfield, the museum was 'a peculiarly international phenomenon' and consequently museums in Britain need to be placed in an international context.⁵⁰⁰ How these interactions became more competitive as they became further entwined in the civic mission will be explored in the following chapter.

⁴⁹⁹ Bell and Paton, *Glasgow*, p.350.

⁵⁰⁰ Waterfield, *The People's Galleries*, p.1.

Chapter Four - Museum Networks and ‘Completing’ Collections, c. 1875 - 1890.

The decades immediately following the emergence of public museums in Glasgow and Calcutta were rife with change, both within the budding museum sector, and in conceptions of how the cities presented themselves. Once authorised, governing bodies of public museums moved quickly to germinate their plans for their new institutions. Efforts were made to expand collections and increase visitor numbers to enhance the museum’s educational capacity. Individual curators wrote guides and catalogues, disseminated research papers, and communicated with other curators, which served to situate the museum within a professional apparatus.⁵⁰¹ As a result, many museums became more deliberately hybrid institutions that provided for public learning, circulated knowledge in private societies, and relied on a dual framework of public funding and private support. Now that Glasgow and Calcutta had a public museum, these institutions were woven into national, provincial and imperial discourses, and therefore offer a route to exploring the relationships between urban centres. Building on the previous chapter, which highlighted that establishing public museums in Glasgow and Calcutta was a largely emulative process, this chapter demonstrates that developing and expanding the institutions was shaped by the dual processes of competition and collaboration. Whilst securing and furthering imperial status through cultural assets was an increasing concern for the Glasgow Corporation and Government of India, for curators, there was a growing understanding of the museum as a shared project which benefited from collaborative working. At this juncture, museums became intimately linked to the image of the city, and, consequently, Glasgow and Calcutta’s rhetorical claims to be the ‘second city of the Empire.’

Museums were also vehicles for articulating ideas about imperial provincialism and the city’s role within the Empire’s network. Communications and collaborations between national museums in the metropolis and provincial museums outside it, as well as between different provincial museums, reveal a lot about concepts of provincialism. Stopes has contested the ‘hierarchical understanding of European and global spaces,’ which has hitherto been based on the notion that nationalism and modernity emanated outwards from

⁵⁰¹ For example: John Anderson, *Catalogue of Mammalia in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Part I* (Calcutta: Printed by Order of the Trustees, 1881); James Paton, *Catalogue descriptive and historical of the Pictures & Sculptures in the Corporation Galleries of Art, Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1882); *Sketch Guide to the City Industrial Museum, Kelvingrove Park* (Glasgow, 1878).

the metropolis.⁵⁰² Using Manchester and Lille, ‘two supposedly peripheral, provincial cities’, he argues that such centres ‘engaged with debates about national identity and modernity on their own terms, rather than ceding the intellectual terrain to capital cities.’⁵⁰³ Arguably, second city rhetoric was a manifestation of this – a way of negotiating the global space through a distinct set of criteria, whereby provincial cities were compared with each other and not, largely, with the metropole. This hypothesis is supported by the findings presented here, which highlight the dual process of strengthening relationships and increased civic competition between provincial cities through public museums during this period. However, Stopes argues that ‘vital to this way of seeing the relationship between the city and the rest of the world was a networked idea of global space’ within ‘which connections between places were horizontal, not vertical,’ the notion of a second city necessitates vertical relationships too.⁵⁰⁴ Britain’s provincial and colonial cities had complex relationships with the first city that can be illustrated through shifting museum cultures. London’s national institutions had responsibilities towards those in the provinces, which suggests ‘a network of connections’ of varying types.⁵⁰⁵ Relationships between provincial museums created a group dynamic, which encouraged curators like Paton to pursue progress beyond their own institutions to benefit the sector more widely.

As argued throughout this thesis, public museums were an important way of delineating status. Once they had been established, the focus shifted away from simply having a museum, and towards more critical evaluations of what was contained within them. What was displayed was noteworthy. Provincial curators were hampered by their reliance on donations, but specialisms did emerge, for example, Glasgow’s Kelvingrove Museum quickly transitioned into the City Industrial Museum.⁵⁰⁶ Its purpose was therefore rooted in the local environment and its industries, in contrast to the Imperial Museum, which was designed to encapsulate the breadth of India. Kate Hill argues that provincial museums expanded ‘most significantly’ in ‘the decades after 1870 as municipalities matured’, and were ‘often seen as the most modern and dynamic museum types.’⁵⁰⁷ Moreover, Claire Wintle explores ways that visitors engaged with displays about the

⁵⁰² Stopes, ‘From Manchester’, pp. 94 – 107.

⁵⁰³ Ibid., p. 96.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 103.

⁵⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 104.

⁵⁰⁶ Referred to as the ‘City Industrial Museum’ in first Annual Report, 1876.

⁵⁰⁷ Kate Hill, ‘A Rather Undefined Social Position and Public Recognition’: Professionalisation, Status and Masculinity in Provincial Museum, c. 1870 – 1930’, *Gender & History*, 0 (2020), 5.

empire in provincial museums, specifically those in Brighton, which suggests collections outside the metropole were expanding in scope.⁵⁰⁸

These trajectories worked in tandem with the existence of second city ideas – Glasgow as an industrial hub and Calcutta as the colonial administrative centre – but as collections expanded, so too did conceptions of what a second city should be. Alongside aspirations projecting from national institutions, these specialisms fostered desires to create ‘complete’ collections. How ‘complete’ a collection became one way of grading the value of the institution. This evaluation relied on an understanding of the world’s specimens and a museum’s role in making them comprehensible, that centred on two things. Firstly, that knowledge of archaeology, art, ethnology, geology, industry, natural history, zoology, etc., could be effectively disseminated within a series of the right objects. Distillation of peoples and cultures into their objects occurred increasingly across the nineteenth century, as ‘collections of natural history, botanical specimens and material culture’ were ‘used to illustrate the peoples, places and landscapes encountered by British travellers, officers and administrators.’⁵⁰⁹ Secondly, whilst this varied depending on the discipline, objects, whether specific or representative, could be displayed in a series to illustrate what was known about any subject, whether vertebrae, traditional Indian handicrafts, or shipping mechanisms. Absences within a collection were therefore significant, a paper detailing the bird collection at the Imperial Museum, for example, noted that there were thirty nine species missing.⁵¹⁰ Its role as both a national and imperial institution engendered expectations that such collections should be ‘complete’ in order for the museum to perform its function. These ideas filtered outwards to provincial museums from the late 1870s onwards, but expectations of ‘completeness’ tended to focus on each museum’s distinct local characteristics. Completeness, in this sense, was both a literal aspiration and a rhetorical ideal, which will be discussed in Section Four.

Changes within the rising number of public museums were characterised by rapidly expanding collections, growing and deepening museum networks, and the professionalisation of museum work. Some of these developments, such as the emergence of a museum sector, were felt commonly across museums big and small, national, provincial and imperial. Other changes, such as the direction the collection took, were

⁵⁰⁸ Claire Wintle, ‘Visiting the Empire at the Provincial Museum’ in *Curating Empire, Museums and the British imperial experience* ed. by Sarah Longair and John McAleer (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), pp. 37-55.

⁵⁰⁹ See Harriet Guest, *Empire, Barbarism, and Civilisation: James Cook, William Hodges, and the Return to the Pacific* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 49-50, 209.

⁵¹⁰ Sclater, ‘On the Indian Museum,’ p.72.

driven by the individual efforts of curators, superintendents and civil serviceman. Methodologically, this chapter uses the changes made to museums and collections to analyse ways that Glasgow and Calcutta's positions within the imperial network were articulated during this period.

Relationships between National, Imperial, and Provincial Museums

Addressing the relationships between national, imperial and provincial museums has proved fruitful for creating a better understanding of provincial cities, and Glasgow and Calcutta in particular. Museums were just one way a city could assert its privileged position within larger national and imperial networks, but they were a significant one. Over the course of this section, Glasgow and Calcutta's differences as second cities truly come to the fore. Calcutta, as the imperial capital, had both a dominant position over its provinces in India, and a subordinate position under the national institutions in London. Glasgow, as a very different second city, was seen as one of a group of prominent industrial cities in Britain during this period. By 1884, its City Industrial Museum was one of forty-one museums established under the Public Libraries and Museums Act.⁵¹¹ Within this identifiable set of provincial museums in Britain, some were more important than others, which naturally created a tussle for resources and status. Relationships between the governing bodies and curators responsible for different museums suggests ways institutions were defined by their interactions with each other.

What the provincial museum 'ought not to be' and 'ought to include' was discussed and contested, both by those in the metropolis and in the provinces, in ways which shaped the public museums in Calcutta and Glasgow.⁵¹² To explore this further, several examples, which centre on communications between different institutions, are presented. Included among these are: the efforts made to create a complete series of archaeological specimens at the Imperial Museum, and the subsequent backlash, and Paton's attempts to form an Indian collection for the City Industrial Museum. This case study approach poses questions about whether Glasgow and Calcutta, because of their unique positions, participated distinctly in wider museum developments during this period.

⁵¹¹ *Report of the Fifty-Seventh Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science held at Manchester in August and September 1887* (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1888), p.98.

⁵¹² 'Natural History Museum for Aberdeen', *Aberdeen Free Press*, 10 February 1886, p.4.

Through these discussions, a ‘Provincial Museum’ came to mean something very specific, namely, a museum outside of London, which was not one of the national museums in Edinburgh or Dublin.⁵¹³ Whilst ‘provinces’, ‘provincial’ and ‘provincialism’ are, as Waterfield articulates, presently ‘loaded expressions’, this was not always the case. In fact, in the Victorian sense, ‘the usage often conveyed a sense of local identity and pride.’⁵¹⁴ Over time, the museums themselves became ingrained in the ‘concept of civic pride’, which was often tinged with resentment when the institution was seen to be falling behind.⁵¹⁵ The distinct uses and benefits of provincial museums were clearly expressed by their advocates, and they began to dispute the right for a national institution to flourish over a provincial one. This fed into ideas that provincial museums should be better served by national institutions from the 1870s onwards.⁵¹⁶

The definitional lines between national, imperial and provincial museums drew the attention of politicians and were discussed at government level. A search for “provincial museums” in the *Historical Hansard* elicited significant results, listed in Appendix III. As a group, these findings highlight the key role played by political individuals, like Mr Jesse Collings (pictured below), in procuring funds and resources for provincial museums. One of these was a House of Commons debate from April 1883 that exposes the state of the discussion amongst politicians.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹³ This excluded London’s British Museum or South Kensington Museum, Edinburgh’s Museum of Science and Art, or National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, or Dublin’s Museum of Science and Art, established in 1877.

⁵¹⁴ Waterfield, *The People’s Galleries*, p.5.

⁵¹⁵ Flanders, ‘Early museums’, p.72.

⁵¹⁶ Caroline Cornish, Patricia Allan, Lauren Gardiner, Poppy Nichol, Heather Pardoe, Craig Sherwood, Rachel Webster, Donna Young and Mark Nesbitt, ‘Between Metropole and Province: circulating botany in British museums, 1870 – 1940’, *Archives of Natural History* 47 (2020), p.126.

⁵¹⁷ House of Commons, *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates: The Official Report* (3 April 1882, vol. 268, cols. 576-98) (London: Hansard) [Online] < <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1882/apr/03/provincial-art-galleries-and-museums> > [accessed 30 March 2021].



Figure 4.1 Jesse Collings outside Houses of Parliament, 1897 ©National Portrait Gallery, London

While the education and financial privilege of these men may not have been representative, geographically, MPs offer a vital avenue for addressing regional differences. The views expressed were influenced by the state of the museums in the locality the MP represented. Collings, Liberal MP for Ipswich at the time, but strongly associated with municipal reform in Birmingham, opened the debate.⁵¹⁸ He asserted that ‘grants in aid of Art and Industrial Museums should not be confined to London, Edinburgh, and Dublin’, and the Science and Art Department at South Kensington should be supplied with ‘a special grant’ to ‘enable them’ to ‘supply’ provincial museums with ‘original examples and reproductions of Industrial Art adapted to their special local acquirements.’⁵¹⁹ As suggested in Chapter Three, London was grouped alongside its secondary capitals – Edinburgh and Dublin, because all three were home to national

⁵¹⁸ A. W. Ashby, revised by H.C.G. Matthew, ‘Collings, Jesse (1831 – 1920)’, in *ODNB*, online edn, 2008 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/32500>>[accessed 16 Feb 2020]

⁵¹⁹ 3 April 1882, vol. 268, cols. 576-98

museums that were directly supported by the British state. London's South Kensington Museum was created as a 'national centre for consulting the best works of science and art', which Henry Cole, its first director between 1857 and 1873, said made it apt 'as a storehouse for circulating objects of science and art throughout the Kingdom.'⁵²⁰ Yet ten years later, Collings suggested that the 'circulation system' did not satisfactorily serve provincial museums. He considered that there should be a more uniform approach to the provision of specimens by the South Kensington, but at the same time they should meet 'special local acquirements', which suggests that citizens in different localities required collections specific to them. Lastly, he advocated that provincial museums and galleries should receive further gifts and loans from the National Art Collections and the British Museum.⁵²¹

According to the House, this assistance should be limited to towns 'rated under the Free Libraries and Museums Act', and it should be proportional to the 'sum raised and spent in each locality.'⁵²² As discussed, provincial public museums created a class of their own, and were seen as a distinguishable group, regardless of their size or scope. Within the Commons, the focus was on the needs of national provincial museums, which were not presented as part of a broader imperial provincial network. In Britain, Collings claimed that 'nearly all the leading towns were forming themselves together in order to bring the question to practical issue.'⁵²³ Whilst he did not refer to them by name, their grouping together embodied something which the metropolis should be concerned about. More interesting still, Collings did not mention the specific museums in different towns, but spoke of the 'leading towns' themselves coming together, implying that the institutions were inextricably linked to the ambitions of the city. This may explain the restriction to museums and galleries established through the Libraries and Museums Act, as these were necessarily public and therefore run by the Municipal Corporations. What 'practical issue' they resolved to bring about is difficult to pinpoint, particularly given Collings did not 'wish to imply that there was any jealousy in the large Provincial towns of the South Kensington and British Museums and other Collections in London.' At this stage, 'jealousy' would have been wildly misplaced considering the disparity between the state of the national institutions and provincial museums established by local enterprise. Ideally, Britain's provincial museums would have a symbiotic relationship with the metropole's

⁵²⁰ Henry Cole, *Fifty Years of Public Work* (London: G. Bell, 1884), p.388.

⁵²¹ House of Commons, vol. 268, cols. 576 -98.

⁵²² Ibid.

⁵²³ Ibid.

national institutions, whereby the former could facilitate the wider objectives of the latter. Assistance was therefore expected to be proportional to the position of the provincial museum. The intricacies of these emerging networks will be picked up in the following section.

Justification for increasing centralised assistance for provincial museums developed from a broader aim to ‘improve the artistic and industrial education’ of Britain’s workmen, and to bring the nation more closely in line with provisions made in other European nations.⁵²⁴ In this way, changes to provincial museums were still driven by comparisons inflected with competition. For example, instead of Glasgow councillors citing Paisley or Stirling, MPs from the provinces used examples of successful museums in other nations to prompt change across Britain. Large towns in Britain were the natural home for industrial education, as industry had made them large in the first place. In fact, museums were measured against how well they benefited their three-fold audience – the public, the student, and the worker.⁵²⁵ Workers were an increasingly desirable strata of visitors because of extensions to the electoral franchise.⁵²⁶ In Glasgow, the museum was geared towards educating and empowering the city’s inhabitants to participate in cultural pursuits. By contrast, the work of the Imperial Museum was largely aimed at experts, students, and privileged travellers from Britain and elsewhere.⁵²⁷ The Museum was thus embroiled in projecting the Empire’s cultural legitimacy to Britons and other foreign visitors. Yet, as Gupta stresses, the ‘public’ emphasis of the Imperial Museum meant that native people naturally made up the majority of its visitors.⁵²⁸ In the colonial context, the audience was more racially aggregated, which was notable in the division of the Imperial Museum’s recorded visitors into ‘native’ and ‘European’. In 1888, Thomas Greenwood reported that on average the Imperial Museum received ‘1,170 native visitors a day, and 700 Europeans a month.’⁵²⁹ The huge disparity between attendance from the two groups may not be proportionally surprising, but suggests that the museum had an appeal beyond its administrative function. To provide some perspective on these figures, for the year 1887, Glasgow’s Kelvingrove Museum received a total of 238,074 visitors.⁵³⁰ More regular weekly reports of visitor activity were also given in the press.

⁵²⁴ Ibid.

⁵²⁵ Ibid.

⁵²⁶ Ibid.

⁵²⁷ T. Holbein Hendley, ‘Indian Museums: A Centenary Retrospect’, *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 62.3193 (1914) p.207.

⁵²⁸ Gupta, ‘The “Public” Indian Museum’.

⁵²⁹ Thomas Greenwood, *Museums and Galleries* (London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co., 1888), p. 360.

⁵³⁰ *Kelvingrove Museum and Corporation Galleries of Art, Glasgow. Report for the year 1887*, p. 5.

The number of visitors was important, and used to suggest that a city like Glasgow, the self-claimed ‘second city of the Empire’, should benefit from a collection reflective of its status as a large industrial city. It was argued that the national institutions in London were accessible to the highest number of people, and therefore they should hold the most valuable and complete collections, but several MPs in this debate suggest that not everyone in the provinces agreed. Using his experience of Birmingham, Collings described the city’s jewellery workers as an exemplar group who would benefit from access to the jewel collection at the British museum, which on his last visit, was attended by ‘only seven persons...three of whom were ladies.’ Women were cited specifically because they would perceptibly benefit less from using the collection than men employed in the field. John Slagg, the Member for Manchester, further argued that ‘the vast populations of the manufacturing towns’ would benefit from access to collections held in the metropolis, but his focus was on their greater ‘need of artistic influences than the cultivated people’ in London, who already ‘had large means of gratifying their refined tastes.’ That said, it was impressed that British provincial museums were not in direct competition with metropolitan institutions. Rather, provincial audiences required and deserved a diverse art education, as well as, not instead of, their metropolitan counterparts. *The Academy* commented that ‘instead of entertaining as its ideal the imitation of a metropolitan show, [provincial museums] might gain an individuality and peculiar interest.’⁵³¹ Provincial museums were therefore conceived as spaces for specificity and engendering civic pride in local industries, but not ones best suited for transposing exhibitions directly from the metropolis. In this sense, the development of provincial museum collections was not seen as a considerable threat to metropolitan displays, so long as they remained centred on localised specimens. As the contemporaneous Archaeological specimen debate in India will highlight, retaining local specimens in provincial museums was seen to endanger the value of the display in Calcutta’s dually imperial and national institution.

As museums and galleries were decidedly ‘good for your spiritual, moral and intellectual health’, people in the provinces, particularly those plagued with the social problems discussed in Chapter Two, were equally, if not more in need of them than those in the metropolis.⁵³² Yet, the value of the national collections were such that their moralising capacity was considered to be greater than anything available outside the metropole. On a more critical note, Alfred Illingworth, Member for Bradford, reported ‘a growing feeling of discontent at the practical monopoly enjoyed by the Metropolis in the

⁵³¹ ‘Claims of Provincial Museums’, *The Academy* 21: 519 (15 April 1882), p. 275.

⁵³² Flanders, ‘Early museums’, p. 75.

Art treasures concentrated in London.’⁵³³ He asserted the need to understand that ‘the Metropolis could not supply the demands of the whole Kingdom, for, after all, London had only one-tenth of the population of the country.’ As shown in Chapter One, population statistics were central to debates about how national resources should be divided, how many MPs a town should have and, which city could claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire.’ Alexander Beresford Hope, Member for Cambridge University, retorted in support of London’s monopoly:

When Birmingham became the capital of the Empire, by all means let them send the British Museum and the National Gallery there; but while London, with its millions of inhabitants against Birmingham’s hundreds of thousands, continues to be the capital, on the greatest happiness of the greatest number their National Collection ought to remain there.⁵³⁴

He asserted London’s right to the best collection in Britain on the basis that it was ‘the capital of the Empire.’⁵³⁵ As such, it needed to have ‘the most precious art possessions of the country’ and ‘the very best original examples’ for the benefit of all that visited London.⁵³⁶ Collections in capital cities were intended for the benefit of those beyond the metropolis, whereas those in provincial cities were expected to only advantage those in the locality. A similar argument was later used by Curzon to justify the national memorial to Victoria in Calcutta, which raises questions about where the ‘second city of the Empire’ fitted into this matrix.⁵³⁷ It stands to reason that a second city, to be a viable deputy to London, also needed to have a valuable collection within a notable museum.

Whether or not provincial museums could be assisted without damaging national institutions was of primary interest, and prompted protracted discussions in both Britain and India. Collings attempted to dissipate the threat posed by the provinces, which were alleged to wish ‘to break up the National Collections’, by expressing his incomprehension on ‘how the apportionment of selected specimens to localities appropriate to their exhibition was less national than confining them to one place in London.’ Supporting the provincial museums was depicted as a national act, and the boundaries between nation and province were, therefore, considerably blurred. In summary, Collings suggested that ‘there were, doubtless, many duplicates... which might be spared for the Provinces, without injuring the unity of the Collections in the Metropolis.’⁵³⁸ Clearly then, a comprehensive

⁵³³ House of Commons, vol. 268, cols. 576 -98.

⁵³⁴ Ibid.

⁵³⁵ Ibid.

⁵³⁶ ‘Claims of Provincial Museums’, *The Academy* 21: 519 (15 April 1882), p. 275.

⁵³⁷ Will be discussed in Chapter Six.

⁵³⁸ House of Commons, vol. 268, cols. 576 -98.

collection in London was the priority, and any developments in the provinces were expected to complement rather than challenge the unity in the metropolis. It is therefore possible to see how second city rhetoric in Glasgow could be used to negotiate a space for the Kelvingrove Museum, which would afford it greater resources than its competitors.

Whereas London's hegemony was mostly accepted or even supported in the provinces, the same could not be said for the Imperial Museum's precedence over the developing provincial museums in India. Resistance from provincial colonial administrators was far more confrontational in India than the challenges raised in the House of Commons debate. Calcutta's position as the capital of colonial India had allowed the Government to assert the Imperial Museum's superior objectives over those of budding provincial museums. Remarkably, advocates for the provincial museums disputed their subordination to Calcutta. As a supposedly national institution, the Imperial Museum became a target for provincial animosity, which was often only symbolically about individual public collections. More than the city's political position, the founding ideology of the Imperial Museum was to create a comprehensive and ideally, encyclopaedic collection. Naturally, this objective was impossible to meet and no subsequent museum in India pursued it.

These issues were discussed extensively in a debate about whether Calcutta's Imperial Museum should be sent the archaeological specimens obtained in provinces beyond Bengal. H. B. Medlicott, the superintendent of the Geological Survey of India, suggested that 'arrangements should be made for the permanent deposit in the Indian Museum, when circumstances permit, of archaeological collections formed by officers belonging to the Archaeological Survey of India.'⁵³⁹ The Archaeological Survey of India was a state-run enterprise, and so their compliance with the initiative was expected, though not necessarily presumed. This cultural centralisation to benefit the colonial power, thus creating homogeneity in its own image, was bound to be contested, but it is surprising this discord came from the colonial power's provincial representatives. Before accepting the Indian Museum's suggestions and 'issuing definite orders', the Government of India wrote to elicit opinions from Local Governments and Administrations. It was made clear that the Government of India was actively:

⁵³⁹ 'Disposal of Objects of Archaeological Interest' in Proceedings of the Home Department: Archaeology, June 1883, Files 33-70. *NAI*

in favour of the Imperial Museum as being a central institution, and moreover as having a prior claim to Provincial museums, as these institutions, while they can seldom reach a high standard of archaeological value, would interfere with the completeness of the archaeological series at the Indian Museum.⁵⁴⁰

In the same breath, the museum was labelled both Imperial and Indian, suggesting that it was viewed as both a national and imperial institution. It was posited as a museum which could be completed and, as an imperial project, should be prioritised over provincial projects. This suggests a hierarchy in India, between imperial and provincial which was similar to the national and provincial divide in Britain at the time. The hierarchy in India was arguably more rigid than in Britain, thus responses to the Government of India's inquiry from provincial administrations indicates resistance to the overarching imperial project. Similar to the House of Commons discussion on the perceived benefits of national institutions in London, the Government of India saw a central collection in Calcutta as essential. The value of creating this 'complete' collection in the Metropolis of India was not, however, articulated well enough by officials in Calcutta to their fellow officials in the Provinces. Mackenzie's argument that the question, "'What is the museum for?'" never received a thorough answer in India is bolstered by the fact that museums in the Provinces did not buy into the imperial centre's proposals. Contrastingly in Britain, spokespeople for provincial museums largely supported the idea that London was the nation's natural and essential repository and should be prioritised. In cities like Glasgow, the question of a museum's purpose was more easily answered because it had already been articulated by the Public Libraries and Museums Act of 1850. The aims of an imperial collection were epitomised by its 'prior claim to Provincial museums' and the desire for 'completeness'.

At this point, the Imperial Museum 'consisted, in the main, of the zoological, geological and archaeological collections.'⁵⁴¹ Of these, the archaeological collections were considered to be 'of unquestioned value to every serious student of Indian antiquities.'⁵⁴² Centrally-located collections were, as shown by the House of Commons debate, considered more valuable for study-purposes. In particular, 'archaeology furnishes a good example of what is gained by careful and accurate classification, and the bringing together of objects for comparison.'⁵⁴³ The museum, according to David Murray's 1904 volume, made archaeological specimens 'intelligible.'⁵⁴⁴ As Guha-Thakurta argues, there was a

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁴¹ *The Indian Museum*, p. 9.

⁵⁴² Ibid., p. 14.

⁵⁴³ David Murray, *Museums, their history and their use: with a bibliography and list of museum in the United Kingdom, With a Bibliography and List of Museums in the United Kingdom* (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1904), p. 232.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid.

‘concerted drive to make museums in India ‘new centres of disciplinary specialisation’ during the 1870s, to which archaeology was important because of the discipline’s parallel urge ‘to name, describe, and document as it swept through India’s virgin terrain of ruins and relics.’⁵⁴⁵ Yet, these efforts were resisted and ultimately unsuccessful.

Consequently, a debate ensued across India in 1882-83 which concentrated on whether specimens found in a particular Province would be better placed in a local museum to meet local needs, or in the Imperial Museum to serve a larger objective. Again, the central issue was where the archaeological specimens would best serve the greatest number of people. Naturally, the Government of Bengal was in agreement with the Government of India’s resolution, but Governments officials in other Provinces had different ideas about provincial institutions being ‘subsidiary’ to any Imperial Museum, in Calcutta or anywhere else. These were officials, not Indians from the province, which suggests a divide within the colonising elite. Often these officials were not native to the province they governed, but, fearing local opposition, advocated against the imperial centralisation of collecting.

The responses were highly individualised, suggesting that the ‘professionalisation’ amongst museum workers was not replicated across the spread of India’s colonial officials. North-Western Provinces and Oudh argued for the claim of local museums over the Imperial Museum, whilst acknowledging that the ‘first object should be to complete the archaeological series’ held in it.⁵⁴⁶ The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab was, again, in ‘favour of the Provincial museums’ due to the benefits of maintaining the relationship between the archaeological remains and the province they came from. Yet, he acceded that duplicates and casts of significant finds should be used to further the objectives of the Government of India. For the Central Provinces, the Chief Commissioner suggested the ‘mutual working of local museums with the Indian Museum’ but stressed the need to consult an expert before removing a specimen from the local museum to the Indian Museum.⁵⁴⁷ Coorg’s Chief Commissioner also considered the museums at the presidency towns to be the best location for archaeological specimens, though no museum existed in Coorg at the time.⁵⁴⁸ On the other hand, the Chief Commissioners for Assam and also Hyderabad were entirely supportive of the Government of India’s plan to concentrate specimens in its capital. These responses purportedly differed because of the colonial

⁵⁴⁵ Guha-Thakurta, *Monuments*, pp.44-45.

⁵⁴⁶ ‘Disposal of Objects of Archaeological Interest’, p.3, *NAI*

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.4.

administrators' deep understanding of their Province's resources, institutions, and, most importantly, its people. Expectedly, Bombay had a complex reaction to the suggestion that all valuable specimens should be sent to Calcutta.

Whilst a simple "no" may or may not have sufficed, the Bombay administration went to considerable lengths to procure a specialist to advocate on its behalf. They sought the opinion of Dr James Burgess, the Archaeological Surveyor and Reporter for Western and Southern India. Burgess would go on to replace Alexander Cunningham as Director-General of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1886. Burgess observed that, in theory, 'for purposes of comparison and study, the collection in one great Central Museum of all the objects relating to any science is by far the most satisfactory.'⁵⁴⁹ Within archaeology however, 'most of the objects only exist in single specimens' and the officer that found it would 'regard it as his own by absolute right' and would be 'rather indisposed than otherwise (supposing he belonged to the Peninsula) to send it away to Calcutta where he would never see it again.'⁵⁵⁰ In this vein, Bombay's Governor in Council remarked that 'in most of the larger Native States' people were becoming interested in the issue.⁵⁵¹ It is difficult to discern how significant this local opposition to the removal of objects was, but considering the sacredness of many finds it is probable that this varied considerably. He argued that as 'local museums have been or are being established for the deposit and preservation of archaeological collections', it was likely that 'both Chiefs and people would prefer that such specimens should remain with them, and not be transported to distant museums.'⁵⁵² Within this discourse, Calcutta and the Imperial Museum are repeatedly referred to as 'distant'. To outsiders, Calcutta was a city with a mission beyond its immediate vicinity, and its imperial character was inextricably tied to the identity of the city.

In terms of distance, however, removing archaeological specimens to Calcutta was considered to be less disadvantageous than sending them to London, as had previously been the norm. The Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces and Chief Commissioner of Oudh, Sir Alfred Comyn Lyall (1882-1887), stressed the importance of archaeological remains staying in India, rather than following the swathes of material which had been sent to Europe, considering that 'India may be rapidly drained of a

⁵⁴⁹ Ibid., p.20.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁵¹ Ibid., p.38.

⁵⁵² Ibid., p.18.

quantity of invaluable art treasures.’⁵⁵³ By asserting India’s right to retain its valuable specimens, he contested the dominance of London’s museums. Lyall was an undoubted specialist on India and, he wrote several books on Indian history, including *Asiatic Studies*, *Religious and Social*, *The Rise and Expansion of the British Dominion in India* and *Warren Hastings*.⁵⁵⁴ He advocated that:

It is true that such museums must for a long time be subsidiary to the Imperial Museum; but they should nevertheless have a fair share of the result of archaeological research in the province within which they are situate.⁵⁵⁵

The process of creating a comprehensive collection was expected to be protracted, and necessary for the Imperial Museum, but, importantly, provincial institutions should not have to make considerable sacrifices in the meantime. He further impressed that archaeological research should be conducted in its local context. This reflects early discussions about the ramifications of detaching objects from their original contexts, an issue which had not bothered prolific archaeological collections in earlier periods, like Colin Mackenzie, whose finds made up the principal exhibits at the Imperial Museum, with the rest divided between institutions in Britain.⁵⁵⁶ Arguments were therefore made for leaving specimens in situ, with the pervading thought in favour of this proposal. As Sadiya Qureshi synthesises, ‘museums necessarily divorce objects from their original context, in doing so they ascribe meanings to such objects that they would never otherwise easily obtain.’⁵⁵⁷ Yet, for official minds responsible for the Provinces, they considered the real divorce to be removing it from the locality, defined by boundaries ascribed by the British Government.

Mirroring arguments made in the Commons, Charles Umpherston Aitchison (1832-1896), Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab thought that ‘the collection of archaeological specimens at small local museums would undoubtedly fail to realise the object with which they are preserved’ due to the limited number of visitors, and their inability to form many ‘complete collections’.⁵⁵⁸ Visitors, particularly European ones, were far more plentiful in the Metropolis of India than elsewhere. Further stressing that the Imperial Museum was a

⁵⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁵⁴ Alfred Comyn Lyall, *Asiatic Studies, Religious and Social: First Series* (John Murray: London, 1882); *The Rise and Expansion of the British Dominion in India* (John Murray: London, 1893); *Warren Hastings* (Macmillan & Co.,: London, 1899).

⁵⁵⁵ ‘Disposal of Objects of Archaeological Interest’, p.18.

⁵⁵⁶ Jasanoff, ‘Collectors of Empire’, p.132.

⁵⁵⁷ Sadiya Qureshi, ‘Tipu’s Tiger and images of India 1799-2010’ in *Curating Empire: Museums and The British Imperial Experience* ed. by Sarah Longair and John McAleer (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 2012), p. 210.

⁵⁵⁸ W.M. Young, Secretary to Government of the Punjab to the Secretary to the Government of India, 3 March 1883 in ‘Disposal of Objects of Archaeological Interest’, p.33

symbol of the state, Lyall argued that ‘the British Government has no claim to objects of archaeological value in the Native States.’⁵⁵⁹ Largely then, the tide of change had built resistance to the Imperial Museum, which was articulated through aspirations for local museums. The Imperial Museum was painted as an institution that actively took away prime specimens from provincial museums. As a result of these communications, it was resolved that if something of archaeological interest was discovered by Government officers it would be reported to the Local Government. The Local Government would then decide whether it should be kept in situ or removed to a Local Museum, or the Imperial Museum if the former did not exist. Local Governments were required to produce lists of all Museums in their Province, with a descriptive catalogue of each of their contents. Although they could keep the specimens, Local Governments were expected to ‘attach due weight to the desirability of completing any particular archaeological series to which the Trustees of the Indian Museum may attach importance.’⁵⁶⁰

Very different dynamics of civic competition and collaboration with a national museum characterised Glasgow’s demands for greater access to Indian collections in the 1870s. In 1877, Paton wrote to Dr John Forbes Watson, Director of the India Museum (formerly the East India Company Museum), requesting ‘a collection of specimens of India’s raw products for exhibition’ in the City Industrial Museum.⁵⁶¹ An agreement was reached between the India Museum and the Glasgow Corporation, though more realistically between Forbes Watson and Paton, that Glasgow would be provided with ‘a series of the raw products of India’.⁵⁶² Paton envisaged that the specimens for Glasgow would be specially and specifically collected and curated by the India Museum, which, once received, would elevate the status of the City Industrial Museum. Forbes Watson, however, had wider objectives, whereby ‘identical sets of the proposed trade collections’ would be distributed by the India Museum to ‘the chief commercial centres of this country’ and India.⁵⁶³ This highlights divergent provincial collecting models – on the one hand, metropolitan institutions would provide but also control specimens sent to the provinces, on the other, provincial institutions would be granted assistance from metropolitan institutions, because these had greater expertise, financial resources and established collecting networks. However, the provincial curator would retain autonomy over his collection. Perhaps because of this, ‘no communication was received from the India

⁵⁵⁹ ‘Disposal of Objects of Archaeological Interest’, p.27.

⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶¹ ‘Glasgow Kelvingrove Museum’, File 146, IOR/L/E/6/38, *IOR*

⁵⁶² Glasgow Town Clerk to Sir Louis Mallet, London, 28 July 1880, p.1, File 915, IOR/L/E/6/46, *IOR*

⁵⁶³ Glasgow Town Clerk to Sir Louis Mallet, London, 2 Feb 1880, p.3, File 146/1880, IOR/L/E/6/38, *IOR*

Office' by the Glasgow Council 'between June 1877 and December 1879' about the 'agreement and its fulfilment', but during this time Paton was invited by Forbes Watson to come to the India Museum and see 'a case containing specimens of wheat which had been experimentally prepared on the plan proposed for mounting the Glasgow collection.'⁵⁶⁴ Personal, rather than institutional relationships, were an important part of specimen procurement in this period, and will be discussed further in the following section.

Aside from this experiment, 'nothing had been done towards forming the Glasgow collection', which suggests that the project did not have the India Museum's full support.⁵⁶⁵ Forbes Watson had been prolific in producing catalogues of India and its products, including 'a comprehensive survey of Indian goods and products'.⁵⁶⁶ He also proposed a new Imperial Museum for India and the Colonies in London.⁵⁶⁷ By this period, however, as Ray Desmond effectively describes, his colleagues were 'getting a little tired' of his 'monomania about the India Museum'.⁵⁶⁸ Despite his best efforts, the Museum lacked popular appeal and its accommodation was costly, so the decision was made to disband the Museum and distribute its specimens across different institutions. Forbes Watson's position was abolished, and Glasgow was left without their Indian collection.

By breaking-up the India Museum, it was possible to prioritise the metropole's more successful institutions, so that the majority of zoological specimens were sent to the British Museum, the botanical specimens to the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, the economic animal products to the South Kensington Museum, and so on.⁵⁶⁹ This dispersed a previously centralised collection of Indian material across several institutions, and categorisations such as; 'zoological', 'ethnological', 'geological', and 'economic botany' were given precedence over attempting to create a collection of 'India' as a whole. Kew received state sanction to 'apply the collections thus transferred at their discretion' in the way which would best serve their existing collections, and anything left over would 'be distributed to other scientific institutions in Great Britain and elsewhere.'⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid., p.4.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶⁶ E. I. Carlyle, revised by Thomas Prash, 'Watson, John Forbes' in *ODNB*, online edn, 2004 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/28847>> [accessed 27 April 2021]

⁵⁶⁷ J. Forbes Watson, *The Imperial Museum for India and the Colonies* (London: WM. H. Allen and Co, 1876)

⁵⁶⁸ Ray Desmond, *The India Museum, 1801-1879* (H.M.S.O.: Oxford, 1982), p.156.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 176.

⁵⁷⁰ 'Conditions agreed upon between the Secretary of State and the Office or Works with respect to the transfer of the India Museum to Kew', 16 August 1879, BL IOR Mss Eur F195/33, *IOR*.

Kew's 'Annual Rent' report for 1880 noted that there were a few outstanding arrangements between the India Museum and other museums. Of these, Glasgow's was the one more assiduously fought for. Kew was willing to honour these pre-existing claims, and the subsequent 'applications for a share' of the India Museum specimens, as much as possible.⁵⁷¹ William Turner Thiselton-Dyer (1843 – 1928), who would become the third Director of Kew but was Assistant Director at the time, was forwarded Paton's argument that Glasgow should receive the largest number and best quality specimens. In a show of good will, he invited Paton to Kew to see 'what objects unsuitable for our Kew methods of exhibition could be acceptable' to Glasgow.⁵⁷² Whilst this suggests a collaborative process, Paton was both directly and indirectly treated as 'provincial', in the worst sense. Nevertheless, Glasgow was sent 'a number of arranged collections exhibited in cases.'⁵⁷³ There are some discrepancies about how many specimens were sent to Glasgow, but the Kew Annual Rent records that seven exhibition cases containing an arranged collections of dyes, drugs, tea, coffee, cereals, and eight boxes containing 581 specimens of miscellaneous vegetable produces, as well as a carved black-wood sideboard, were dispatched.⁵⁷⁴ A saga ensued about who should defray the cost of these cases. Much of this was leftover resentment on Glasgow's part that the original Indian collection had not been carried through, mixed with an ardent belief on London's part that Kew had done more than enough for Glasgow. This explains why the Glasgow Town Council became so heavily involved in what had initially been a curator to curator arrangement.

The Council explicitly used Glasgow's imperial position as leverage with the metropolitan institutions. In July 1879, the Council argued that 'they have a strong claim for special and exceptional consideration in any plan for the disposal of the collections'.⁵⁷⁵ This was because 'next to London, Glasgow has, all of all town in the Kingdom, the closest and most extensive commercial relations with the East India' and it had been in the interest 'of maintaining and extending these relations' that the request had been made to Forbes Watson in the first place. Glasgow's civic leaders wanted to assert the city's position as a vital link to India, which they thought could be well promulgated through an appropriate collection for their public museum. Indeed, Glasgow councillors had their eyes set on more than wheat samples: they asserted that the 'very many of the models and

⁵⁷¹ 'Kew Annual Rent 1880', p. 57., MSS EUR F195/29, *British Library*

⁵⁷² Letter from Thiselton-Dyer to Louis Mallet at the India Office, 9 February 1880, p.373, IOR Mss Eur F195/33, *IOR*.

⁵⁷³ 'Kew Annual Rent 1880', p. 57.

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid*.

⁵⁷⁵ Letter from Glasgow Town Council to Under-secretary of State for India, 30 July 1879, MSS EUR F195/33, *British Library*.

industrial objects of all kinds' from the India Museum would not fit 'within the scope of any of the metropolitan museums', and offered an alternative that 'a large typical selection might be made for Glasgow without detriment to the claims of metropolitan museums.'⁵⁷⁶ Moreover, in the City Industrial Museum 'such a collection could be kept as a separate department, thus retaining some of the significance and value of an East Indian Museum.'⁵⁷⁷

The surplus specimens Glasgow received were a slight, as twenty-four other institutions also received specimens. Though the original collection had not been expected to be of 'much intrinsic value' it was supposed to be 'selected, classified, labelled and illustrated in a systematic manner by officers possessed of technical skill', which of course, involved 'considerable labour and expenditure.'⁵⁷⁸ Essentially, Glasgow, should, according to this agreement, have received complete sets of specimens, which had been specifically selected and displayed by a professional. The specimens that were actually forwarded to Glasgow did not meet this specification. Arguably, Glasgow had done very well out of the exchange and ended up with more specimens than their competitors, but the problem remained that the collection Glasgow received did not align with the city's imperial aspirations. Thomas Croxson Archer, botanist and first Director of the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art, wrote to Sir Joseph Hooker, the Director of Kew, asking for an 'opportunity of obtaining a share', which he claimed would help 'complete the collection' in the Scottish capital.⁵⁷⁹ In his request, Archer cites Glasgow specifically, noting that the City Industrial Museum had 'received extensive collections of specimens from Key of Indian products', which suggests that Glasgow had upset the usual hierarchy of museums by asserting their prior claim.

Whilst the colonial administration instigated hierarchical structures across India, this was increasingly challenged by provincial states, a development that broadly mirrored growing provincial networks in Britain. Stopes' argument that European provinces did not follow typical hierarchical structures may be relatively accurate, but this cannot be neatly transposed to the colonial context. Governance structures overlapped in India, as highlighted by Calcutta's duality as an imperial, national and provincial capital, but

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁸ Letter from the Town Clerk, Glasgow to Sir Louis Mallet, India Office, London, 28 July 1880, p.1, IOR/L/E/6/46, File 915, *British Library*

⁵⁷⁹ Letter from Thomas Croxson Archer, Museum of Science and Art Edinburgh to Sir Joseph Hooker, 26 March 1880, MSS EUR F195/33, *British Library*

remained fundamentally hierarchical.⁵⁸⁰ Comparatively, challenges were not made to London's pre-eminence in Britain because the arguments in favour of maintaining an impressive collection in the metropolis remained convincing. Yet, as Glasgow's interaction with the India Museum demonstrates, there was a sense that 'provincial' did not necessarily mean less important, only different. Paton may not have obtained the collection he wanted, but Glasgow did receive preferential treatment as a result of his actions. In this way, the dialectical engagement between the 'second city of the Empire' and the development of museums is certainly strengthened by hugely varied context posed by Glasgow and Calcutta.

Museum Networks and Professionalisation

Building on the discourse surrounding provincial, national and imperial institutions, this section analyses the impact of individual curators and emerging professional networks on museum development in Glasgow and Calcutta. At times, it is clear that curators acted as individuals, directed by their own whims and fancies and, at others, it is equally clear that they performed as part of a larger emerging network. In line with growing scholarship, networks are a useful way of conceptualising relationships between provincial museums, which move away from restrictive hierarchical models.⁵⁸¹ Notably, Stevenson has illustrated ways that early Egyptologists used 'international scholarly networks' to 'promote their discoveries and methodologies globally, as well as to forge and consolidate professional relationships.'⁵⁸² Through these networks, objects were able to 'move across state boundaries' and strengthen relationships between individuals.⁵⁸³ In Stevenson's examples, the circulated antiquities were, she argues, 'clearly social transactions as much as scientific specimens', which 'cemented intellectual and personal networks.'⁵⁸⁴ Following Longair and McAleer, she too pursues 'more nuanced accounts of individual institutions in their specific historical contexts,' which is one of the core directives of this thesis.⁵⁸⁵ Museum curators in Calcutta and Glasgow, as two very different second cities,

⁵⁸⁰ Cannadine, *Ornamentalism*, pp. 41-57.

⁵⁸¹ See Museum and Galleries History Group's 2021 Conference entitled 'Museum Networks and Museum History', <<http://www.mghg.info/call-for-posters>> [accessed 27 April 2021]; Cornish, et al., 'Between Metropole, 124 – 146.

⁵⁸² Stevenson, *Scattered Finds*, p.105.

⁵⁸³ Ibid., p.106.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid., pp.110-111.

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid., p.116.; Longair and McAleer, (ed.), *Curating Empire*.

secured and circulated specimens in very different ways, and this was heavily influenced by their national, imperial, and provincial status. The networks curators had access to were often, though not always, dictated by the status of the city their museum was in. Whilst Paton mostly relied on distributed specimens from national institutions, curators at the Imperial Museum could utilise existing administrative networks for collecting purposes, and, in return, supplied a large amount of specimens to other institutions.

The development of museums in Britain during this period were, therefore, shaped by the dual, but somewhat opposing, forces of provincial competition and sector cooperation. These relationships were multifaceted, allowing for emulation, collaboration and competition, which further dictated what a provincial museum ‘ought to include’. Shifts towards creating a museum profession sits within the wider professionalisation across different sectors in Victorian Britain.⁵⁸⁶ William Stanley Jevons (1835 – 1882), who was primarily an economist, mapped out the potential for a ‘museum profession’ in 1881, and advocated a ‘Museums Association’ to allow curators to ‘evolve out of the existing chaos some unity of ideas and actions.’⁵⁸⁷ Collaboration between provincial curators was encouraged but voluntary. In Britain, networks of curators were increasingly professional. In India, collaboration towards the imperial collection was expected, if not enforced, which the archaeological specimen debate suggests fostered resentment towards Calcutta.

Between national and provincial museums, the expertise of curators differed. Debates arose about what, in fact, a curator should be qualified in if he was to perform his duties successfully. How much a curator should be paid, how he should be trained, and how many assistants he should have all became part of articulating what the public museum was for. This was influenced by the type of institution he was responsible for – a provincial museum did not require and could not afford multiple curators for different parts of the collection. Instead, the curator was expected to have strong generalised knowledge for a role which was neither wholly academic or civil, and accept far lower pay than a curator in a national institution. Greenwood argued in 1888 that curators ‘are the most enthusiastic of public servants’, and, as a body they consider ‘no effort too great when the welfare of their institution is in question.’⁵⁸⁸ Hill addresses the ‘backgrounds, careers and self-presentation of the first generation of British museum curators in local government-

⁵⁸⁶ Heather Ellis, ‘Knowledge, character and professionalisation in nineteenth-century British science’ *History of Education* 43.6 (2014), pp.777-792.

⁵⁸⁷ W.S. Jevons, ‘The Use and Abuse of Museums’, *Methods of Social Reform* (1881), 80-81 quoted in J. Lynne Teather, ‘The Museum Keepers. The Museums Association and the Growth of Museum Professionalism’, *Museum Management and Curatorship* (1990), p. 26.

⁵⁸⁸ Greenwood, *Museums*, p. 362.

funded provincial museums.⁵⁸⁹ The provincial or national status of the museum also influenced pay. T. N. Mukharji, for example, was given a salary of Rs.600 per month when he became an Assistant Curator at the Imperial Museum, compared to his Rs.75 salary at the Department of Revenue and Agriculture when he was part of the Bengal Economic Museum, which will be discussed shortly.⁵⁹⁰ Many of these men, and they were always men, continued in their role as curator for decades, including Mukharji. Hill argues that over ‘the course of this long service they often came to be seen as “characters”; slightly or even very eccentric local figures closely identified with their institution.’⁵⁹¹

Closer relationships were partly fostered through an increased scholarly apparatus, which prompted museum catalogues and publications to be created and shared between institutions. Indeed, this went beyond provincial or national boundaries, as annual reports and publications were dispatched to different curators across the Empire. This arguably engendered something of a collegiate atmosphere between museum professionals. For example, Greenwood relates that the curator of the Colombo Museum ‘sent all the way to England to gain information of any preparations which will destroy the fungus that had attached the teak cases as well as the specimens in his Museum.’⁵⁹² It is not clear who was contacted, and the curator himself was not named either. Of particular significance in this period were the works produced by Anderson. He created the Imperial Museum’s first catalogues, which demonstrates his systematic approach to the collection. The first of these, *Catalogue of Mammalia in the Indian Museum Part I* was published in Calcutta by order of the Trustees in 1881. As a zoologist, it made sense that his catalogues would centre on the Museum’s collection of animal specimens. He further produced a *Catalogue and Hand Book of the Archaeological Collections in the Indian Museum Parts I and II* in 1883 before he left India in 1886.

Many leading museum men in Britain and India hailed from Scotland. Roles connected with Indian institutions, or those that dealt with a lot of Indian specimens, were particularly dominated by Scots: Sir Joseph Hooker (Director of Kew), John Anderson (Director of the Imperial Museum), Dr John Forbes Watson (Director of the India Museum), Alexander Cunningham (Director-General of the Archaeological Survey), Dr James Burgess (Director-General after Cunningham), and Dr George Watt (responsible for the Calcutta International Exhibition’s exhibits and author of *Dictionary of Economic*

⁵⁸⁹ Hill, ‘A Rather Undefined’, 1.

⁵⁹⁰ McKeich, ‘T. N. Mukharji and the Exhibition of India’, p.160.

⁵⁹¹ Hill, ‘A Rather Undefined Social Position’, 2.

⁵⁹² Greenwood, *Museums and Art Galleries*, p. 365.

Products of India) were all contemporaries. Certainly, Cairns Craig has stressed that Scots were well placed to take on these roles following the ‘culture of generalism which had been embedded in the Scottish university system.’⁵⁹³ Whilst Scots were not exclusively in charge of these institutions, it seems unlikely that Scottish associational networks were not at play in museum development. Anderson, for example, wrote to Hooker in January 1869 when he was looking for a systematic zoologist with some anatomical training, and asked for a recommendation.⁵⁹⁴

Moreover, Paton may, for example, have been able to elicit more support from Forbes Watson than he otherwise may have done when he requested an Indian collection. This conjecture is not, however, particularly helpful, as Paton’s dedication to museums seemed to override his other ties of nationality. Though he was instrumental in conceiving and developing Glasgow’s new institutions during this period, including the Camphill Galleries, People’s Palace, and the Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery, very little has been written about him. During his lifetime he produced several publications, gave numerous speeches, corresponded with leading publications, and played an active role in Glasgow civic life. His obituary in the *Perthshire Observer* stated that throughout his forty year custodianship of Glasgow’s public museums, he ‘did much to promote the taste for art in the city.’⁵⁹⁵ Paton’s career tracked major changes to Glasgow’s cultural scene. As a provincial curator he was however, rather unusual, and his selection for the position after Thomson sheds light on the Corporation’s aspirations for the museum. Unlike Thomson, the museum’s first curator, Paton had been the Assistant Keeper at the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art. The Glasgow Council had greater aspirations for the museum, which is illustrated by their decision to employ a museum professional from a national museum. Compared to other provincial curators, cited by Hill, namely Elijah Howarth, Thomas Sheppard and George Night, who had little or no experience when they entered their respective provincial museums, Paton had expertise far beyond the norm.⁵⁹⁶

Changes were occurring rapidly within provincial museums. The report on the Provincial Museums of the United Kingdom, produced by the British Association for the Advancement of Science in 1887 illuminates the state of museums at different grades on

⁵⁹³ Cairns Craig, ‘Empire of Intellect. The Scottish Enlightenment and Scotland’s Intellectual Migrants’ in *Scotland and the British Empire*, ed. by John M. Mackenzie and T. M. Devine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁵⁹⁴ Letter from John Anderson to Sir Joseph Hooker, 4 January 1869, *Global Plants* <<https://plants.jstor.org/stable/10.5555/al.ap.visual.kdcas4867>> [accessed 25 April 2021]

⁵⁹⁵ ‘Death of Bankfoot Native. Distinguished Career of Mr James Paton’, *Perthshire Advertiser*, 2 March 1921, p. 14.

⁵⁹⁶ Hill, ‘A Rather Undefined’, p.6.

the provincial scale.⁵⁹⁷ It defined ‘provincial museums’ as any ‘Museums out of London to which the public can obtain access.’⁵⁹⁸ The Association itself was directed towards promoting ‘the intercourse of those who cultivate Science in different parts of the British Empire.’⁵⁹⁹ Networks for creating and circulating scientific knowledge was part of the Association’s core operandi, and provincial museums were seen as a vehicle for facilitating them. For this to work, the Association had to learn as much as possible about these institutions. Their investigations involved writing to the town clerks of all the municipal boroughs in the United Kingdom and asking for the names of the museums in their districts. This created a list of 211 provincial museums in the UK, of which Scotland contributed 31.⁶⁰⁰

For the second phase of their inquiry, the Committee drew up questions which included seven on general statistics and thirty-six on details. These were then sent to the curators of the different museums. The first set of questions is as follows:

1. Name of town and country
2. Name of museum and street or building in which it is situated
3. Date of foundation or opening
4. Name and address of curator or other principal officer
5. List of collections and of subjects illustrated
6. On what terms and at what hours is the museum open to the public?
7. Remarks.

Contrastingly, the second series of questions, listed in Appendix IV were hugely varied, clearly targeted, and aimed at generating as much detailed information about Britain’s provincial museums as possible. No attempt was made to contextualise these results in a wider European or imperial context. From the result, four classes of provincial museum were created to account for comparisons of size, annual cost, staffing numbers and types, number of visitors and any special characteristics.

⁵⁹⁷ *Report of the Fifty-Seventh Meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science held at Manchester in August and September 1887* (London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1888).

⁵⁹⁸ The Committee consisted of Professor Valentine Ball, Mr. H. G. Fordham, Professor Haddon, Professor Hillhouse, Mr. John Hopkinson, Dr. Macfarlane, Professor Milnes Marshall, Mr. F.T. Mott (Secretary), Dr. Traquair, and Dr. H. Woodward., p.97.

⁵⁹⁹ *Report of the Fifty-Seventh*, p. xxxi.

⁶⁰⁰ Results taken from report.

Table 4.1 Total number of provincial museums in each class, derived from the *Report on the Provincial Museums of the United Kingdom, 1887*

	Total	England	Scotland	Ireland	Wales
First Class	56	39	7	7	3
Second Class	55	43	8	3	1
Third Class	63	47	11	2	3
Fourth Class	30	27	2	-	1

Glasgow's Kelvingrove Museum was listed as first class, as was the University of Glasgow's Hunterian Museum, yet the Anderson College Museum was second class, and the Museum of the Geology Society was third class. The other first class institutions in Scotland were listed as Edinburgh's Museum of Science and Art and National Museum of Antiquities, Dundee's Albert Institute Museum, Paisley's Free Library and Museum, and St Andrew's University Museum. What is impossible to glean, is whether some characteristics took precedence over others: for example, did large visitor numbers but relatively small dimensions equate to first class? Or would that museum be relegated to second or third class? What is significant, however, is the serious attempt made to understand the differences between provincial museums and to create a hierarchy. Yet this was also a way to facilitate better, more appropriate provisions for each museum from the metropole. In the column for remarks, 19 of the 121 provincial museums were already in receipt of loan collections from the South Kensington Museum.⁶⁰¹ Recent work on the report highlights that the issue 'of metropolitan museums supporting their regional colleagues was a recurrent theme' in this period, and 'beyond London, museums themselves were also taking initiatives in this regard.'⁶⁰² Indeed, Paton 'was a vocal believer in the duty of national museums to help the regionals', exemplified by his interactions with the India Museum and Kew.⁶⁰³

The report gave curators a voice through their responses and many felt the 'need of some organisation among curators, either nationally or in districts, for mutual help and co-operation.'⁶⁰⁴ Paton bemoaned, separately, that as a 'provincial curator' he might spend weeks labouring over something, which may have already been achieved in another museum.⁶⁰⁵ He saw himself positioned within a cluster of provincial curators, which hoped

⁶⁰¹ Ibid., 115.

⁶⁰² Cornish, et al., 'Between Metropole', p.126.

⁶⁰³ Ibid., 129-130.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid., 129.

⁶⁰⁵ James Paton, 'A Museum Conference', *Nature*, 21 (1880), p.514 -515.

‘to forward the educational value and increase the usefulness of the places confided’ to them.⁶⁰⁶ He argued that ‘in no department of public work might and could greater public advantage result from close association of officials than from a union of museum curators.’⁶⁰⁷ To this end, he was an important proponent of the Museums Association, which was founded in 1889 and continues to operate today. He was elected its President in 1897, and he envisaged a collaborative network through which curators could share their knowledge, and he was certainly not alone.⁶⁰⁸ Speaking at the 1894 Museums Association meeting, he specified two types of curator: ‘the specialist who belongs to the great public and national museums’ and the ‘provincial curator, who has to be everything and do everything in his own much embracing-institution.’⁶⁰⁹ To Paton’s mind there was a significant gap between the roles, responsibilities, and necessary skills of the national and provincial curator. Indeed, it would seem that one could not neatly be transported from a national to a provincial museum and vice versa.

Glasgow, Paton posited, should be able to contribute significantly to the museum sector because it was an important imperial provincial city. In 1896, Glasgow hosted the seventh annual Museums Association conference, which was attended by ‘some fifty delegates, several of whom are accompanied by lady friends.’⁶¹⁰ Most of these were ‘curators of museums, art galleries and libraries; but their number also includes one or two municipal dignitaries’, who specialised in ‘civic work’ connected to museums.⁶¹¹ Glasgow’s representatives included Lord Provost, Sir James Bell, Henry Dyer, Councillor Shearer, and Paton, which highlights the intimate connection between the Museum and the civic administration. The proceedings were directed towards increasing ‘the influence and usefulness of Museums.’ In this way, Glasgow’s Museum was positioned as both a municipal institution and a provincial museum run by an experienced curator. In welcoming the assembled party, the Lord Provost said that ‘as a Corporation they desired to provide all kinds of elevating amusements and instruction for the people, and to increase the opportunities of the young to grow not only in bodily health but in mental graces.’⁶¹² In an interesting reversal, Bell applauded the value of the Museums Association, and Paton addressed the role of municipality in developing civic cultural institutions for the public,

⁶⁰⁶ James Paton, *Report on Visit to Museums and Art Galleries in Holland and Belgium 1879* (Glasgow: Glasgow Corporation, 1879), p. 5.

⁶⁰⁷ Paton, ‘A Museum Conference’, p.514 -515.

⁶⁰⁸ E. Howarth, ‘A Museum Conference’, *Nature* 21 (1880), p. 492.

⁶⁰⁹ James Paton, ‘The Education of the Museum Curator’, *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual General Meeting of the Museums Association* (1895), 95.

⁶¹⁰ ‘Museums Association Conference in Glasgow’, *The Scotsman*, 23 July 1896, p.7.

⁶¹¹ Ibid.

⁶¹² Ibid.

and asserted Glasgow's global cultural status in the process. He traced 'the history of the Corporation's art collection', which, as discussed, was a narrative solidified by extensive repetition; he also argued that the Glasgow Galleries should 'take its place in the front rank of art', and 'its collection' should be considered in estimating 'the art heritage and wealth of mankind.'⁶¹³ Importantly, he was able to boast about the new People's Palace, discussed in Chapter Two, and the procurement of the Camphill Manor as 'an art exhibition centre', which will be discussed in Chapter Six. Though the decision to host the Museum Association was of course to foster greater collaboration between provincial museums, the press coverage suggests there was an element of competition too, whereby the Glasgow Corporation wanted to showcase its cultural achievements.

Glasgow's Museum and Galleries Annual Report for that year certainly supports this view. It recorded that 'visitors expressed the highest satisfaction at the manner in which the wants of the community in respect of Museums are being met by the Corporation.'⁶¹⁴ This is important because, as Chapter Six will detail, there were many causes for dissatisfaction within the existing institutions before the inauguration of the new Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in 1902. Quoting from the official report for the Annual Conference of the Museums Association, Glasgow's Annual Report recorded that:

The city authorities of Glasgow have recognised beyond almost any other provincial municipality the great value of Museums and Art Galleries to the people of a large community, and, while paying due attention to the essential characters of a Museum for advancing the knowledge of science and art in the broadest sense, they have endeavoured to meet the natural requirements of an extensive city by establishing subsidiary Museums and Galleries in the various parks and open spaces belonging to the Corporation.⁶¹⁵

Here, recorded for posterity, is the central role of the public museum in the Glasgow Corporation's wider plan for the city's development. It is this characterisation of the Glasgow Corporation's intimate connection with the development of the city's cultural assets which became incorporated into its claim to be the 'second city of the Empire.'

Whilst the messaging in Glasgow centred on civic enterprise, the Imperial Museum in Calcutta was embroiled in the city's political story. As a state institution in a colonial capital, the Museum was part of wider networks of varying types across India. Administrative and transport links made it possible to collect specimens for the Imperial Museum. Still, similar processes of professional association, reflections on curating, and

⁶¹³ Ibid.

⁶¹⁴ *Corporation of Glasgow (Parks Department) Report on Museums and Galleries for 1896* (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1896), p.8.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid.

discussion about the role of the museum were at play in Calcutta. The 1884 Annual Report for the Imperial Museum (called the Indian Museum in the report) states that the Government of India ‘issued further instructions’ to place the ‘Indian Museum in favourable relation with the various Provincial Governments and Museums with reference to the acquisition of objects of antiquarian interest’, through which it was hoped that their ‘already large collections may be much extended.’⁶¹⁶

The report also highlights the Museum’s connections with the South Kensington Museum, whereby, ‘numerous moulds were taken from the Gour sculptures and casts made’ to be sent to London. This work was carried out by the Calcutta School of Art, and paid for by the Government of Bengal, demonstrating the hybridity of the Imperial Museum, which will be explored in the following section.

Museums and Hybrid Institutions

By the 1880s, the tussle between private and public collections, which had characterised early museum development had reached a more comfortable companionship. That said, this companionship was by no means uniform and museums continued to be established and maintained in a myriad of ways. Though ostensibly supported by the state or municipal governments, public museums were still reliant on donations and support from private individuals. The British Association for the Advancement of Science noted the distinct irregularities:

About one-fourth of the existing museums were originated by individual collectors, but only about a dozen of these remain in private hands. About 55 museums are now the property of municipal corporations, and are nearly all supported by local rates levied under the Public Libraries Act. About thirty belong to public institutions, universities, or schools, and are supported by those institutions or by Government grants. About half a dozen belong to and are entirely supported by the Imperial Government. About a dozen museums were established prior to the beginning of this century, about 100 were established between 1800 and 1870, and nearly 100 have been opened during the last sixteen years.⁶¹⁷

As the above example demonstrates, this was hardly a coherent process, which led to categorisations based on whether the museum was supported ‘by special rate, general

⁶¹⁶ *Indian Museum. Annual Report and List of Accessions. April 1883 to March 1884* (Calcutta: Printed by Order of the Trustees, 1884), p. 8

⁶¹⁷ *Report of the British Association for the Advancement of Science*, p.118.

borough finds, local societies, local institutions, annual subscriptions, colleges, government, private owners, endowment and unknown.⁶¹⁸ This section probes how both Glasgow's City Industrial Museum and Calcutta's Imperial Museum became necessarily hybrid institutions during this period. Hybrid, in this sense, refers to the balance between governing bodies and curators, between public and private funding, and between provincial, national and imperial conceptions of the public museum.

Those museums which were run by municipalities were 'inadequately funded', and Hill argues they 'often functioned essentially to enhance the prestige of the local elites.'⁶¹⁹ Even though by 1876, the 'absolute necessity of a Museum' was 'universally admitted', in Glasgow, the Town Council had been unable to financially fund the extension, as discussed in the previous chapter.⁶²⁰ Indeed, when Kelvingrove's extension was opened to the public in 1876 a 'sum of £263' was still yet to be paid on the £8300 project.⁶²¹ James White transferred the building to the Town Council on behalf of the subscribers, and presented the Lord Provost with 'a cheque for the sum required to free the museum entirely from debt.'⁶²² Despite the Council's pledge to facilitate the 'development and progress of scientific, artistic and technological collections', the Museum still required external support from Glasgow's citizens, especially when it came to specimen donation.⁶²³ The British Association's report levied criticism at 'many museums for their patchiness of their collections and for the lack of systematic collecting policy, relying, as was the tendency, on donation.'⁶²⁴ Provincial curators may have been forced to rely on donations but they could try and direct the sort of materials they received.

One particular episode explicates this dynamic nicely; in 1879, the Glasgow Sub-Committee for Museums and Galleries resolved to send Paton to 'visit and inspect the Public Museums and Galleries of Holland and Belgium', which he did in August that year.⁶²⁵ Paton and the Glasgow Corporation may have chosen these particular cities on the basis of their comparative reputation, but the report itself does not specify this. Tellingly, Glasgow may have been the 'second city of the Empire', but Paton was sent to European cities, suggesting that the Empire did not provide its own cultural role models. Moreover,

⁶¹⁸ Ibid., p.114.

⁶¹⁹ Hill, 'A Rather Undefined Social Position', p.5.

⁶²⁰ *Report on the Condition and Progress of the City Industrial Museum, Glasgow, for the year 1876*, (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1876), p. 7.

⁶²¹ 'The new museum', *Glasgow Herald*, 19 April 1876, p.4.

⁶²² Ibid.

⁶²³ *Report on the City Industrial Museum, Kelvingrove Park, and the Corporation Galleries of Art, Glasgow for the year 1878* (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1878), p. 1.

⁶²⁴ Cornish, et al., 'Between Metropole', p.125.

⁶²⁵ Paton, *Report on Visit to Museums*, p. 2.

these links to European cities signify that second city rhetoric was also informed by non-imperial developments. Though this decision could have been budgetary, comments made by the Lord Provost, John Ure in 1883 at a meeting ‘of the leading citizens of Glasgow’, suggests that placing the city within a European cultural framework was deliberate.⁶²⁶ Ure was discussing the ‘proposed new buildings’ for an ‘art gallery, museum &c.’, when he suggested that, compared with a ‘very many provincial towns’, their city was ‘very far behind’, but expert advice considered that ‘the Corporation Gallery, when better known, will rank as a collection of European importance.’⁶²⁷

In 1879 it was decided that Paton would inspect public museums and galleries, which would be more comparable to the institutions under his care than private ones. He wanted to examine the public art collections and consider how well the Dutch and Flemish schools were represented in the Glasgow collection. Practical issues, such as how the art was conserved, lit and arranged were also of primary interest because Paton was concerned about the state of Glasgow’s Corporation Galleries, which he thought were detrimental to the longevity of the collection, as will be discussed in Chapter Six.⁶²⁸ In terms of the natural history and technological collections, he wanted to see ‘plans of buildings, classification and arrangement and sections, preparing, mounting, and displaying of objects, and the various means whereby the objects shown are made intelligible and instructive to visitors.’⁶²⁹ Presumably, this was also an opportunity for Paton to expand his professional network and assist Glasgow’s Museum through collaboration. Paton had an aspirational attitude towards what was possible in Glasgow, which highlights one of the benefits of looking at specific curators and institutions when studying museums in this period, particularly as Hill’s exemplar curators seem to have been ‘explicitly servile’ to the committees that appointed them.⁶³⁰ Indeed, some of the curators who responded to the British Association’s survey pointed out ‘the importance of having museums controlled by scientific curators, not by town councils or amateurs’, suggesting that they had experienced tensions between exercising their ideas and those of the municipality.⁶³¹ Paton, on this level actively wanted to ‘draw a line between curators and amateurs’, but seems to have

⁶²⁶ ‘Proposed new buildings for Art Gallery, Museum, & c.’, *Glasgow Herald*, 23 November 1883, p.3.

⁶²⁷ Ibid.

⁶²⁸ Paton, *Report on Visit to Museums*, p. 3.

⁶²⁹ Ibid.

⁶³⁰ Hill, ‘A Rather Undefined Social Position’, 7.

⁶³¹ Report of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, p. 129.

benefitted from the freedom afforded him by the hybridity of Glasgow's civic institutions.⁶³²

Underlying these ostensible motivations, Paton also wanted to find evidence to encourage Glasgow's citizens to contribute more actively to their public institutions. As Chapter Six argues, Paton's vision for the new Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum was influenced by his encounters with institutions in Holland and Belgium. Even at this early juncture, it was hoped that his 'many notes and observations' would inform the 'development and future extension of the Glasgow Museum and Galleries.'⁶³³ One of these observations was that 'most famous collections have become public property through the generosity of private citizens or by the enterprise of municipal authorities.' Here, Paton highlights the two most common and distinct routes to founding museums and galleries, which mirror the case studies showcased in the previous chapter. Rotterdam was a very useful city for Glasgow to aspire to, as both a provincial city, a port, and the second city of the Dutch Empire. Significantly, Paton reports that some examples within the Rotterdam collection had been gifted by Glasgow shipbuilders, to whom he pointedly considered 'the hint about charity beginning at home might without offence be offered.'⁶³⁴ Furthermore, Paton may have been the quintessential public servant, but his museum was reliant on donations from private bodies and individuals. Throughout his report, Paton frequently mentioned that a public collection had resulted from a private bequest or bequests. This was a notable difference between Glasgow's museum and those elsewhere. In a cyclical fashion, Paton needed private individuals to feel compelled towards the public cause of the museum, to consequently donate their specimens, and thus improve the public museum. Indeed, it is interesting that Paton wrote to Forbes Watson to request specimens from India in the same year that he had evaluated museums in Europe.

Unlike other rhetoric surrounding Glasgow at the time, which centred on the positive ramifications of its commercial importance and the heartiness of its citizens, Paton did not shy away from the city's shortcomings, particularly its public institutions. He argued there was 'every reason' for 'the greatest shipbuilding centre the world ever saw' to have a 'good representation of naval architecture, its history and triumphs', yet Glasgow was 'far from possessing' one.⁶³⁵ He further contended 'in point of population, wealth, and

⁶³² Lucie Carreau, 'Becoming "Professional": From the Beasley Collection to the Cranmore Ethnographical Museum', *Journal of Museum Ethnography* 23 (2010), 50.

⁶³³ Paton, *Report on Visit to Museums*, p. 4.

⁶³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶³⁵ *Ibid.*

resources, not one of the towns alluded to in this Report approaches the City of Glasgow.⁶³⁶ In fact, in comparison to the places he visited, ‘their industries are fewer, less diversified, and less extensive and their access to and command of markets, and consequently their opportunities for commercial development, are not equal to those enjoyed by our citizens.’⁶³⁷ Extensive, here, means empire, and Paton is therefore intimating that as a more imperial city, Glasgow should have a better museum. It is possible then, to see how Glasgow the shipbuilder, Glasgow the industrial port, and Glasgow the populous hub, were linked, in Paton’s mind at least, to the quality of institution which they should strive for. Certainly, it is not incidental that the characteristics asserted here are the same as those used to claim second city status, and, notably in this example, these are used to justify developing the city’s public museum. Overlaying these factors was of course the civic fervour, which many argued was distinctive to Glasgow. Unlike the town’s other museums, which he did not think needed ‘special attention’, the Lakenhal, ‘or hall of the ancient cloth workers of Leyden’ required emulation in Glasgow.⁶³⁸ Though poorly suited for a Municipal Museum for ‘the preservation of antiquities and objects of historical interest connected with Leyden’, Paton thought Glasgow ‘might well imitate their patriotic zeal.’⁶³⁹ On this note, the end of Paton’s report is worth quoting in full:

With less ability to maintain their great institutions, and with less urgent necessity for them, on account of the limited industrial sphere of their inhabitants, these cities have put forth efforts on a scale which, if equalled in Glasgow, could not fail to have a most marked effect in the industrial standing of the city, at once most elevating and refining the taste, stimulating thought and research, and suggesting new inventions and combinations. These institutions raise the whole mass of the population to a higher level, and they broaden and deepen the fertilizing stream of industrial activity.⁶⁴⁰

Attempts to elevate the populace were essential in Glasgow because of the increased electorate which held sway on wider political divisions. In contrast to Woodson-Boulton’s argument that art museums were active ‘attempts to contain the chaotic forces of industrialization’, Paton asserts that efforts towards the museum would ‘deepen the fertilizing stream of industrial activity.’⁶⁴¹ Though Woodson-Boulton refers to art-museums, Paton’s aspiration for the City Industrial Museum was to unite it with the Corporation Galleries to create an art museum, hence the two institutions were connected.

⁶³⁶ Ibid. p. 14.

⁶³⁷ Ibid.

⁶³⁸ Ibid., p. 8.

⁶³⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 14.

⁶⁴¹ Woodson-Boulton, *Transformative Beauty*, p.6.

This advances the understanding that Glasgow's reactions and aspirations for its public museum were distinct from other comparable cities. Yet, at the same time, Paton placed the city's institutions within a wider framework of museums in Europe. Subsequently, the *Dundee Evening Telegraph* published a review of his trip and printed the section listed above, which they acknowledged applied 'principally to Glasgow' but should be taken on board by authorities in other cities.⁶⁴² The paper noted that Paton's comparisons were 'not too flattering or our own country', which suggests that the poor state of Glasgow's museum reflected badly on Scotland as a whole.⁶⁴³ Moreover, compared with the European cities, 'our own large towns, which have much greater wealth and means for rivalling those of the Continent, are devoid of almost every appliance for art culture.'⁶⁴⁴ The press response draws attention to the more explicitly competitive elements.

Hybridity in Calcutta was conceived somewhat differently, but donations from private collectors were also important, even to state run museums like the Imperial Museum. Returning to the archaeological specimen debate, several provincial governments argued that individuals would be more like to donate their findings to a local museum than the Imperial Museum. Indeed as was noted in 1882:

the danger of interfering with local museums seems to lie in the consideration that such interference may tend to induce collectors to hoard their collection where otherwise they might have been willing to make them public property.⁶⁴⁵

At least in a provincial sense then, donating to a public museum was believed to be tied to local pride, and perhaps, also, civic recognition. Potential donors needed to be convinced by the museum's mission in order for them to commit their support. In Calcutta, the Imperial Museum received a significant volume of donations, though these additions were proportionally smaller than specimens acquired through 'purchase' or 'exchange'.⁶⁴⁶ The donors list in the 1884 Annual Report included individuals as well as the Archaeological Survey of India, Asiatic Society of Bengal, and the Government of Bengal. Other museums, such as the Lahore Museum are also reported to have donated 'by exchange'. Individuals were able to make a contribution to the imperial project through donations to the museum. This suggests that individuals were convinced, though not universally, by the museum's objectives. The different departments of the Imperial Museum made it comparably easy to distribute donated specimens to the right area. Indeed, H.F. Blanford,

⁶⁴² 'Our Appliances for Art Culture', *Dundee Evening Standard*, 12 November 1879, p.4

⁶⁴³ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁴⁵ 'Disposal of Objects of Archaeological Interest', p.7.

⁶⁴⁶ *Indian Museum Annual Report 1883-84*, pp. 4-6.

reported that the ‘Museum collections are, so far as is known, in good order and preservation.’⁶⁴⁷ By contrast, individual donations made to Glasgow’s Industrial Museum, though numerous, were not aligned in any particular direction. As Bailie Dickson and Paton impressed:

The Museum has hitherto depended for its growth almost exclusively on contributions obtained either by begging or by voluntary contribution. No donation or bequest has been received of such outstanding prominence as to give a distinctive character.⁶⁴⁸

Citizens were encouraged to donate to perform a civic rather than national or imperial duty to aid the museum’s journey to befitting the ‘second city of the Empire.’ This collecting model posed problems for Paton, as he tried to move systematically towards a more ‘complete’ collection.

‘Completing’ Collections in Glasgow and Calcutta

During the 1880s, aspirations towards more systematic collecting practices and more globally focused collections developed. Identifiable trends emerged to stimulate desire for ‘complete’ collections, which could be achieved through more systematic collecting strategies. The extent to which a collection was considered ‘complete’ was a way of appraising the quality of the institution, its curator, and even the whole city. It is important to stress that whilst ideals for ‘complete’ collections were emerging, this rarely translated into lived practice. As suggested, this was more due to lack of resources than willingness. Felix Driver and Sonia Ashmore argue that ‘the impulse to collect, arrange, and display natural products and cultural forms came to be closely associated, in the second half of the nineteenth century, with the development of new forms of political culture, governance, and imperial rule.’⁶⁴⁹ The style of collection held in a public museum was therefore a way of negotiating the wider balances between provincial, national and imperial structures. This adds to Longair and McAleer’s assessment that museums should be studied within ‘their original contexts’ in ways that take their ‘collections development’ into account.⁶⁵⁰ Consequently, this section focuses on the collecting processes, which in some areas

⁶⁴⁷ *Indian Museum Annual Report 1883-84*, p.10.

⁶⁴⁸ Dickson and Paton, *The Present Position*, p. 9.

⁶⁴⁹ Felix Driver and Sonia Ashmore, ‘The Mobile Museum: Collecting and Circulating Indian Textiles in Victorian Britain’, *Victorian Studies*, 52.3 (2010), p. 354.

⁶⁵⁰ Longair and McAleer, *Curating Empire*, p.5.

became more systematic during this period, but were also directed by the individual whims of curators, a lack of funding, and donation cultures, as touched on in the above sections. The collecting processes specific to Glasgow and Calcutta were led by several factors; the pursuit of scientific knowledge, the individual interests of curators and debates about what a provincial museum should contain. It was not enough to simply expand the collection, the additions had to be seen to benefit local people, education, and scientific interests. Due to the heavy reliance on donated specimens and materials, collections across provincial museums were often directed more by happenstance than by any systematic process.

Returning to Paton's trip to the principal Dutch and Flemish towns reveals a lot about the way collections were appraised and understood. His report concluded that the museums and galleries he saw had 'richer collections of art, fuller and more complete scientific museums, and more varied and perfect collections of objects illustrating the history, customs, arts, and manufactures of the people than in any other similar area in the world.'⁶⁵¹ Paton's trip illustrates the use of 'complete' in connection with collections, which proliferated during the era of change in question. His comments on the Navy Office Museum in The Hague for example, considered the collections to be of the 'most complete scale.'⁶⁵² The Royal Cabinet of Curiosities in the Netherlands was particularly impressive because its Japanese collections was 'of the most famous and complete extant.'⁶⁵³ Moreover, Leyden's Museum of Natural History with its 'great reputation for science and learning' had the 'most valuable public collection' with the 'most extensive, complete, and admirably-arranged collections in existence.'⁶⁵⁴ These examples derive from a twelve page report in which Paton used 'complete' five times to positively describe a collection. So, whilst frequently used, it was not the only way he described the collections he saw, which he considered to exceed any in Glasgow's institutions. Whilst it would be easy to dismiss this as mere rhetoric, 'complete' was part of the lexicon consistently used to describe collections throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century. Other positive descriptors included 'rare', 'richest' and 'valuable'.

Loan collections and financial support from the government Science and Art Department, however, increased access to other types of collections too. Consequently, specimens from beyond the locality were obtainable through more systematic means than relying on returning imperialists donating to public collections. The International

⁶⁵¹ Paton, *Report on Visit*, p. 3.

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁶⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid.* Leyden is a city in the Dutch province of South Holland

Exhibition movement certainly fuelled this understanding by drawing the globe into one space. As James Ryan argues, public exhibitions became a ‘central element in the imperial project to capture the world “under one roof.”’⁶⁵⁵ Exhibits from different countries, provinces, and industries were evaluated in the press by how remarkable they were, and, importantly, how ‘complete’.⁶⁵⁶ Not only this, but those held in Britain afforded provincial museums the opportunity to purchase specimens from India and elsewhere, which would otherwise have been logistically barred to them. Together, this increased aspirations beyond the metropole to create ‘complete’ collections of specific countries, provinces and industries.

Expectations about what types of materials should reside in national, imperial and provincial museums shifted towards creating a ‘complete’ collection of the right kind. The geographical span of this collection tended to reflect the scale of the institution. This was proliferated through varied channels. Two of the most important of these were the South Kensington Museum, discussed above, and the International Exhibition movement, discussed in the following chapter via Calcutta’s 1883 International Exhibition and Glasgow’s 1888 International Exhibition of Science, Art and Industry. These events gave access to global products without foreign travel, which both provided an impetus for museums to collect and facilitated more systematic collection processes.⁶⁵⁷ Expectations which had previously been reserved for large metropolitan museums filtered down to provincial museums through the greater accessibility of materials for purchase. International Exhibitions were increasingly competitive ventures, and therefore collecting from them became somewhat competitive too. There were, however, collaborative elements.

In 1886 for example, purchases were made for Kelvingrove Museum at London’s Colonial and Indian Exhibition. Glasgow’s Museum and Galleries Committee had resolved to spend £600 on expanding Kelvingrove’s collection, but on application to the Science and Art Department, the city received a Government grant to cover half the cost.⁶⁵⁸ This

⁶⁵⁵ James R. Ryan, ‘Hunting with the camera’: Photography, wildlife and colonialism in Africa’, in Chris Philo and Chris Wilbert (eds), *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places: New Geographies of Human-Animal Relations* (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 205-22, p.206.

⁶⁵⁶ For example: ‘The Calcutta International Exhibition’, *Indian Daily News*, 19 October 1883, describes the collection of *pataras* and baskets etc., as ‘very complete’ and ‘Glasgow International Exhibition’, *Glasgow Herald*, 11 May 1888, p.9 describes the printing section as ‘the most complete exhibits of the kind ever brought together’.

⁶⁵⁷ John R. Davis, ‘The Origins of the 1862 Exhibition and its Place in History’, *The Journal of the Decorative Arts Society 1850 – the Present* 38 (2014), pp. 8-19.

⁶⁵⁸ *Kelvingrove Museum and Corporation Galleries of Art, Glasgow. Report for the year 1886* (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1886), p.5.

highlights the strengthened position of provincial museums by the mid-decade, and suggests that arguments made by Paton and others for national institutions to support regional ones had found purchase. It also demonstrates that the Glasgow Corporation was finally more willing to part with funds to strengthen the position of their public museum, rather than rely solely on public subscriptions as they had done previously. This links back to the institution's growing hybridity, as discussed above. It might be the case that the knowledge that municipal bodies in other urban centres were expanding their museum collections through regular International Exhibitions, provided solid encouragement for Glasgow to do the same, particularly as conceptions of municipal museums were becoming more closely entwined with the image of the city. The collector dispatched to the 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition was a Town Councillor rather than Paton, which both demonstrates that Glasgow's museum was a municipal project, and supports Hill's assessment that 'authority, status and expertise' were balanced between 'the council committee and the curator'.⁶⁵⁹ However, she argues, and Paton certainly accedes to this impression, that this 'tended to shift in favour of the curator during this period.'⁶⁶⁰ Paton's absence can perhaps be attributed to his communications with Kew in 1879, which meant he would have been poorly received in London's museum circles.

Bailie Dickson, followed by ex-Bailie Crawford, were tasked with making selections from the Exhibitions and were assisted by Casper Purdon Clark, the Keeper of the Indian Section at the South Kensington Museum, and Thomas Armstrong, Director for Art of the Science and Art Department.⁶⁶¹ Specialist expertise from this grand national institution would no doubt have been welcomed by the Glasgow councillors, but it reflected Forbes Watson's aforementioned arguments in favour of knowledge being disseminated from the imperial centre, rather than cultivated in the provinces. The Museum and Galleries Committee thanked the 'Science and Art Department, not only for the generous spirit in which the application for aid was entertained, but also for the valuable advice in the selection of specimens and material aid in forwarding them to Glasgow' by the South Kensington Museum officers.⁶⁶² The Museum's 1886 Annual Report recorded these purchases as 'the most important' acquisitions made that year.⁶⁶³ The *Glasgow Herald* reported that 'the collection secured for Glasgow embraces some of the choicest and most characteristic objects which enriched the famous Indian section of the Colonial

⁶⁵⁹ Hill, 'A Rather Undefined Social Position', p.5.

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶⁶¹ 'Important Purchases for Kelvingrove Museum', *Glasgow Herald*, 31 December, 1886, p.10.

⁶⁶² *Kelvingrove Museum and Corporation Galleries of Art, Glasgow. Report for the year 1886*, p.5.

⁶⁶³ Ibid.

and Indian Exhibition.’⁶⁶⁴ Many of these items had been ‘selected and reserved by South Kensington Museum authorities previous to the opening of the exhibition and before any other museum officers had an opportunity of seeing and securing specimens.’⁶⁶⁵ The *Glasgow Herald* propagated the idea that the city received preferential treatment from national museum officers. The purchases made for Glasgow, which included jewellery and metalware, were ‘said to embrace a most satisfactory representation of oriental taste in art, which cannot fail to be of the greatest interest to the public and of high value to art-students and designers.’⁶⁶⁶ Considering Glasgow’s earlier disappointment not securing the ‘complete’ Indian collection they had wanted from the India Museum in 1879, this was significant. Yet, the collection itself only amounted to 121 items, suggesting that this was to be a nucleus of a wider collection, and it was the value of these items, both artistically and symbolically which made them important.

A complete series, such as the proposed archaeological series for the Imperial Museum, was perceived as the most valuable type of collection, but were very difficult to achieve. Burgess, for example, doubted the real likelihood of achieving a complete archaeological collection in India, though he did think a complete ethnological collection was possible in Calcutta. Indeed, he saw ‘no reason why the Indian Museum in Calcutta should not be quite as perfect as the Ethnological Museum of Berlin.’⁶⁶⁷ He placed Calcutta in the same comparative field as Berlin, a European capital and first city of an empire, rather than citing another second city. The Ethnological Museum of Berlin was said to send officers to India to obtain sets of material like ‘utensils, weapons of chase and fishing’ which ‘some tribes’ are more than happy to supply when paid appropriately. Owing to the innumerable sets available within different communities, and the fact that ethnological practice at the time accepted specially made examples, Burgess considered this a good option for Calcutta’s collection too. As the imperial institution of India it should, and could, have a ‘complete’ collection, facilitated through its collecting networks. These practices point to the hitherto underappreciated links between Calcutta’s status as the capital city and the collecting networks which were established and enabled through its position.

⁶⁶⁴ *Glasgow Herald*, 31 December, 1886, p.10.

⁶⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid., p.10.

⁶⁶⁷ ‘Disposal of Objects of Archaeological Interest’, p.20.

Alongside the Imperial Museum, Calcutta was also home to the Bengal Economic Museum, which was set-up with far more systematic objectives. From the outset, it was intended for:

the collection, identification, and classification of the economic products of Bengal, both raw materials and manufactures; the Committee of Management being further charged with the work of ascertaining all that is already known regarding such products, and digesting and reducing the information into practicable form for circulation among local officers and others.⁶⁶⁸

Its collection was the result of a planned strategy, as opposed to the donation model necessitated in British provincial museums. It was designed to create a complete picture of economic products of Bengal, to allow for the more efficient exploitation of the region's resources. That being said, the Bengal Economic Museum similarly received donations from 'private gentlemen and mercantile companies.'⁶⁶⁹ According to the *Report on the Administration of Bengal*, there was a Central Committee of Management in Calcutta, and then a network of Local Committees staffed with colonial officers throughout Bengal, with one for every district. Important districts would also be assigned their own separate committee.⁶⁷⁰ As a result, fifty-three committees were created, forty-one of which were for districts, and twelve for sub-divisions. This was highly a bureaucratic arrangement that was designed to ensure colonial officials kept to their brief, and only sent the necessary specimens to the capital. Indeed, the Local Committees were instructed on 'what products to send', 'what quantities of each', and 'how to pack them so as to reach the museum safely.'⁶⁷¹ This top down approach facilitated the dissemination of instructions and centralised museum knowledge. Importantly, the committees were designated as 'local', rather than provincial, which suggests that a hierarchical structure, as well as a flow of objects from the periphery to the centre. Within this model, local personnel were not encouraged to offer their own expertise, knowledge, or ideas, instead they were expected to facilitate larger objectives dictated by Calcutta. By 1876, the Museum had obtained 4,217 specimens under headings such as; food-grains, condiments, cotton, fibres, indigo, tobacco, tea, drugs and building stones.⁶⁷² The collection was expanding rapidly so that in 1878 there was a reported increase of 1,042 specimens which brought the total to 13,646.⁶⁷³ Many of these specimens were geological and others were ethnological, and so in the

⁶⁶⁸ *Report on the Administration of Bengal 1874 -75* (Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Press, 1876), p.195.

⁶⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.196.

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.195.

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷² *Ibid.*, p.196.

⁶⁷³ *Report on the Administration of Bengal 1878-79* (Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Press, 1879), p. 38.

interests of developing ‘complete’ collections these were sent to the Geological Survey Museum and the Indian Museum respectively. The subsequent closure of the Museum, brought on by Calcutta’s 1883-84 International Exhibition, as the next chapter will demonstrate, centred on how the collection it contained could be deployed most usefully and efficiently. The Museum was moved into the Imperial Museum, which suggests that the centralisation which had been rejected in the metropolis, was still a driving force in Calcutta.

Conclusions

Both cities reacted distinctly to universal changes within the budding museum sector during the 1870s and 1880s. Whereas Glasgow’s City Industrial Museum remained fundamentally and necessarily provincial, efforts to make it an important institution within growing museum networks mirrored wider attempts to promote Glasgow as the ‘Second City of the Empire’. By extending the physical museum building in 1876, and thereafter expanding the scope of the collection, both Paton and the Corporation participated in wider aspirations for Glasgow to be an important imperial provincial city. These acts helped to position Glasgow more favourably amongst its closest provincial competitors, as well as those further afield, the deliberateness of which is deftly highlighted by the decision to host an International Exhibition in 1888.

In Calcutta, both the status of its Imperial Museum and that of the city as the capital of India were challenged by India’s Provincial interests. The Government of India attempted to affirm its imperial mission through this institution but was in some ways barred from doing so by provincial aspirations. Calcutta’s capital city status therefore simultaneously aided and curtailed collection expansion. In this way, Calcutta was both ‘Second City of the Empire’ and first city of India, while Glasgow was certainly not the first city of Scotland. Certainly, the Bengal city’s status within India enabled colonial administrators to employ collecting networks along existing administrative, rather than, curatorial lines. Yet, at the same time, the concentration of resources encouraged resentment, which prompted resistance to centralised collections. Perceptions of Calcutta influenced the way the Imperial Museum developed. Just as today there remains a strong link between national institutions and the capital city, people defended Calcutta as a centralised location for public institutions and collections on this basis, but that also made

it a target for colonial angst. Now, of course, India's national museum is conspicuously placed in the administrative centre of Delhi and is, increasingly, used for political purposes.

Museums in this period can, consequently, further elucidate changes in understandings of second city status and relationships between cities within the British Empire. The multifarious causes for museum development and collection expansion have explicated how a city's position as a provincial, capital or imperial city encouraged change in certain directions. Conceptions of provincial cities, in particular, have come to the fore as a primary driver for change within museums during this period. What a provincial museum ought to be, for example, was debated strenuously in the British press. Indeed, the different versions of provincialism presented by Glasgow and Calcutta highlights the multifaceted ways cities within the Empire functioned.⁶⁷⁴ Looking at how the administrations of the City Industrial Museum and the Imperial Museum responded to the wider changes within the emerging sector emphasises the unique characteristics of both cities.

Shifts occurred because of emerging museum networks, which were aided by personal relationships between curators. More than the bricks and mortar, this period of professionalisation provided an opportunity to explore ideas about what the museum was for. The collections held by City Industrial Museum and the Imperial Museum may have been extended during the 1880s, owing largely to the International Exhibition movement, which will be discussed in the following chapter, but they were still fundamentally the same institutions. While Paton remained the Superintendent of Glasgow's public museums and galleries, Anderson left India and the Imperial Museum in 1886, to be replaced by his assistant, Wood-Mason.

A desire to establish order within the confines of the museum prompted tireless attempts to systematise collecting and display for the betterment of public appeal, but this did not necessarily create orderly collections. As other recent scholarship acknowledges, this was a period of experimentation and articulation for museums, as suggested by the study conducted by the British Association for the Advancement of Science, the move towards the Museums Association, and the reconfiguring of London's India Museum and the Bengal Economic Museum.

⁶⁷⁴ Felix Driver and David Gilbert, *Imperial Cities, Landscape, display and identity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003); Longair and McAleer, *Curating Empire*.

What was expected of museums outside the metropole undoubtedly changed drastically over this period. Whilst museums outside the metropolis were still considered provincial in every sense, their curators were empowered to create more for the citizens of their specific cities. Some of this empowerment was distilled from London itself, as individuals like Forbes Watson sought to provide provincial museums with set specimens. He, however, wanted uniformity across provincial cities, whereas curators within them wanted to distinguish their museum and its collection from its competitors. Thus, some of this empowerment came from within the provinces themselves, not least because Town Councils began to provide more money to their museums, but also because of the professionalisation which had forged a network across Britain and beyond.

Chapter Five - Calcutta and Glasgow's First International Exhibitions, 1883-1884 and 1888.

During the mid to late nineteenth century, International Exhibitions, or World's Fairs, were a quintessential part of the metropolitan experience in Europe's imperial nations, and have therefore attracted significant scholarly attention.⁶⁷⁵ These imperial spectacles were designed to amass the world under one roof, promote trade, and thoroughly entertain the public. On display were products and peoples from the host city, its nation and beyond, forming arenas rife with cultural exchange. Using Pratt's seminal work *Imperial Eyes*, it is useful to think of the International Exhibitions as "contact zones".⁶⁷⁶ She defines these as 'the space of imperial encounters, the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict.'⁶⁷⁷ Moreover, Peter H. Hoffenberg presents them as 'historical moments in which we can view the sinews holding together the British Empire.'⁶⁷⁸ Hosting an International Exhibition was a deliberate and aspirational act to promote and elevate the image of the city. Consequently, the emphasis here is on how Calcutta's International Exhibition in 1883-84 and Glasgow's International Exhibition of Industry, Science and Art in 1888, prompted significant developments in both the Imperial and Kelvingrove Museums. Rather than provide a comprehensive history, this chapter analyses these events through a lens which sees them as vehicles for further enmeshing assertions of civic, national and imperial status within museum projects in Calcutta and Glasgow.

These temporary events provided both impetus and means for curators and municipal bodies in Glasgow and Calcutta to expand their museum's collections in

⁶⁷⁵ Renate Dohmen, "'A fraught challenge to the status quo': the 1883-84 Calcutta International Exhibition, conceptions of art and industry, and the politics of world fairs' in *Art Versus Industry? New perspectives on visual and industrial cultures in nineteenth-century Britain*, ed. by Kate Nichols, Rebecca Ware and Gabriel Williams (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), pp.199-216; Inés Dussel, 'Better exoticism and universalism: educational sections in Latin American participation at international exhibitions, 1860 – 1900', *Paedagogica Historica* 47:5 (2011), 601 – 617; Marta Filipová (ed.), *Cultures of International Exhibitions 1840-1940* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015); John E. Findling, *Historical Dictionary of World's Fairs and Expositions, 1851-1988* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1990); Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas, The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988); Peter H. Hoffenberg, *An Empire on Display: English, Indian, and Australian Exhibitions from the Crystal Palace to the Great War* (London: University of California Press, 2001); Sadiya Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: exhibitions, empire, and anthropology in nineteenth century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

⁶⁷⁶ Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*.

⁶⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.8.

⁶⁷⁸ Hoffenberg, *An Empire on Display*, p.15.

previously unseen ways.⁶⁷⁹ Consequently, though seemingly fleeting, museums were key to forging an International Exhibition's legacy, and many of the materials displayed remain in the collections today. Moreover, Glasgow's Exhibition was designed to create a surplus to pay for a museum more fitting of the 'second city of the Empire.' Yet within the discourse there is a heavy emphasis on ephemerality. Paul Greenhalgh's much cited *Ephemeral Vistas*, refers to them as 'spectacular gestures', which held people's attention before 'disappearing into an abrupt oblivion, victims of their planned temporality.'⁶⁸⁰ Certainly, the exhibitions would run for around six months (Calcutta's in the 'cold weather' between 4th December 1883 and 10th March 1884 and Glasgow's between 8th May and 10th November 1888) and, for the most part, the structures that had contained them would disappear, but, as Burton Benedict notes, the displays recurred time and again at different exhibitions to different populations, thus surrendering some of their ephemerality.⁶⁸¹ Despite the significant continuities across the phenomenon, the stark disparities between the colonial context and the British industrial one really come to the fore.

Whilst Calcutta's Exhibition conformed to some familiar tropes, its points of divergence, dictated by its position as both an Indian and European city, are more noteworthy. Firstly, the lines between the coloniser and the colonised were blurred in ways which were not apparent or relevant in European metropolises; similarly, the distinctions between the people on display and the audience were not clear-cut; and, lastly, the boundaries between commercial and state interests overlapped. Together, this created an uncertain and confusing environment, which elicited mixed reviews from contemporaries. Glasgow's Exhibition, by contrast, was a radiant example of the medium. From the outset, civic leaders were careful to ensure that it was appraised on the basis that it belonged to the 'second city of the Empire.'

Many key arguments made by this thesis are keenly observable through these events. Firstly, imperial provinciality usefully conceptualises Glasgow and Calcutta's place within the matrix of International Exhibitions, because, both cities were neither core metropolises, nor entirely peripheral. Glasgow and Calcutta's Exhibitions are in line with the historical enquiry which is turning away from the International Exhibitions held in the core

⁶⁷⁹ Carol A. Breckenridge, 'The Aesthetics and Politics of Colonial Collecting: India at World Fairs', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 31:2 (1989), pp.195-216.

⁶⁸⁰ Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas*, p.1.

⁶⁸¹ Burton Benedict, 'International exhibitions and national identity', *Anthropology Today* 7.3 (1991), p.5.

metropolises.⁶⁸² The attraction of International Exhibitions relied on a belief that successful elements could be transposed and adapted to suit a city's distinct characteristics. These were necessarily competitive ventures, whereby civic leaders attempted to show their city to the world at its best to outperform its competitors. Yet, their participation in the movement was characterised by the same paradoxical confidence and defensiveness that was linked to second city claims. Whilst archival materials directly linked Glasgow's exhibition with its claim to be the 'second city of the Empire', those pertaining to Calcutta, mostly referred to the 'Metropolis of India', which reflects how each city wanted to be seen.

Archival Material

Surviving primary material for International Exhibitions varies from city to city and from year to year; material for Glasgow's 1901 International Exhibition, for instance, is far more plentiful than its forerunner in 1888. All the available material relating to Calcutta's Exhibition at the National Archives of India, the State Archives of West Bengal, the Asiatic Society of Bengal, and the National Library were surveyed in the autumn of 2018. There were, however, significant difficulties when I attempted to access records at the Indian Museum, where I had expected the majority of them would be kept, but either this material no longer exists, or curators were unwilling to make it accessible. Despite numerous visits and many meetings with various members of staff, I was unable to view anything relating to the 1883 International Exhibition. The information board outside tells visitors that:

In 1874, Lt. Governor George Campbell established a museum in Hastings Street containing mainly specimens of ordinary products of Bengal, e.g. agricultural, minerals, forest, wastes and other curious objects. These objects were transferred to the annex to the Calcutta International Exhibition in 1883 [...] After the closure of the Exhibition, these Bengal Government exhibits, along with other exhibits of the same nature collected by the Government of India came to form part of the exhibit of the Indian Museum.⁶⁸³

This board highlights the key role the Exhibition played in the evolution of the Bengal Economic Museum into an arm of the Imperial Museum. Importantly, it states that exhibits were retained for the permanent collection, some of which I was able to see in the gallery

⁶⁸² Filipová (ed.), *Cultures of International Exhibitions*; Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*.

⁶⁸³ 'The Indian Museum', Beautiful Bengal Information Board, (Kolkata: Kolkata Municipal Corporation).

spaces. Material included in this chapter therefore largely derives from official documentation, issued by government departments, or else newspaper reports surveyed in India or, increasingly, on digital databases.

Records created through the rigmarole of hosting Calcutta's International Exhibition were filtered for the permanent record in 1900.⁶⁸⁴ At the time, this material was stored in the Economic and Art Section of the Indian Museum and its removal was requested 'to make room for more important files' in an overcrowded office.⁶⁸⁵ To decide which papers should be preserved and which destroyed, the documents were grouped under six headings:

1. 'Papers relating to Economic Products such as timbers, minerals, condiments, dyes, cereals &c.
2. Miscellaneous lists sent by exhibitors, some containing descriptive matter.
3. Letters and papers on Indian Artware and Ethnology.
4. Printed papers, circulars and forms relating to the Exhibition. It is suggested that one each of these papers be preserved, arranged in chronological order and bound together for future reference.
5. Financial letters relating to the receipt and disposal of grants of money for Exhibition purposes.
6. Useless - Official and private communications asking for information about details of the Exhibition, and their replies; correspondence with Police, caterers and workmen; letters to and from Railway Companies about transit and delivery of goods, rail receipts, &c, complaints; enquiries with reference to awards; spare copies of various printed forms.'⁶⁸⁶

Only those listed under the last heading, 'useless', were put forward for disposal. Material under the first five headings were retained, presumably because these were directly relevant to the Museum. It is unknown whether the 'papers, circulars and forms' were 'bound together' as suggested. Considering the administrative trend for hoarding files in Kolkata, and the lack of a more complete record elsewhere, it seems unlikely that documentation has not survived at the Indian Museum.

Fortunately, across International Exhibitions, certain publicity documents, like prospectuses and programmes, were deemed essential and many of these survive. Prospectuses were issued by Executive Committees to elicit applications from exhibitors and tended to detail the specifics of the Exhibition, namely the organising body, the

⁶⁸⁴ 'Approves the proposal of the officer in charge of the Economic and Art Section of the Indian Museum for the disposal of certain documents referring to the Calcutta Exhibition of 1883-84', December 1900 in Proceedings of the Revenue Department, Files 23-25, *West Bengal State Archives, Kolkata*

⁶⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁶ Ibid.

location and dates, regulations, and the classification of exhibits which were requested.⁶⁸⁷ Stylistically, prospectuses were informed by previous incarnations, and differences were prompted by the unique character of the Exhibition.

Newspaper coverage, both leading up to the event and of the event itself, provides vital insight into the reception of the displays in Calcutta and Glasgow. Calcutta was the epicentre for the fallout from the Ilbert Bill, which fostered a tense, racially aggravated atmosphere. In short, the Bill intended to allow Indian judges to try Europeans, where previously only European judges could preside over them. The backlash against this was severe because Calcutta's European population felt their way of life threatened by the blurring of racial lines, which brought into question their racial superiority over the Indian population. Calcutta's British residents 'boycotted the exhibition to demonstrate their discontent for the Ilbert Bill' and the Viceroy, George Robinson, 1st Marquess of Ripon, who supported it.⁶⁸⁸ In doing so, Renate Dohmen argues that the British population were 'rejecting any suggestion that India, and by extension, Indians could fully, and increasingly participate in the subcontinent's governance', and thus denied 'the very aspirations which underpinned the Calcutta International Exhibition for a modern India to take its place among the nations of the world.'⁶⁸⁹ This reaction was mirrored in the press, particularly in Britain, where coverage was minimal and lacklustre. By contrast, reporting on Glasgow's exhibition was extensive and varied. Reports were often designed for those unable to attend. Mostly, these originated from 'our special correspondent', and were often only slightly rewritten and reproduced in different newspapers.⁶⁹⁰ That said, the special correspondent for the *Aberdeen Weekly Journal* commented on Calcutta with his home audience in mind, making specific reference to how it fared in comparison to Aberdeen, as well as the ongoing commercial connections between the two cities.⁶⁹¹

The legacies of these events in Calcutta and Glasgow are vastly different. This is partly due to the types of material which were left behind. Some, like event programmes and newspaper reports, were expected to provide momentary commentary on the Exhibition as it unfolded. Others, such as the official reports, were intended to forge the event's posterity. Multiple copies of the *Official Report of the Calcutta International*

⁶⁸⁷ 'Calcutta and Poona International Exhibitions', 1883, IOR/R/2/612/85, File 85, *British Library*; 'International Exhibition of Industry, Science and Art, to be held in Glasgow in 1888' in Proceedings of the Revenue and Agriculture Department: Museums and Exhibitions, June 1887, Files 20-26, NAI

⁶⁸⁸ Dohmen, "'A fraught challenge'", p. 204.

⁶⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁰ See Catherine Waters, *Special Correspondence and the Newspaper Press in Victorian Print Culture, 1850 – 1886* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019)

⁶⁹¹ 'Notes from the Calcutta International Exhibition', *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 15 February 1884, p. 2.

Exhibition, published in two volumes by the Bengal Secretariat Press in 1885, for example, survive.⁶⁹² Other volumes produced include: the *Catalogue of Raw Products Collected for the International Exhibition*, *Catalogue of Exhibits from the Indian Empire*, and *Economic Products of India Exhibited in the Economic Court, Calcutta International Exhibition*. Unlike Calcutta's official, administrative record, Glasgow's 1888 Exhibition stimulated colourful commercial narratives for public purchase, which acted as mementos, but also formulated the long-term narrative of the event. To name a few: *Glasgow Exhibition Special Number of the Art Journal*, *Pen and Pencil – The Glasgow International Exhibition of Industry, Science and Art*, *Pen-and-Ink Notes at the Glasgow Exhibition*, and *Elliot's Popular Guide to Glasgow and the Exhibition with excursion notes*.⁶⁹³

Deciding to Host an International Exhibition

Much like their public museums, proposals for an International Exhibition in Calcutta and Glasgow emerged in disparate ways. On the one hand, Glasgow's Exhibition was more traditionally suggested by civic leaders, and on the other, Calcutta's was proposed by someone beyond the local, national, or imperial leadership of the city – Jules Joubert (1824 – 1907), who was of 'French extraction' but 'Australian by naturalisation and sympathy'.⁶⁹⁴ By 1883, Joubert had been involved in many exhibitions, including Philadelphia (1876), Paris (1878), Sydney (1879), Perth (1881) and Christchurch, New Zealand (1882), thus he was a noted insider to International Exhibitions, but an outsider to Calcutta. When he approached the Government of Bengal, he claimed that his valuable experience would be directly transferable to India, and Calcutta's International Exhibition would flourish as a result.⁶⁹⁵ Somewhat similarly, Glasgow's Sub-Committee for the Parks and Galleries suggested an International Exhibition because Edinburgh had recently and successfully held one. Whilst the proposal in Glasgow had to be voted through a 'Meeting

⁶⁹² *Official Report of the Calcutta International Exhibition 1883-84, Vol. I and Vol. II – Catalogue of Exhibits from the Indian Empire* (Calcutta: Bengal Secretariat Press, 1885).

⁶⁹³ *The Glasgow Exhibition Special Number of the Art Journal* (London: J. S. Virtue & Co. LD., 1888); *Pen & Pencil Exhibition Number: International Exhibition of Industry, Science & Art* (Glasgow: Maclure Macdonald & Co. Ornamental Printers to the Queen, 1888); *Pen and Pencil- The Glasgow International Exhibition of Industry Science and Art* (1888); T. Raffles Davison, *Pen and Ink Notes at the Glasgow Exhibition* (London: J. S. Virtue & Co. LD., 1888).

⁶⁹⁴ A Correspondent, 'The Calcutta International Exhibition' *The Leeds Mercury*, 10 December 1883, p. 8.

⁶⁹⁵ Deb Narayan Bandyopadhyay, 'Intercultural Knowledge: Jules Joubert and Calcutta International Exhibition (1883)' in *Remapping the Future: History, Culture and Environment in Australia and India* ed. by Raelene Frances and Deb N. Bandyopadhyay (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), p.73.

of the Citizens', approval of Joubert's scheme in Calcutta came first from the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Augustus Rivers Thompson (1829 – 1890), and then from the Viceroy, George Robinson, Lord Ripon (1827 – 1909), again mirroring the creation of public museums. Both Glasgow and Calcutta's administration welcomed an International Exhibition because of the numerous opportunities for self-promotion and financial reward. As this section will demonstrate, within India, this was largely based on improving areas of depressed Indian commerce by increasing the global visibility of India's raw products, industries and art-wares. In Glasgow, as an International Exhibition had been held so recently in Scotland, motivations were based on propagating an image of the city which would compare favourably with other urban centres.

When Joubert arrived in Calcutta during the cold season of 1882, the Viceroy had been unavailable, so he approached the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal instead. At his 'personal interview' with Rivers Thompson, Joubert presented him with 'testimonials and letters of introduction' from varying Governors in the Australasian Colonies.⁶⁹⁶ His expertise, as it were, proven by his aforementioned performances. Rivers Thompson was thus assured of his 'good faith and ability to carry such an enterprise to successful issue.'⁶⁹⁷ This trans-imperial connection testifies to the ways empires used International Exhibitions. The documentation was then forwarded to the Viceroy, and, following a meeting with Rivers Thompson, Ripon provided 'his sanction and patronage to the project'.⁶⁹⁸ Approval was, however, only granted 'on condition that no financial responsibility [...] should be incurred by the Government of India.'⁶⁹⁹ Thus, the Lieutenant-Governor 'accepted the responsibility of holding the Exhibition.'⁷⁰⁰ This was to be Bengal's event with the support of the Government of India.

Joubert suggested that Rivers Thompson would be aware of the 'immense benefit International Exhibitions' had 'conferred' on other countries, so there was no need to 'lay particular stress on the special advantages that will accrue to Bengal and Calcutta'.⁷⁰¹ Calcutta was selected because it was the capital, and this necessarily affected its execution and perceived success. Specifically, however, an International Exhibition would introduce

⁶⁹⁶ From A.P. MacDonnell to Revenue Department, 15 January 1883 in 'Poona and Calcutta international Exhibition 1883', R/2/612/85, *British Library*

⁶⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰¹ From Jules Joubert to Government of India, Public Works Department, Dec 1882 in 'Calcutta International Exhibition of December 1883' in Proceedings of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture: Museums and Exhibitions, Files 1-21, *NAI*.

‘intelligent representatives from all nations’ to the ‘immense undeveloped industries and resources of this empire.’⁷⁰² Joubert promulgated his links to foreign exhibitors from ‘England, America, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Japan, China, and Australia’ as an attractive package for the Government of Bengal.⁷⁰³ *The Leeds Mercury* marvelled at what a ‘bold enterprise’ it had been ‘for a private individual to undertake’, considering the Indian Administration was ‘proverbially an exclusive body’ that could ‘seldom be induced to listen to the suggestions of a private individual in a matter in which personal interests are involved.’⁷⁰⁴ However, the paper also suggested that Rivers Thompson had been swayed because an ‘International Exhibition either at Calcutta or Bombay had long been in contemplation.’⁷⁰⁵ Whether or not this is true, an ‘exhibition mania’ had been ongoing for several decades, sparked by the vitally successful Great Exhibition at London’s Crystal Palace in 1851, which makes it surprising that neither Calcutta nor Glasgow participated sooner.⁷⁰⁶ Although, by the 1880s, Exhibitions had become ‘commercially successful, competitive ventures that were inextricably tied to a range of political, scientific, and technological ideals,’ which suggests that cautious leaders in both cities had waited until success was more assured.⁷⁰⁷

In Calcutta, Joubert largely dictated the timing and many other aspects of the project, but the involvement of the Government of Bengal, followed by the Government of India, made it an intensely collaborative and hybridised affair. Joubert had enlisted the Government’s ‘moral support’ because, he claimed, ‘the success of an undertaking of this kind’ relied on it in ‘great measure.’⁷⁰⁸ Indeed, the Imperial Museum, which was a conscious focal point of the exhibition, was only accessible to Joubert through this collaboration.⁷⁰⁹ Yet to the public, it seemed that Joubert was at the helm, making it a mostly private enterprise. The *Indian Daily News* argued that the public would have liked ‘to see the hand of the Government more clearly manifested in the management of the Exhibition.’⁷¹⁰ By the time the prospectus was issued, Joubert was listed as the ‘Promoter and Executive Commissioner’, whilst both the Viceroy and the Lieutenant-Governor of

⁷⁰² Ibid.

⁷⁰³ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁴ A Correspondent, ‘The Calcutta International Exhibition’, *The Leeds Mercury*, 10 December 1883.

⁷⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁶ Breckenridge, ‘The Aesthetics’, p.201.

⁷⁰⁷ Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, pp. 3-4.

⁷⁰⁸ From Jules Joubert to Government of India, Public Works Department, Dec 1882 in ‘Calcutta International Exhibition of December 1883’ in Proceedings of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture: Museums and Exhibitions, No. 1-21, *NAI*.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁷¹⁰ *The Indian Daily News*, 15 November 1882.

Bengal were listed as its patrons.⁷¹¹ Allowing Joubert to take such a strong directive over the Exhibition can be seen as a defensive tactic to ensure that the colonial administration would be able to deflect criticism if required. This was not, however, successful. The *Glasgow Herald* highlighted that:

The Bengal Government are severely blamed by local critics for having permitted an Australian speculator to come in and run an exhibition for his own advantage, to claim Government support and assistance, and call his show international.⁷¹²

Damningly, the paper claimed that ‘Mr Jules Joubert and his Australian friends are the exhibition’, which suggests that some did not think that the event belonged to Calcutta or Bengal at all.⁷¹³ In fact, ‘they have secured Government aid, a fine site, the loan of materials in some cases, and in others the purchase of them at Government contract price.’⁷¹⁴ The article concluded that ‘the Government get very little out of the affair but the hard work, and Mr Joubert gets the pence.’⁷¹⁵ This is important because it suggested that neither the Governments of Bengal nor India were able to take autonomy of the event, and use it for their best advantage. Despite his dominance on the Exhibition landscape, Joubert does not cast a particularly commanding profile in his portrait below.



Figure 5.1 Jules Joubert, c. 1875 photographed by J. Hubert Newman IE3242077 ©State Library of New South Wales.

⁷¹¹ ‘Calcutta and Poona International Exhibitions’, 1883, IOR/R/2/612/85, File 85, *British Library*

⁷¹² ‘The Calcutta International Exhibition’, *Glasgow Herald*, 4 January 1884, p.7.

⁷¹³ *Ibid.*

⁷¹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Interestingly, Glasgow's 1888 Exhibition was similarly managed by an outsider to the city, but an insider to exhibitions, Mr. H. A. Hedley – the difference being, that he was recruited after the project had already been confirmed, owing to his successful management of Edinburgh's 1886 International Exhibition.⁷¹⁶ Hedley's management was not the only crossover between the International Exhibitions held in the Eastern and Western capitals of Scotland, in fact, Edinburgh provided a clear prompt for a similar event to be held in Glasgow. 1886 was also the year London held the prolific Colonial and Indian Exhibition, from which the Glasgow Corporation had procured a substantial collection of Indian specimens, discussed in the previous chapter. At this juncture, the Sub-Committee of the Parks and Galleries met to discuss 'the prudence and propriety of holding an exhibition', which they voted in favour of, and certainly it seemed that not hosting one would have risked Glasgow falling behind its national and imperial competitors.⁷¹⁷ Following the initial proposals, a 'Meeting of the Citizens' was called by the Lord Provost, James King on 29th October 1886. The *Glasgow Herald* reported that:

The sub-committee fully recognise the circumstance that the idea of a great exhibition, as regards Scotland, has lost its novelty; and that no inconsiderable amount of disadvantage will arise from the close following of an exhibition in Glasgow on the very successful undertaking in Edinburgh.⁷¹⁸

Edinburgh had tested the water and received financial dividends, which prompted Glasgow's elite to propose an exhibition explicitly to make money, and, implicitly, to assert the city's position within the Empire.

Finding a time when Glasgow would stand alone was vital because other Exhibitions would invite competition for exhibitors and visitors. 1887 was ruled out because Manchester was hosting a Royal Jubilee Exhibition that year, and 1889 because Paris was holding an Exhibition – which was set to be 'a gigantic affair', leaving 1888 for Glasgow.⁷¹⁹ Notably, the general committee of the Calcutta International Exhibition resolved 'not to support M. Joubert's proposal to hold an Exhibition in Bombay' in February 1884, owing to the 'general consensus' that 'it would too closely follow in the footsteps of the Calcutta Exhibition.'⁷²⁰ It was felt that two events so close together would 'not redound to the credit' of Bombay. Instead, it was decided that if the presidential Government or 'citizens of Bombay' organised an International Exhibition in 'two or three

⁷¹⁶ L. Atkinson, 'Kimberley forthcoming exhibition', *Journal of the Society of Arts* 40 (1891), 305. 6

⁷¹⁷ 'The Proposed Exhibition in Glasgow', *Glasgow Herald*, 6 October 1886, p. 4.

⁷¹⁸ Ibid.

⁷¹⁹ Ibid.

⁷²⁰ *Times of India*, 27 February 1884, p.5.

years hence, it would prove beneficial to commerce, and a credit to the second city in the British Empire.’⁷²¹ Unlike Glasgow, which profited hugely from hosting an exhibition after Edinburgh, Bombay was severely disadvantaged, so that an exhibition of this kind was never held there. Indeed, Dohmen observes that the failure of the 1883 to be ‘a true world fair and to establish India as venue of international exhibitions’, effectively halted Bombay’s ambitions.⁷²²

Contrastingly, Glasgow went on to host two more International Exhibitions in 1901 and 1938, as well as a Scottish National Exhibition in 1911, which, despite its national focus, had an international flavour. In fact, this was part of an alternating sequence with Edinburgh, which Wilson Smith considers to be an expression of the continuing rivalry between ‘Edinburgh, “Scotland’s metropolis” and its historic capital; and Glasgow, “the Second City of the Empire” at the heart of Scottish industrial production.’⁷²³ However, ‘Glasgow’s exhibitions were bigger, more ambitious and more successful in terms of attendance and financial receipts,’ compared to anything held in Edinburgh, so that any competition was ‘won convincingly by Glasgow.’⁷²⁴ As Craig Lamont argues, the major exhibitions, more than anything else, ‘symbolise the character of Glasgow’ which became the most dominant, whereby its ‘status as the “Second City of Empire” was deployed to upgrade public perceptions of a burgeoning port-city to a monumental, progressive centre of Britain.’⁷²⁵

Any fear that Glasgow could not compete with Edinburgh, leastways not in such quick succession, were dispelled by an ardent belief that, if Glasgow’s people got behind the enterprise then success would be guaranteed. The Sub-Committee of the Parks and Galleries Committee’s Annual Report recorded that, once it had been approved by the Town Council, the scheme had been:

enthusiastically taken up by the public of the West of Scotland, and the early stages of the work have since been prosecuted with such zeal and discretion as augur the most successful and happy issue to the great undertaking.⁷²⁶

⁷²¹ Ibid.

⁷²² Dohmen, “A fraught challenge”, p.213.

⁷²³ Wilson Smith, ‘Old London, Old Edinburgh: Constructing Historic Cities’ in *Cultures of International Exhibitions 1840-1940* ed. by Marta Filipová (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), p. 211.

⁷²⁴ Ibid.

⁷²⁵ Craig Lamont, ‘Georgian Glasgow: the city remembered through literature, objects, and cultural memory theory’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Glasgow, 2015), p. 224.

⁷²⁶ *Kelvingrove Museum and Corporation Galleries of Art, Glasgow. Report for the year 1886* (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1886), p.6.

There are striking parallels to be drawn between Glasgow's Scott celebrations in 1871, discussed in Chapter One, which saw Glasgow's civic leaders proclaim their citizens just as well-situated and entitled to celebrate their national literary hero as the capital to the East. Here, the Committee reiterates Glasgow's position as the capital of the West of Scotland, and positions the upcoming International Exhibition as the West's unique contribution to the movement. At the 'Meeting of the Citizens' Sir Archibald Campbell Bart., reportedly commented that:

Exhibitions, it was said, had been held elsewhere, and they were now very common, but that was no reason why Glasgow, the second city in the empire, which had held a unique position in the West of Scotland, and was the great centre, he might say, of trade and industry, should not be able to steer its own compass.⁷²⁷

Just as rhetorically Glasgow's claim to be the 'second city of the Empire' had been used to justify expanding the City Industrial Museum, so too was it used to support an International Exhibition. Campbell gave the impression that Glasgow had been under appreciated and an Exhibition inviting the world in would help resolve the issue. He was particularly enthused by this idea because he hoped that others would 'come and see what he knew already, and to be as proud of Glasgow as he was.' Campbell (1835 – 1908), was a prolific member of Glasgow society – the first Baron of Blythwood, and previously the Conservative MP for Renfrewshire, and, consequently, his support held sway with the assemblage of his fellow citizens. He was also, owing to his significant personal wealth, a 'notable amateur scientist', with a personal laboratory at his home – Blythwood House, where Queen Victoria stayed on her official visit to Glasgow for the Exhibition.⁷²⁸

Bringing the Collection Together

Building on the previous chapter, which addressed Glasgow and Calcutta's collecting networks, this section analyses the influence the International Exhibitions had on procuring specimens for their museums. In Calcutta and Glasgow, expanding each city's public museum collection was a core directive of the Exhibition. Whilst the Governments of India, Bengal, and other parts of India had long been involved in putting together

⁷²⁷ *Glasgow Herald*, 6 October 1886, p. 4.

⁷²⁸ T. E. James, revised by Joseph Gross, 'Campbell [formerly Douglas], Archibald Campbell, first Baron Blythwood', in *ODNB*, online edn, 2011 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/32260>> [accessed 27 April 2021]

collections of exhibits for International Exhibitions, this was the first opportunity they had to amass and retain them in the capital. Breckenridge argues that the International Exhibitions created an ‘extraordinary phenomena’ in the history of collecting because of their ‘transience and ephemerality.’⁷²⁹ Indeed, after every large exhibition there were ‘voices lamenting the dispersal of the impressive collections that have been brought together.’⁷³⁰ Yet in Calcutta and Glasgow, their International Exhibitions were seen as vehicles for obtaining a permanent collection, which would commemorate the event and create a longstanding legacy. Consequently, 1883 and 1888 were a watershed moment for the history of the collections at the Imperial Museum and the City Industrial Museum respectively. Whereas provincial collecting had been characterised by overreliance on donations, collecting for the International Exhibitions in Glasgow was distinguished by its systems and orderliness. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Imperial and Bengal Economic Museums were already part of established collecting networks, but these were utilised more thoroughly in 1883. To aid the comparative analysis, the focus of this section is on the collections of Indian materials brought together in Glasgow and Calcutta.

Colonial officials in Calcutta were able to make use of existing administrative networks to bring the collection together, and the Glasgow Committee were able to access these networks through mercantile connections, which will be discussed shortly. In early 1883, a circular letter detailing the collection sought after for Calcutta’s International Exhibition was issued to the different Presidencies by the Government of India’s Revenue and Agricultural Department, who were responsible for the Museums and Exhibitions section. The letter stated that the their ‘Department will take upon itself the entire responsibility of forming a collection of raw products and rough manufactures.’⁷³¹ Presumably, this collection would be an advanced version of the sort Paton had requested from the India Museum in 1877. The benefits of assigning sole responsibility for the collection were claimed to be twofold. Firstly, it would avoid ‘collecting a large number of duplicates, which would be the result if each province were to send up its own collections.’⁷³² Secondly, they would be able to utilise the collection which was being made for Amsterdam’s 1883 International Exhibition, as ‘a great part’ of it was expected to ‘be brought back to Calcutta.’⁷³³ A systematic, ordered and centralised collecting process

⁷²⁹ Breckenridge, ‘The Aesthetics’, p. 195.

⁷³⁰ Eugene S. Ferguson, ‘Technical Museums and International Exhibitions’, *Technology and Culture* 6:1 (1965), p. 38.

⁷³¹ ‘Calcutta and Poona International Exhibitions’, 1883, File 647, IOR/R/2/612/85, *British Library*

⁷³² *Ibid.*

⁷³³ *Ibid.*

was outlined as the most efficient way to create a ‘complete’ collection without any duplicates. It would seem that in the interests of efficiency, the origin of the raw products and rough manufactures was not important, so long as an example of each type were procured for the collection. Moreover, the reference to Amsterdam’s collection highlights that such materials were believed to be transposable and recyclable, and indicates the Exhibition networks suggested by Benedict.⁷³⁴ These were specimens which were created specifically for exhibiting purposes.

Significantly, the ‘whole’ financial backing for the collection of raw products and rough manufactures was to be provided by the Government of Bengal, even though the intention was to create ‘a permanent collection in the Imperial Museum at Calcutta.’⁷³⁵ This is particularly interesting because in 1872 a resolution had been passed by the Governor-General in Council to confirm that the Indian Museum would remain an Imperial Museum. The Government of India had been concerned that if ‘control were transferred to Bengal [...] other administrations would regard the Museum as a local one, and the contributions which it is desired to collect [...] would be scattered among the various local Museums.’⁷³⁶ It feared that shifting financial responsibility to the Government of Bengal would ‘divide the contributions which should be concentrated in the Imperial Museum’ between the ‘Museum of Allahabad, Lahore, Lucknow, and Nagpore’, Madras and Bombay.⁷³⁷ Moreover, that there would be no financial benefit for the Government of India, as any money spent by Bengal on Calcutta’s Museum would legitimise Provincial Governments extending funds for their own museums. By 1883, the Government of Bengal was explicitly stated as the administration solely financially responsible for the Imperial Museum’s new collection of raw products and rough manufactures. This suggests that national spending on Calcutta’s institution would have been resisted in ways akin to the contemporaneous archaeological debate, discussed in the previous chapter. In light of the resentment towards the Imperial Museum from local and provincial museums, Bengal fronting the cost may have been the only viable option.

Further explication of the Government’s unique position for creating a ‘complete’ collection of India is provided in the circular. In terms of obtaining specimens of manufactures, the Government of India was ‘aware that a very large number of articles of

⁷³⁴ Benedict, ‘Exhibitions’, p.5.

⁷³⁵ ‘Calcutta and Poona International Exhibitions’, 1883, File 647, IOR/R/2/612/85, *British Library*

⁷³⁶ ‘The Indian Museum to Continue as at present to be an Imperial Museum’, May 1872, in Financial Proceedings: Accounts, Part A, Files 26-27, *NAI*.

⁷³⁷ *Ibid*

this class can only be procured for exhibition by Government agency' and, crucially, 'with the assistance of Government funds' – these were to be paid for by the Government of India, not Bengal.⁷³⁸ These manufactures were key to the objectives of Calcutta's International Exhibition because the Government wanted to increase 'demand for manufactures and art-ware produced by the non-agricultural classes' of India.⁷³⁹ The Exhibition was used to 'commence the formation of a permanent collection on a more complete scale than would otherwise have been justifiable.'⁷⁴⁰ Presumably, if trade in India had been better, expenditure on a 'permanent' collection for the public museum in the capital would have been more easily justified as a venture in its own right. These specimens could be paid for by central Government because they were believed to benefit the whole of India.

Once a collection like this had been formulated in a central institution like the Imperial Museum, it could be reproduced and distributed to other museums in India, Britain, and elsewhere. A notable example of this form of centralised knowledge production was the *Journal of Indian Art and Industry*, which was established at the same time as the Exhibition for the 'promotion of Oriental Art'.⁷⁴¹ Again, it was part of a wider objective to create a 'permanent collection of selected samples of art-ware at the Imperial Museum.'⁷⁴² Together, their aim was to establish 'a better knowledge' of the different types of Indian art manufactures and increase 'the demand for them.'⁷⁴³ The preface to the new *Journal of Indian Art* was written by Sir Edward C. Buck, who was also the President of the Art and Museums Committee of the Revenue and Agriculture Department.⁷⁴⁴ It was thought that the 'forthcoming Exhibition in Calcutta 'would help decide 'the character' of the publication.'⁷⁴⁵ It was not intended that the Exhibition would simply replicate the displays brought together for other International Exhibitions, like Amsterdam, but that Calcutta's would be more complete and more representative of India than ever before. The *Friend of India and Statesman* purported that 'the display of the Economic products of India will probably be the most complete of its kind in the world.'⁷⁴⁶ Throughout these discussions, Calcutta was framed as central to the realisation of a 'complete' collection of,

⁷³⁸ 'Calcutta and Poona International Exhibitions', 1883, IOR/R/2/612/85, File 647, *British Library*

⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴¹ See Partha Mitter, *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India, 1850-1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

⁷⁴² *Ibid.*

⁷⁴³ E. C. Buck, *The Journal of Indian Art* 1 (1886), p.i.

⁷⁴⁴ Hoffenberg, 'Promoting Traditional Indian Art', p.198.

⁷⁴⁵ Buck, *The Journal of Indian Art*, p.ii.

⁷⁴⁶ 'Calcutta International Exhibition', *Friend of India and Statesman*, 4 August 1883, p. 1114.

and for, India. Clearly, there were drives towards creating a permanent collection which would befit Calcutta's status as Bengal's provincial capital, the 'Metropolis of India', and, implicitly, as the 'second city of the Empire.'

Importantly, the objective to expand and systematise Calcutta's collections was widely propagated as a positive outcome for the International Exhibition. For example, the *Friend of India and Statesman* reported that they had received 'interesting communication' from the 'Central Office of the Calcutta International Exhibition.'⁷⁴⁷ The paper continued that:

A collection of art-wares and fabrics illustrative of native or indigenous industries and an exhaustive collection of raw produce, whether commercially known or not, is being purchased or otherwise obtained through an agency established by the Government of India in every district or sub-division in each Presidency or Province of India.⁷⁴⁸

The extensiveness of this state-led collecting process highlights the unique circumstances posed by hosting an International Exhibition in the Metropolis of India, as well as the clear links to the city's status. In this way, advancing the city's collection was embedded in the rationale for hosting an Exhibition in Calcutta at this time, though this was not something suggested by Joubert. The *Bangalore Spectator* reported that the Calcutta Exhibition would facilitate the Government's ability to 're-organise and expand the collections of the Bengal Economic Museum, so as to make them thoroughly representative of the "Productive Resources of India."'⁷⁴⁹ The press response suggests Calcutta's population was interested in changes to the Museum. At this point it was speculated that, once the Exhibition had ended, 'the collections of art, art-wares, fabrics, raw produce and trade-samples' would 'be deposited in a new Museum to be erected for that purpose, and the donations here solicited shall, therefore, be retained as part of a permanent collection.'⁷⁵⁰ The emphasis on the discourse was on making a 'complete' and 'permanent' collection, which suggests that the Museum was being used to project an image of imperial longevity.

Whilst a separate museum was not created, the Imperial Museum's 1884 Annual Report noted that 'a permanent building connected with the Museum' was erected to serve the 'temporary purpose of the Exhibition' and thereafter devoted to the 'Exhibition of the valuable series of Indian art manufactures and economic produce which had been collected

⁷⁴⁷ 'The Exhibition', *Friend of India and Statesman*, 7 July 1883, p. 10.

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁴⁹ 'The Calcutta Exhibition', *Bangalore Spectator*, 18 July 1883, p. 3.

⁷⁵⁰ *Friend of India and Statesman*, 4 August 1883, p. 1114.

by Mr. Buck with funds furnished by the Government of Bengal.’⁷⁵¹ Pictured below is the annex on the left-hand flank of the Imperial Museum as it appeared in the *Illustrated London News*, featuring some of the expected paraphernalia of Indian life from a British perspective. This highlights a specific instance when the local, national and imperial status of Calcutta fuelled changes to the Museum.

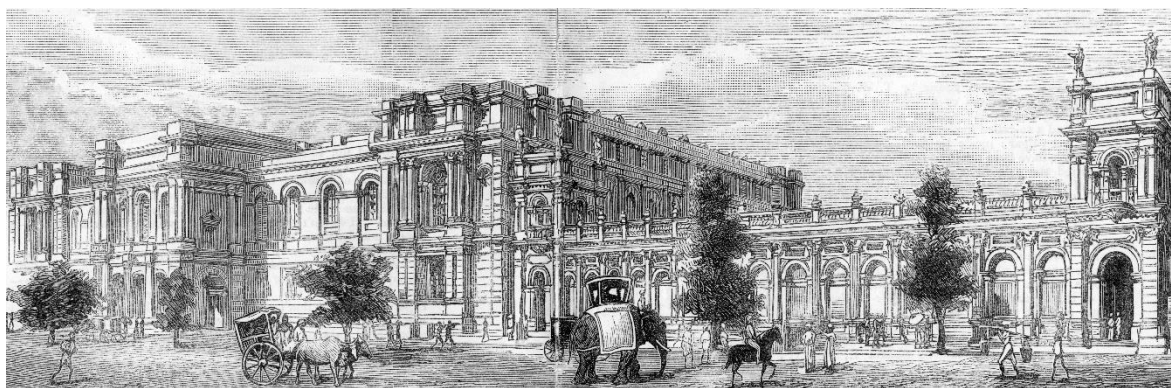


Figure 5.2 Imperial Indian Museum and Annexe 1883 © Illustrated London News Ltd/ Mary Evans

Whilst Calcutta’s collection relied on existing governmental collecting networks, Glasgow was able to utilise well-established mercantile ones. John Muir, founder of Finlay, Muir & Co. – a prolific Glasgow company with different parts of it located in Bombay and Calcutta – elected to source the Indian specimens. Muir was a central figure in Glasgow’s commercial, civic, and cultural scenes. In 1886 he was elected to the Glasgow town council as a bailie, and moved on to Lord Provost in 1889, where he remained until 1892, followed by a baronetcy in 1893, no doubt aided by his work for the 1888 International Exhibition.⁷⁵² Muir had a vested interest in propagating the opportunities in India as he had many business footholds in Calcutta and elsewhere. Nenadic describes him as ‘a sophisticated entrepreneur with an eye to new trends in mass consumption of India-produced goods.’⁷⁵³ Most important, however, was the conflation between Glasgow’s governing body, the Museum, and the citizens in the process of collecting for the Exhibition. Muir and his company were given ‘the credit of the collection, which is, perhaps, the most complete ever witnessed in this country.’⁷⁵⁴ The *Scotsman* noted that Muir had ‘visited India two years’ before and ‘interested the Viceroy and the Governors of Bombay and Madras in the matter’, which again highlights the importance of personal relationships in late nineteenth century collecting networks. Muir

⁷⁵¹ *Indian Museum. Annual Report and List of Accessions 1883-84*, pp. 9-10.

⁷⁵² Monica Clough, ‘Muir Family’ in *ODNB* online edn. 2007 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/52088>>[accessed 12 January 2021]

⁷⁵³ Nenadic, ‘Exhibiting India’, p. 79.

⁷⁵⁴ ‘Glasgow International Exhibition: The Indian Department’, *The Scotsman*, 28 June 1888, p.5.

had even secured the assistance of Buck, who was Secretary to the Government of India's Revenue and Agricultural Department – the role he held when involved in Calcutta's International Exhibition.

Systematically, 'Committees were then formed in various centres, and, with the assistance of Government officials, a capital selection was speedily made of art wares, fabrics, and curiosities illustrative of the varied life of the great Empire of the East.'⁷⁵⁵ Bringing the collection together in Calcutta caused the Trustees of the Imperial Museum to request details on the 'present state of the collections of samples of Indian products', and ask specifically about 'the sources from which the charges for [...] the Glasgow Exhibition of 1888 will be defrayed.'⁷⁵⁶ The reply confirmed that 'Mr. Muir of Messrs. Finlay, Muir & Co., has agreed to place a sum of R100,000 at the disposal of the Secretary in this Department to meet the expenses.'⁷⁵⁷ This sum is significant because the South Kensington Museum sent Caspar Purdon Clarke to India to secure a representative collection of India with only £5,000.⁷⁵⁸ The Indian collection for Glasgow was a serious investment, and one which Muir was keen to get right. Assistance granted by the Government of India, and expertise provided by Mukharji on the art-wares, suggests that Glasgow, through Muir, was considered a valuable partner in the exploitation of India's resources.

The civic spirit cultivated by the Glasgow 1888 International Exhibition, discussed in the following section, started well before it opened to the public. The collected goods were packed by Messrs Finlay, Muir, & Co., Calcutta and Bombay and Messrs Gordon, Woodroffe, & Co., Madras', before being handed over to the City, Anchor, and Clan liners, who conveyed the goods from India to Scotland 'free of charge.'⁷⁵⁹ It was Muir who had reportedly suggested to the Clan Line steamers that 'it would be a handsome gift to the city of Glasgow if they brought the whole of the exhibits [...] free of freight.'⁷⁶⁰ The other shipping companies had also been 'extremely anxious to do service to the executive' along the same lines.⁷⁶¹ Unless these services were offered on entirely philanthropic grounds, which is unlikely, this suggests a belief held by the proprietors of the different steamers

⁷⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁶ Letter from H. B. Medlicott to the Secretary to the Government of India, 26 March 1887 in 'Appointment of Babu Trailokya Nath Mukherji' in Proceedings of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture: Museums and Exhibitions, May 1887, Nos. 1-8, *NAI*.

⁷⁵⁷ 'Appointment of Babu Trailokya Nath Mukherji' in Proceedings of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture: Museums and Exhibitions, May 1887, Nos. 1-8, *NAI*.

⁷⁵⁸ 'Indian Section Mr Purdon Clarke Visit to and Purchases in India 1880-1883', MA/2/1/1, *V&A Archives, London*.

⁷⁵⁹ *The Scotsman*, 28 June 1888, p.5.

⁷⁶⁰ 'Glasgow International Exhibition', *Glasgow Herald*, 28 May 1888, p.13.

⁷⁶¹ Ibid.

that there would be a financial return. Clearly, the ‘merchant princes’, previously asked to assist the public museum project in Glasgow and enlighten their fellow citizens, had come out in force to support the city’s International Exhibition. These were not altruistic acts but commercial ones, because the Exhibition had distinct ramifications for Glasgow’s status on the world stage.

Purchasing material from International Exhibitions was a common method used by curators to expand their collection in size and scope. Collecting was a way of combatting the ephemerality. Unlike members of the public, who were no doubt influenced by the ephemerality of the event when making purchasing decisions, Exhibition Committees enacted their purchasing plans after the Exhibition had closed. In Glasgow, the ‘Committee for the Indian Section’ received ‘special acknowledgement’ for the ‘very large and valuable contribution of specimens of Indian Art manufactures and products’, which represented an ‘expenditure in India of upwards of £700.’⁷⁶² From this a collection of ‘282 Specimens of Indian Art’ was procured for permanent retention in Glasgow.⁷⁶³ The Indian specimens received by the Museum were given ‘unconditionally’, and if duplicates were found, the Committee were ‘free to sell or exchange them for other desirable objects’.⁷⁶⁴ Additions from the 1888 International Exhibition formed the largest portion of the city’s Indian collection, which, as the previous chapter has shown, was part of an ongoing effort to promote Glasgow’s global links with India through the Museum.

The collection under the banner of the Imperial Museum was also used to project messages about Calcutta’s connections across India. In 1887, the Government of India sanctioned Mukharji’s transfer from the Bengal Economic Museum to Assistant Curator of the Economic Museum as part of the Imperial Museum.⁷⁶⁵ This emphasises that while there were several governing bodies in Calcutta, at local, provincial and national levels, it was still one city, which needed to be suitably equipped for its various functions, but these institutions were not in competition with each other. A letter from the Government of India to the Government of Bengal reiterated that when the arrangements were made to bring the ‘Economic Section of the Revenue and Agricultural Office and Economic collections of the Government of Bengal [...] under the common roof of the Indian Museum’ the

⁷⁶² *Kelvingrove Museum and Corporation Galleries of Art, Glasgow. Report for the year 1888* (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1888), p. 4.

⁷⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁷⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁷⁶⁵ ‘Appointment of Babu Trailokya Nath Mukherji’, *NAI*

‘Imperial or rather the national functions which were attached to the Imperial Department should be transferred to the new office.’⁷⁶⁶ It continues that:

the Bengal Government is desirous that the collections which it will now possess in the Indian Museum should be of a national character and worthy of Calcutta as its position of the capital of the Empire, as well as in its position of the chief city of the Province of Bengal.⁷⁶⁷

Moreover, ‘that in the performance business connected with the supply of specimens to other countries and provinces lies the best chance of perfecting the collections at the metropolis itself.’⁷⁶⁸ Buck affirmed that ‘the functions of the Bengal Economic Museum will now be to some extent of a national character.’⁷⁶⁹ Notably, the Museum is referred to as the ‘Indian’ not ‘Imperial’ Museum, which highlights the emphasis on its national character. Calcutta’s positions are layered through this description of the public collections, to include its provincial, national and imperial positions.

As the desire to create a permanent collection was present at the outset of both Exhibitions, it is clear that the administrations in Calcutta and Glasgow carefully considered the long-term impact of the events, which directly challenges the notion that they were entirely ephemeral. What was saved from the mass for the permanent public record is highly illustrative of how city leaders wished to present the event and the city to future generations.

Putting on a Show

Not only was Calcutta’s Exhibition an obvious opportunity to create a permanent collection, but it was an arena to represent India as British officialdom wanted India to be seen. Hosting an Exhibition in Calcutta was hardly innovative in itself; other colonial cities had participated in the phenomenon between 1851 and 1883. What was novel however about Calcutta’s Exhibition, was the social set-up, which meant Europeans and Natives would need to mix more readily than elsewhere. In Glasgow, the innovation came from the scale of the Exhibition which was posited in direct competition with Manchester’s Exhibition the year before. Marta Filipová argues that ‘almost every metropolis had the ambition to host a carefully orchestrated exhibition that would showcase the best

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid.

achievements and inventions to date and secure its status of a world city.’⁷⁷⁰ She considers links between the International Exhibitions and a growing awareness of modernity within regions and provinces.⁷⁷¹ This follows Breckenridge’s argument that International Exhibitions ‘made modern cities’ with a ‘transformative power...that quickly made them a ubiquitous and unavoidable part of the décor of modern metropolises.’⁷⁷² Through images, this section highlights some of the ways that Calcutta and Glasgow’s status as the ‘Metropolis of India’ and the ‘second city of the Empire’ shaped the shows which were put on in the 1880s.

The first step for cultivating a good impression was finding a location which best presented the city. In Calcutta, this was fixed around pre-existing structures emanating from the Imperial Museum – ‘one of the finest buildings in Calcutta’ and temporary ones, which were ‘light structures of iron and glass with cemented floors, and walls plastered, distempered and neatly stencilled.’⁷⁷³ Figure 5. 3 shows how these exhibitors were laid out in the space. Running through the centre of the exhibition grounds was Chowringhee Road, so that the Imperial Museum and its exhibits were divided from the Indian and Machinery Courts, as well as amusements, like the diorama, refreshment rooms and Burmese theatre. Its selection was influenced by the space required to host the vast exhibits and the fact it was a central and Europeanised location. Calcutta’s clear connections with Europe, both in terms of government administration and architectural aesthetics, was seen to be a significant benefit to the Exhibition.⁷⁷⁴

The Indian Court, half of which was dedicated to material from Calcutta and Bengal, was housed on the Maidan in the largest temporary structure. The rest was divided between Jeypore, Rajputana, N.W.P and Oudh, Punjab, Hyderabad, Mysore, Madras, Bombay, Central India, Burma, Assam and Central Provinces. The photograph below shows the Imperial Museum on the left and the Indian Court in the centre of the exhibition grounds. Buck had ‘contended, with respect to this Exhibition, that India should be made to occupy a central position.’⁷⁷⁵ He noted that it was ‘always’ customary ‘to give the

⁷⁷⁰ Filipová (ed.), *Cultures*, p. 2.

⁷⁷¹ Ibid., p. 3.

⁷⁷² Breckenridge, ‘The Aesthetics’, pp. 201-202.

⁷⁷³ Our Special Correspondent, ‘Calcutta International Exhibition’, *The Launceston Examiner [Tasmania]*, 22 December 1883, p.1.

⁷⁷⁴ ‘The Calcutta International Exhibition’, *The Leeds Mercury*, 22 December 1883, p.12.

⁷⁷⁵ ‘Calcutta International Exhibition of December 1883’ in Proceedings of the Department of Revenue and Agriculture: Museums and Exhibitions, Files 1-21, NAI.

country or province in which it is held the central portion of the building or enclosure', and therefore he emphatically renounced any plans to remove the Indian section to the side.⁷⁷⁶

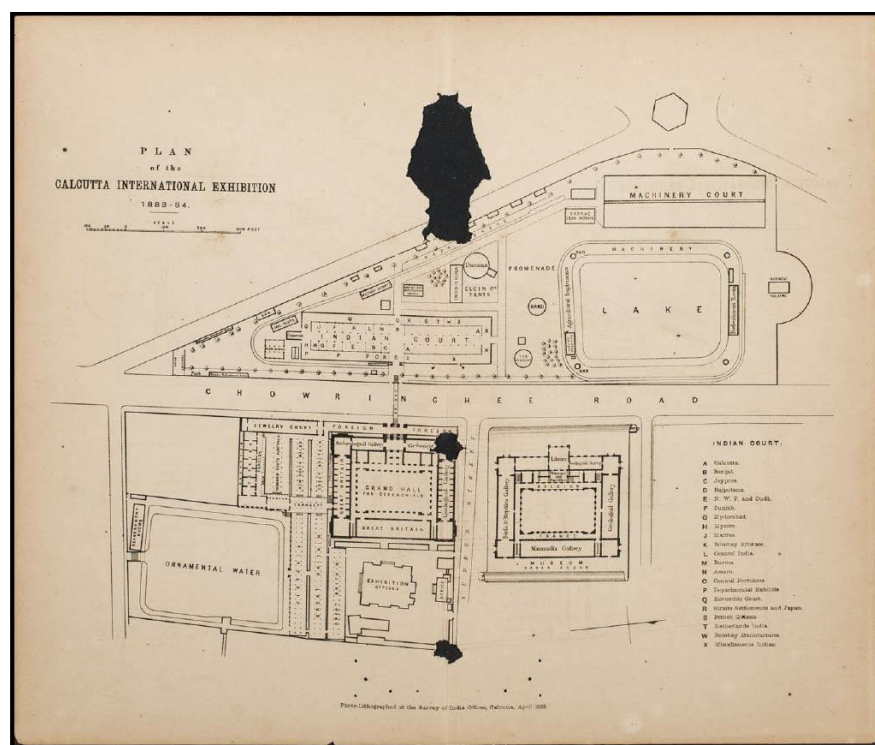


Figure 5.3 Plan of the Calcutta International Exhibition 1883 – 84 © Victoria & Albert Museum, London

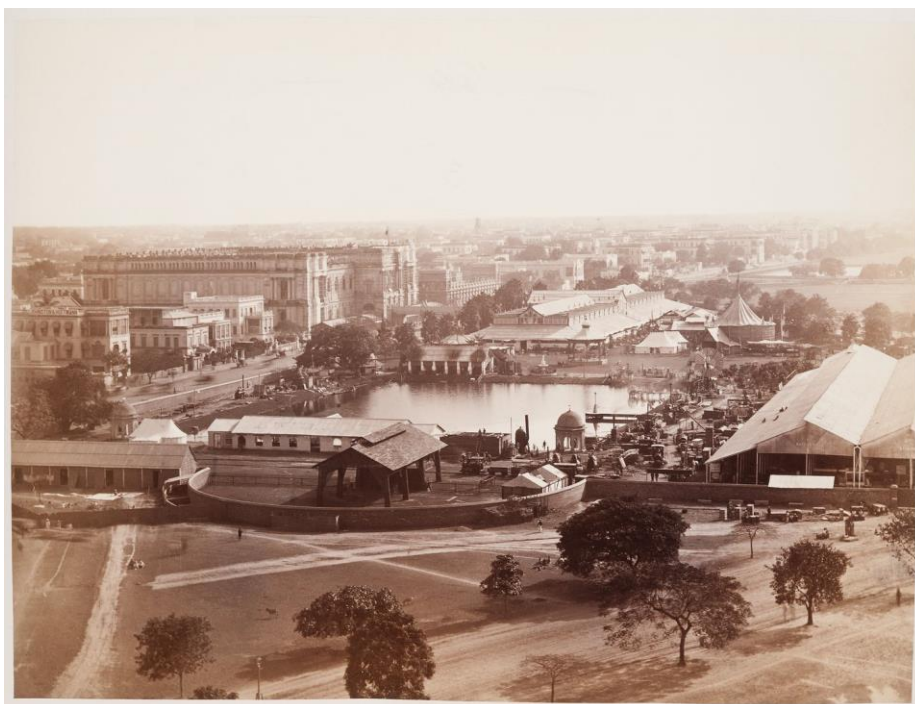


Figure 5.4 Bird's-eye view of the Calcutta International Exhibition 1883-4 ©Collection Centre Canadien d'Architecture/ Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal

⁷⁷⁶ Ibid.

In contrast to the Imperial Museum, the Kelvingrove Museum was something of an adjunct to the rest of the exhibition space. The plan below shows the Museum in blue, on the right bank of the River Kelvin – recognisable by the distinctive extension, discussed in Chapter Three. This space was used to display ‘Her Majesty’s Jubilee Gifts’, ‘under the care of the Exhibition Executive’, and would ‘in all probability [...] be the last time these Presents’ would ‘be publicly exhibited.’⁷⁷⁸ These exhibits were open between 9:30 am and 10: 00 pm. In newspaper advertising sequences, which included the fine art sections, naval exhibits, the Bishop’s castle, the fountain display, and the Indian courts, the Museum was regularly listed first.⁷⁷⁹ It was separate to the main exhibition space, just as the ‘Jubilee Gifts’ were not necessarily in keeping with the rest of the exhibits.

As suggested, Glasgow’s Exhibition was consciously designed to better those that had gone before. Whilst Edinburgh and Manchester’s Exhibitions included ‘reconstructed historic urban streets in their attractions’, Glasgow avoided this trope.⁷⁸⁰ The fact, that the reconstructed streets and alleys of Old Manchester and Salford were ‘one of the most popular attractions’ at the Royal Jubilee Exhibition, means it is somewhat surprising that Glasgow did not attempt this too.⁷⁸¹ Hill argues that these historical urban constructions ‘borrowed from and competed against each other, which resulted in the paradoxical fact that displays intended to celebrate national and regional specificity ended up sharing many generic features.’⁷⁸² Perhaps this goes some way to explain why the Executive Committee of Glasgow’s Exhibition chose to omit this attraction from their offering. Instead, Glasgow’s link to the Scottish past was illustrated in a different way – the dedicated exhibition at the ‘Bishop’s Palace.’ The collection was to be ‘the illustrations of Scottish history, life, and manners.’⁷⁸³ The Archaeological Collection was put together by ‘the officers connected with the Museum.’⁷⁸⁴ Indeed, ‘a large number of suitable specimens were transferred from the Museum to that collection.’⁷⁸⁵

⁷⁷⁸ ‘Glasgow International Exhibition’, *Aberdeen Free Press*, 23 July 1888, p.1.

⁷⁷⁹ ‘Glasgow International Exhibition’, *Aberdeen Free Press*, 10 July 1888, p.1; ‘Glasgow International Exhibition’, *Bradford Daily Telegraph*, 13 July 1888, p.1.

⁷⁸⁰ Kate Hill, ‘“Olde Worlde” urban? Reconstructing historic urban environments at exhibitions, 1884 – 1908’, *Urban History* 45:2 (2018), pp. 306 – 330.

⁷⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.306.

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*, p.309.

⁷⁸³ *The Book of the Bishop’s Castle and Handbook of the Archaeological Collection* (Glasgow: James. J. Maclehose, 1888), p.6.

⁷⁸⁴ *Kelvingrove Museum and Corporation Galleries of Art, Glasgow. Report for the year 1888*, p. 4.

⁷⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Whereas the image emanating from Glasgow was simultaneously one of progress and historical lineage, the press coverage of Calcutta's exhibition reinforced racial divides between the governors and the governed, in adherence with resistance to the Ilbert Bill. Below are two images taken from the *Illustrated London News*. The first is a 'panoramic view' which depicts the 'City of Palaces', typified by European-styled architecture, and native people labouring in the foreground. The second, 'a view from the roof of the Museum' similarly strengthens the divide between the city's European and Native populations. From the outset, it was expected that the Exhibition would be targeted at everyone, regardless of their race, gender or creed. A vernacular notice retained in the *Official Report of the Calcutta Exhibition* stated:

In order that every person, whether rich or poor, may be able to visit the Exhibition as often as he may wish, the price of admission has been made for all hours of every day, except Sunday and Wednesday, from 10 a.m. to 7.30p.m. four annas.⁷⁸⁶

Special arrangements were also made so women from all sections of society could attend. Though far from this mix of visitors showing off Calcutta's success, the event was marred with conflict. The *Bengalee* published 'the bare truth' that the 'Exhibition has not been popular with our countrymen' so 'that even in that noble temple of industry the rank infection of race-feeling had spread', which was 'observable in painful differences made at times between European and Native visitors.'⁷⁸⁷

These depictions of Calcutta during the Exhibition appear more striking when placed alongside an illustration of Glasgow's central exhibitions space (pictured below). Again, this was an image of progress and the successful realisation of a vision which all the world should come to see.

⁷⁸⁶ *Official Report of the Calcutta International Exhibition 1883-84, Vol. I, p.489.*

⁷⁸⁷ *The Bengalee*, 8 March 1884, p.10.



Figure 5.6 Panoramic View from roof of Museum - north-west, 1883 ©Illustrated London News Ltd/ Mary Evans



Figure 5.7 View from roof of Museum – north, 1883 © Illustrated London News Ltd/ Mary Evans



Figure 5.8 The view at the Glasgow International Exhibition, looking west from the dome down the Main Avenue (1888) Mitchell Library, GC f606.4 reproduced with the permission of Glasgow City Council, Libraries and Archives.

The Glasgow Town Council was keen to conceal the darker side of the city, which featured some of the worst slum housing in Europe, a large, underpaid, working class and a high crime rate. Image was everything, so before the exhibition, the *Dundee Weekly News* reported that ‘Glasgow is undergoing an unusually big spring cleaning.’⁷⁸⁸ Tonally, this report highlights the stark disparities between the ways Glasgow and Calcutta’s events were received. The Dundee paper humorously observed that ‘wet paint being much too common to be indicated in the usual way’ had resulted in numerous splashes of paint making their way onto passers-by.⁷⁸⁹ For Glasgow, bigger was better. All aspects of the Exhibition were loaded with competition. For example, Manchester had a Doulton & Co. Glazed Terracotta Fountain at their Exhibition, thus Glasgow made sure to have the biggest one in the world.⁷⁹⁰ The fountain, which remains the largest globally, features allegorical pairs of men and women to represent India, Canada, Australia and South Africa, and atop them all a statue of Queen Victoria. Mariangela Palladino and John Miller summarise it as ‘an incarnation of cosmopolitanism, reiterated the nation’s – and Empire’s – global status at a time of continuing colonial expansion and accelerating commodity culture.’⁷⁹¹



Figure 5.9 'Take it Easy Boys!' (1888) Mitchell Library, GC 606.4 reproduced with the permission of Glasgow City Council, Library and Archives.

⁷⁸⁸ 'Glasgow's Spring Cleaning', *Dundee Weekly News*, 5 May 1888, p.7.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁰ Mariangela Palladino and John Miller, 'Glasgow's Doulton Fountain and Postcolonial Heteropia in "There's the Bird that Never Flew"', *Safundi* 12.3 (2011), p.1.

⁷⁹¹ Ibid.

This cartoon effectively summarises the competition between Glasgow and Manchester, which Manchester did not know it was taking part in. Pictured are members of the public who took it upon themselves to rush repeatedly in and out of the Exhibition to increase the recorded number of visitors. This is likely to only have been open to those affluent enough to afford a season ticket, which allowed entry for the duration of the Exhibition. Repeated visits from season ticket holders were an indication that an Exhibition had a significant amount to offer, both for education and leisure purposes. Glasgow's citizens wanted their Show to go down in the annals of International Exhibitions as one of the most successful.

This success was attributed directly to the 'trouble and care' taken, as well as the 'prudence, earnestness, and well-directed intelligence' of those involved.⁷⁹² Commentators boasted that 'lynx-eyed censors have not been able to detect in the Glasgow administration any serious lapses from wisdom.'⁷⁹³ Indeed, the Exhibition had 'stood successfully the fierce white light of public judgement that beats into and through every corner and cranny of such an enterprise.'⁷⁹⁴ Consequently, Glasgow was 'justly proud of her great show', and the author advised that her citizens should be 'well pleased' that 'among their number' there were 'men of clear brains and strong wills' to carry the task successfully.⁷⁹⁵ Rhetorically hyperbolic, such narratives are useful insights into how the event was recorded for posterity. In this instance, the author qualifies Glasgow's success 'as an Exhibition, and as an attraction and object of interest to the public.'⁷⁹⁶

Conclusions

Though many have focused on the ephemerality of International Exhibitions, analysis of the events held in Calcutta and Glasgow has shown that significant attention was given to their long-term legacies. Here, the engagement between the 'second city of the Empire' and the development of museums has brought together two International Exhibitions which may never have been compared otherwise. This comparison has revealed that similar motives lay behind hosting an International Exhibition in Calcutta and in Glasgow, as establishing public museums the decade before. Firstly, comparisons with other urban

⁷⁹² Raffles Davison, *Pen and Ink Notes*, p. xii.

⁷⁹³ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁹⁶ Ibid.

centres meant that not holding an International Exhibition would have caused both cities to fall behind their competitors. This is where Glasgow's Exhibition diverged from Calcutta's. Whilst Calcutta was necessarily compared with other important cities, the press did not accept that it could compete equally, meaning that it was depicted as something distinct from other International Exhibitions because of the colonial context. By contrast, Glasgow actively encouraged competition, and any opportunities to better its nearest competitors – Edinburgh and Manchester – were grasped greedily. In both cases, though they appeared to be confident gestures these events can be read as inherently defensive. Partly, because Calcutta and Glasgow's administrations waited until success was more assured, and partly because of the focus on creating permanent collections, which would benefit the status of the city.

Secondly, the status of Calcutta as a capital city, and Glasgow as an important imperial provincial city, necessitated an International Exhibition. These events were thus used to further assert and confirm this imperial provincial status. In Glasgow's case, this was very successful, more so than its public museum.⁷⁹⁷ In Calcutta, its status as the capital of India came to the fore through the collecting processes both before and after the Exhibition. As the discussion surrounding the evolution of the Bengal Economic Museum has shown, Calcutta was increasingly posited as the national centre of India. The collection held under the roof of the Imperial Museum needed to be useful for the whole of India, which is highlighted by its role creating 'complete' collections, and then the plans to distribute them across India and beyond.

It has only been possible to cover a small portion of the material surveyed for these two International Exhibitions, leaving much more ripe for analysis on how Calcutta and Glasgow were presented. This chapter has, however, provided a useful starting point. The 1883-84 and 1888 International Exhibitions, as pivotal moments in the history of Calcutta and Glasgow's collections, have brought to a close the histories of the Imperial Museum and City Industrial Museum, and provided the vital springboard into the final chapter. Glasgow's 1888 International Exhibition was always intended to create a surplus to create a new institution more befitting of its status as the 'second city of the Empire'; that institution was the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, which provided the centrepiece for the city's second International Exhibition in 1901, as discussed in Chapter Six.

⁷⁹⁷ Spooner, 'Day-tripping', pp.326-344.

Chapter Six - Forging Flagship Institutions and the ‘second city of the Empire’ paradox.

At the close of the nineteenth century and opening of the twentieth, new flagship institutions were established in Glasgow and Calcutta, which remain iconic parts of their respective cities today. Whilst the principal focus has hitherto been on Calcutta’s Imperial Museum and Glasgow’s City Industrial Museum, this final chapter moves on to dissect the rationale, aims, and scope of these new institutions – Glasgow’s Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum and Calcutta’s Victoria Memorial Hall. Importantly, administrators in both cities were, in many ways, responding to the growing needs of maintaining and further asserting second city status. These new cultural assets were a way of broadcasting the city’s civic capacity and aspirations for the future. The previous chapter has shown that Calcutta and Glasgow’s International Exhibitions in the 1880s were, despite their ostensible ephemerality, designed to service long term goals. In particular, they were seen as vital opportunities to expand the collections of existing institutions. This growth impacted the subsequent actions taken by the governing bodies in both cities in disparate ways. On the one hand, the surplus from Glasgow’s 1888 International Exhibition was expected to fund a new, more fitting museum and gallery for the ‘second city of the Empire.’ On the other, the addition of the Economic and Art Sections to the Imperial Museum meant that the institution contained a broader, fuller collection. What Calcutta lacked, however, was a historical collection which dealt with the Indian past and Britain’s role within it. These respective needs would be met by the new Kelvingrove and the Victoria Memorial Hall, which effectively illustrate the increasing role of cultural assets within second city infrastructure.

Though initially proposed during the preparations for 1888, the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum did not open until Glasgow’s second International Exhibition in 1901, and officially in 1902. The Victoria Memorial Hall in Calcutta was formally conceived within days of Queen Victoria’s death, also, coincidentally, in 1901. It too took a long time to reach completion, and did not open to the public until 1921, by which point, Calcutta had been deprived of its capital city status for ten years. Whilst these institutions were at entirely different stages in 1901 – one at the point of inception, the other at completion, they offer a useful point of comparison between the two cities, at a pivotal time in the history of the British Empire.

Both were created to occupy huge spaces in conspicuous parts of their cities – in Glasgow’s premier West End Park, and on Calcutta’s central open space, the Maidan. Though their locations were debated, decisions were made swiftly.⁷⁹⁸ These ambitious palatial designs were deliberately attention seeking, intended as much for posterity as for the present. Either by chance or design, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum and the Victoria Memorial Hall were also connected to a new age, heralded both by the turn of the century and the death of the monarch, which had been synonymous with Britain and its Empire for sixty three years. Despite the departure from the previous century, both institutions were firmly Victorian in origin and ideology. Below is a photograph of the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, followed by the design for the Victoria Memorial Hall.

⁷⁹⁸ Resistance to the Maidan as the site for the Victoria Memorial in *Victoria Memorial Hall Correspondence Commencing from January 1901*, Vol.I, pp. 102 and 168, C408, Victoria Memorial Hall, Kolkata.



Figure 6.1 Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, 1901. Mitchell Library, GC f606,4, Reproduced with the permission of Glasgow City Council, Libraries and Archives.

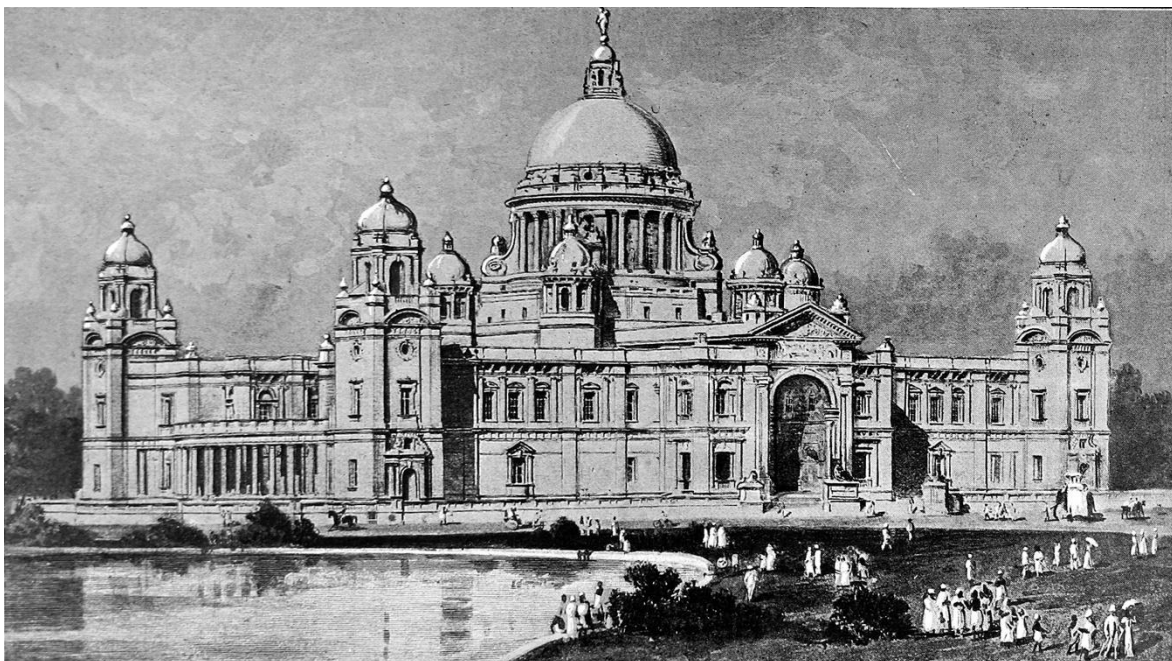


Figure 6.2 Design by Sir William Emerson for the All India Queen Victoria Memorial Hall, Calcutta, 1904 © Illustrated London News Ltd/ Mary Evans

As these images show, the new Kelvingrove Galleries bore some resemblances to the buildings constructed for the 1888 International Exhibition, its temporary predecessor on the same site. The central part of the building, designed by John William Simpson (1858 – 1933) and Edmund John Milner Allen (1859 – 1912), was similarly framed by towers and flanked to the left and right by long gallery spaces. Its red sandstone, quarried from Dumfriesshire, made it particularly distinctive in an area known for its blonde sandstone tenements. This building material was only available after the Caledonian railway was constructed to bring it to Glasgow in the 1890s. Styled as a Spanish Baroque palace, it was expected to complement the gothic University, which overlooked it.

The Victoria Memorial is equally eye-catching, in fact, Jasanoff has likened it to ‘an enormous dollop of Italian meringue’ deposited on the Maidan.⁷⁹⁹ Designed from white marble by William Emerson (1843 – 1924), it is ‘an ostentatious example of the colonial Indo-Saracenic style’ and was said to be “Britain’s answer” to the Taj Mahal.⁸⁰⁰ Sympathetic observers Jan Morris and Simon Winchester called it ‘monumental and festive, proud and serene’, and, without any sense of criticism, noted that ‘it was to be packed to its every attic with the annals and artefacts of imperial success.’⁸⁰¹ Guha Thakurta provides a more critical response, calling it ‘one of the most flamboyant edifices of empire,’ which is certainly true.⁸⁰² It remains inescapable in Kolkata today, owing to its central location and prominent positioning, alongside the similarly synonymous Howrah Bridge, on the city’s branding as the “City of Joy”.

Chapter One has shown that the assiduous campaign led by Glasgow’s elite to establish the city as the ‘second city of the Empire’ had found firm purchase by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Evidence presented here suggests that the new Kelvingrove also reflected the second city paradox – a confident statement of Glasgow’s position within the Empire, but, importantly, a significant response to the city’s lack of suitable cultural assets. As Glasgow’s industry began to decline, the new Kelvingrove was a response to growing imperial anxiety, by attesting to Glasgow’s continued global relevance. While Calcutta seemed to strike a chord with less and less of India, Glasgow became the most accepted ‘second city of the Empire’ in Britain, and evoked pride outside

⁷⁹⁹ Maya Jasanoff, ‘Lost Calcutta’, *The New York Review of Books*, 23 May 2019, <<https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2019/05/23/lost-calcutta/>> [accessed 25 August 2020]

⁸⁰⁰ Tapati Guha Thakurta, ‘Traversing Past and Present in the Victoria Memorial’, *Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta* 153 (1995), p.1.

⁸⁰¹ Jan Morris with Simon Winchester, *Stones of Empire, The Buildings of the Raj* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 117.

⁸⁰² Ibid.

of Scotland. Glasgow, as a city, was looking forward into the twentieth century and unveiling the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, after its lengthy incubation, was billed as a fitting opening to a new era. Little, of course, did the administrative body know how momentous 1901 would turn out to be, perhaps the investiture of their crowning cultural achievement would have been planned differently if they had. Contrastingly, the Victoria Memorial responded to the monarch's death and was simultaneously conjectured to fill a gap in Calcutta's urban fabric as an imperial capital city. In line with Francis G. Hutchins' 'illusion of permanence', whereby 'British imperialism in India reached its highest state of self-consciousness and self-satisfaction at the turn of the century', the Victoria Memorial was generated, in part, by political insecurity.⁸⁰³ Certainly, 'the Empire was never more fragile than at this moment when it seemed most secure'.⁸⁰⁴ The distinct difference between the approaches taken in Glasgow and Calcutta is perfectly illustrated by the assertion that the Kelvingrove would be 'a fitting inauguration of the twentieth century' and the Victoria Memorial would be 'perpetually under the eye of future generations'.⁸⁰⁵ The connectedness between these notions, either as a progressive vision or a distinct lens into the past, and second city status will be explored throughout this chapter.

In this way, we can see how the components of second city status shifted over time to reflect the changing characteristics of the city. Notions of a developed civic culture had expanded, and expectations for the purported 'second city of the Empire' had changed with it. Whilst the arguments that the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum and the Victoria Memorial were deeply imperial institutions are not novel, indeed, the deliberate contemporary messaging of the latter is hard to miss, drawing the two together elucidates the ways imperial cities responded to the turn of the century, the death of Victoria, and changing civic expectations through the prism of second city rhetoric. These new institutions can be seen as a culmination of the dialectical engagement between the 'second city of the Empire' and museum development this thesis has been exploring, as they both encapsulated the status Glasgow and Calcutta were aspiring to, and defending, at the dawn of the new century.

⁸⁰³ Francis G. Hutchins, *The Illusion of Permanence, British Imperialism in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 197.

⁸⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁵ Glasgow: 'Glasgow Corporation', *The Scotsman*, 19 February 1897, p.3; Calcutta: 'Address delivered by the Viceroy at a meeting of the Asiatic Society at Calcutta on 26 February 1901', Mss EUR F102/12: 190, *British Library*.

Aims and Objectives

Looking first at the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, followed by the Victoria Memorial, this section deals with the aims and lasting objectives of the people that created them. The former was designed to supersede the city's Corporation Galleries and Kelvingrove Museum by providing the collections with a more suitable and permanent home. In response to these earlier iterations, the Sub-Committee on Museums and Galleries strove to provide a larger, brighter space for classifying and displaying the collection. The latter, as well as ostensibly memorialising the late Queen, was to hold a distinct position in India's museum and galleries landscape by delivering something the Imperial Museum did not. Moreover, 'it would be an additional ornament' for the 'Imperial Capital'.⁸⁰⁶ Despite the differences in their origins, ratifying second city status was similarly woven into the fabric of the architecture, collections, and ideologies in both institutions in multifarious ways.

Curzon and Paton, two figures who have peppered this narrative, come to the fore (pictured below). Paton's previously discussed enthusiasm for the development of the museum sector was hugely influential in the plans for the Kelvingrove. Likewise, Curzon's unfettered zeal for the imperial mission and heritage in India led him to forcefully pursue his idea for the Victoria Memorial. He was a major advocate for preserving sites of historical significance in India, and passed the Ancient Monuments Bill in 1904. In Calcutta, he turned his attention to memorialising key events in the history of the British in India, specifically commissioning a tablet to the Black Hole, where one 'can shiver' at the proximity to 'that torture-chamber, twenty-two feet by fourteen.'⁸⁰⁷ Despite his departure from India under a cloud in 1905, only four years into the twenty-year Victoria Memorial project, it remained a product of his initial proposals. With this in mind, this section turns towards the ideas put forward by these two disparate men. Their physical presentations could not have been more different – one the imperial spectacle, the other the professional museum-worker. Yet, both were quintessentially Victorian, and arguably illustrate the different roles played by Calcutta and Glasgow within the Empire. Curzon encapsulates Calcutta's performative role as a centre for grandiose ceremony, whereas Paton is unfussy, but confidently assured in his role.

⁸⁰⁶ From Sir Richard Temple to Lord Curzon, 3 May 1901 in *Victoria Memorial Hall Correspondence Commencing from January 1901*, Vol.I, p.138, C408, VMH.

⁸⁰⁷ Low, *A Vision of India*, p. 213.; David Gilmour, 'Curzon, George Nathaniel, Marquess Curzon of Kedleston' in *ODNB*, online edn, 2011 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/32680>> [accessed 27 April 2021]



Figure 6.3 George Nathaniel Curzon, Marquess Curzon of Kedleston by John Cooke, after John Singer Sargent oil on canvas, 1914 – 32, based on work dated 1914 NPG 2534 ©National Portrait Gallery, London.

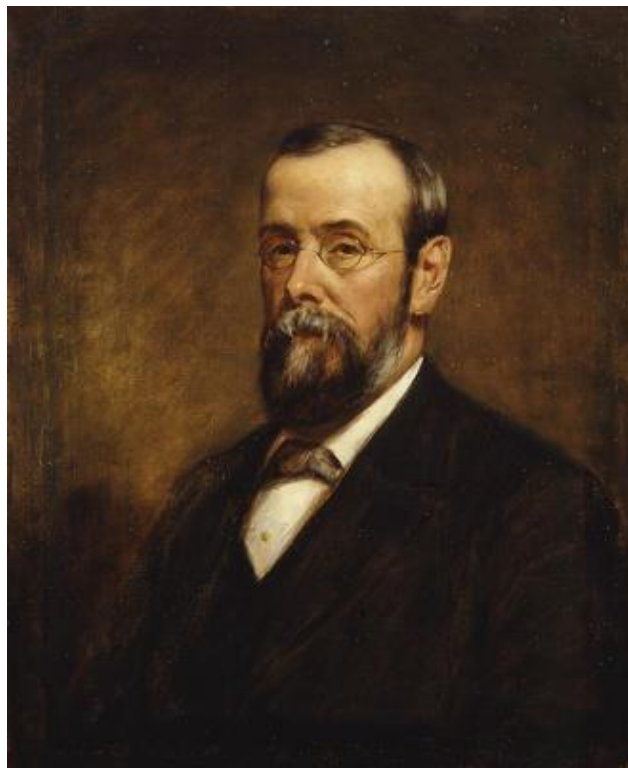


Figure 6.4 James Paton, 1897 by Joseph Henderson (1832 - 1908), reproduced with the permission of Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Museums

Paton, who had worked through many significant changes to the Glasgow Corporation's museum and gallery holdings, had certain ideas about his role as a curator, and his duties to the collections he served. To his mind, his role was 'to care for and preserve' the city's collection, and, specifically, to ensure the 'art property in his charge [...] is handed down to generations yet to come...in no worse condition than that in which he found it.'⁸⁰⁸ Consequently, he was very aware of the shortfalls of the existing accommodation, which shaped his proposals for the new institution. Discontent with the state of Kelvingrove museum had been mounting since the inauguration of the 1876 extension, when it became obvious it was still too small for the city's ambitions. In particular, 'the want of space and the unsuitableness of the building' entirely 'prevented any systematic arrangement' of the collections.⁸⁰⁹ For Paton, as a foremost innovator in the emerging provincial museum sector, this seriously hampered his abilities to display the city's collections in a meaningful and educative way. Simply extending the existing structure was no longer an option, and to create something more fitting of Glasgow's ilk necessitated an entirely new building.

Additionally, the Corporation Galleries were damned by internal and external commentators alike.⁸¹⁰ They were insufficiently lit, yet dangerously prone to fires, which meant that 'the great Glasgow art collections – in which are included some of the works which rank among the treasures of the world – and which embraces donations and bequests from among many of the most esteemed citizens of recent times' were 'daily exposed to the mercies of careless and irresponsible outsiders who deal in the most inflammable commodities' around Sauchiehall Street.⁸¹¹ Other concerns included 'acid fumes, and atmospheric conditions', and therefore the option to remove these valuable assets to safer, more salubrious climes was very attractive.⁸¹² Proposals for a more suitable cultural institution had thus been circulating long before 1901. Paton presented several papers to the Glasgow Philosophical Society which centred on the likely longevity of both the art and museum collections if left where they were. In February 1886, Paton, alongside Bailie James Hunter Dickson, Chairman of the Glasgow Corporation's Museum and Galleries Committee, gave a dismal account of the 'present position of the Art Galleries and Museum of Glasgow.'⁸¹³ One of their main contentions was that provisions for the public

⁸⁰⁸ James Paton, 'Art Museum: Its Structural Requirements', *Philosophical Society of Glasgow* 1890 – 91, p.6, *GMRC*.

⁸⁰⁹ H. M. Cundall, 'Glasgow Art Galleries and Museum', *Art Journal* (1893), p. 244.

⁸¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹¹ Dickson and Paton, *The Present Position*, p.7.

⁸¹² 'The Evening News', *Glasgow Evening Post*, 4 February 1886, p. 2.

⁸¹³ Dickson and Paton, *The Present Position*, p.2.

museum in Kelvingrove Park had been of a ‘temporary and makeshift nature’.⁸¹⁴ They estimated that only a relatively modest £10,000 had been spent on Kelvingrove Museum, which included the original conversion of the building, and the extension paid for by a combination of public subscriptions and the Town Council.⁸¹⁵ Over the seven years leading up to 1886, ‘various schemes have been under the consideration for dealing fully and finally with that question’, but a decision had not been reached.⁸¹⁶

Given Paton’s penchant for a turn of phrase, it is somewhat surprising that he did not specifically say that the existing institutions were not worthy of the ‘second city of the Empire’. Nevertheless, the *Glasgow Evening Post* made the connection - ‘Glasgow’s collection of pictures and sculpture is miserably housed [...] and the Museum in the Park is admittedly inadequate to the scientific and educational demands of the Second City of the Empire.’⁸¹⁷ This suggests that, by the late 1880s, second city rhetoric had a wider range of rhetorical cues in Glasgow than specific citation of the ‘second city of the Empire’ epithet, and therefore it could be deduced and applied retrospectively. Unlike the first Kelvingrove, which only became connected with the city’s imperial aspirations as a means of justifying the museum’s expansion in the early 1870s, the new one was ostensibly linked from the outset.

It was the 1888 International Exhibition which would finally facilitate change, by creating the funds and the momentum to commit to a new building. An Association for the Promotion of Art and Music in the City of Glasgow was constituted by the International Exhibition Association to erect Art Galleries Concert Hall, Museum, and School of Art at Kelvingrove Park.⁸¹⁸ The Chairman was the aforementioned John Muir, who acted as Lord Provost between 1889 and 1892, followed by the Vice-Chairman, Sir James King who was the previous Lord Provost between 1886 and 1889. As well as the Executive Committee, twelve of which were appointed by the Corporation and six by the Association, there was a long list of honorary Vice-Presidents that wished to put their name to the project. Several of these were Ex-Lord Provosts and other notable names included: the Duke of Argyll, the Earl of Rosebery, Lord Kelvin, and Sir J. Stirling-Maxwell. This list suggests an elite and mainstream group, in contrast to the original Kelvingrove Museum, which had been pushed through by a few Town Council outliers.

⁸¹⁴ Ibid., p.8.

⁸¹⁵ Ibid.

⁸¹⁶ Ibid.

⁸¹⁷ ‘The Evening News’, *Glasgow Evening Post*, 4 February 1886, p. 2.

⁸¹⁸ ‘Association for the Promotion of Art and Music in the City of Glasgow’, 1888, *GMRC*

The surplus, some £46,000, even with interest, was not enough to fund something on the desired scale, and, consequently, Glasgow's citizens were once again called upon to offer financial assistance to the project.⁸¹⁹ Muir, contributed a further £15,000, and other donations brought the total to £110,000.⁸²⁰ A competition was then raised to elicit designs for Glasgow's first purpose built public cultural centre. In the report published in the Select Design, the Association advocated that:

A supreme effort must be made: the fair fame of the city for culture and public spirit must be sustained, and the completed buildings stand forth a memorial of the Exhibition and a fresh proof of the proud attachment the citizens bear their ancient city.⁸²¹

Though not explicitly inciting second city rhetoric, the components, specific to Glaswegian civic pride at this time, were clearly present in the formation of the new Kelvingrove. Maver's argument that Glaswegians proffered the city's historicity as a point of superiority stands true.⁸²² The new institution needed to secure a legacy for 1888 and also mark the beginning of a new cultural period in Glasgow. There is a suggestion of the second city paradox here too, as Glasgow, which had gained recognition for its International Exhibition, needed to confidently assert the continuation of such success, and defend itself against criticism that it was not sustainable. In the same vein as the fountain commemorating the deliverance of water to the city from Loch Katrine, discussed in Chapter Two, the Glasgow Corporation could not miss an opportunity to memorialise the city's achievements. Explicitly, the report stated that the Museum and Art Gallery 'may be confidently expected to be worthy of its position and of the city of Glasgow.'⁸²³

Paton returned to the Philosophical Society in February 1891, this time to the Architectural Section, to give a paper on how the new museum building might best suit its purpose. He outlined his plans for an 'Art Museum', which had been emerging elsewhere but was novel to Glasgow. Indeed, Woodson-Boulton argues, by looking specifically at Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester, that 'municipal art museums and galleries of contemporary art became a fixture of city life' during the latter nineteenth century.⁸²⁴ In typical Paton style, he referred to similar institutions elsewhere, including the Rijks Museum, which he considered to be a 'triumph of Gothic architecture' containing

⁸¹⁹ Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum Select Design (Glasgow: Maclure, Macdonald & Co., 1892), p.2, *GMRC*

⁸²⁰ Clough, 'Muir Family'.

⁸²¹ Report in Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum Select Design (Glasgow: Maclure, Macdonald & Co., 1892), *GMRC*.

⁸²² Maver, *Glasgow*, p. 3.

⁸²³ 'Association for the Promotion of Art and Music in the City of Glasgow', p.2.

⁸²⁴ Woodson-Boulton, *Transformative Beauty*, p. 1.

Amsterdam's 'world-famous collection', but was 'internally' inadequate.⁸²⁵ No doubt inspired by his previously discussed reconnaissance trip to Holland and Belgium in 1879, Paton envisaged an institution which could cater to the needs of both the city's art and museum collections. In Brussels, he had noted that the 'principle exhibitional institutions' - the Royal Library, Art Museum, Natural History Museum, and Industrial Museum, had the advantage of being 'grouped together' in the 'same range of buildings.'⁸²⁶ He thought that the 'concentration of public institutions having a common object and purpose yields a harmonious whole worthy of a great city.'⁸²⁷ The grouping together of multiple institutions was considered more impressive than modest institutions spread out geographically. Paton added, that 'the contiguity of the various departments or sections each adds greatly to the value and completeness of the other,' which suggests that contextualising collections with other collections was desirable.⁸²⁸ Moreover, that by increasing the scale of the institution, Glasgow's overall civic cultural project would appear more 'complete'. This drawing together of objectives through different types of collections mirrored the rationale for removing the Art and Economic specimens to the Imperial Museum, and, going back further, the Asiatic Society's argument for an Imperial Museum in Calcutta. 'Completeness' in this sense, was solidifying as an organising concept for cultural institutions beyond London and its secondary capitals.

Practicality was at the forefront of Paton's concerns, arguing that 'a simple, well-ordered plan' was of greater benefit to visitors than 'rich panelling.' His desire for order followed the principles of the growing museum networks and professionalisation. In this vein, he also referred to the other facets of the museum, which lay beyond the public galleries – the store-rooms, artist studios, and offices, which shows an understanding of how other purpose-built spaces functioned in practical terms. Paton concluded that 'we may conceive of Kelvingrove Park becoming ultimately the centre of artistic and technical instruction in the city', which would provide 'the source of intellectual and aesthetic cultivation, for the whole mass of the citizens.'⁸²⁹ This draws to the fore Paton's motivations to make the city's existing collections as accessible and useful to the public as possible, and then to preserve them for future generations.

⁸²⁵ Paton, 'Art Museum', p.1.

⁸²⁶ Paton, *Report on Visit*, p. 11.

⁸²⁷ Ibid.

⁸²⁸ Ibid., p. 11.

⁸²⁹ Paton, 'Art Museum', p.11

Selecting premium locations for both the new Kelvingrove and Victoria Memorial was considered essential, particularly within the context of second city aspirations. The new buildings needed to simultaneously contribute to their existing surroundings, but also stand out from the urban landscape; they needed to be placed in a green space; and needed to be easily accessible. Owing to the ‘generous and judicious decision’ of the Glasgow Town Council, the architect was gifted with a site ‘which, for spaciousness and surrounding attractions, can be equalled in few great cities,’ to create this multi-purpose building.⁸³⁰ Kelvingrove Park was considered a premium location in the city, exemplified by its selection for the 1888 Exhibition. Paton described ‘a cluster of buildings planted on the higher side of the Kelvin, with our noble University crowning the height beyond’, on ‘which Glasgow might indeed look with pure gratification and joy.’⁸³¹ Yet, the West End was a contentious choice with regards to accessibility for all of Glasgow’s citizens. Indeed, ‘its distance from the populous districts of the city is the one strong objection to the Kelvingrove Park as the site of this combined museum and art gallery.’⁸³² By the time the new Kelvingrove Galleries opened, however, animosity had been somewhat sated by the opening of public institutions in the south and east of the city. The Camphill Gallery in Queens Park was acquired by the Glasgow Corporation in 1894, and it was decided that ‘the main floor should be devoted to the purposes of a local exhibitional gallery for the southern district.’⁸³³ Again, as the photograph below shows, the Corporation chose to convert an existing building, although, unlike Kelvingrove House, Camphill remains in situ today. The People’s Palace, discussed in Chapter Two, similarly opened in 1897 to serve the city’s population in the east.

⁸³⁰ Ibid., p.2.

⁸³¹ Ibid. p.11

⁸³² *Glasgow Evening Post*, 4 February 1886, p. 2.

⁸³³ *Kelvingrove Museum and Corporation Galleries of Art, Glasgow. Report for the year 1895* (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1895).



Figure 6.5 Camphill House, rear view, taken 1911 © Glasgow City Archives

Whilst provisions were made in the five broad districts of the city – the centre, the North, the East, the South and the West, it was no coincidence that the West End Park, or Kelvingrove Park, was selected for its flagship institution. Just as the ostensible benefits of Kelvingrove Park were presented at length during the planning and realisation stages of the 1888 International Exhibition, so too did it present the best spot for their new art gallery and museum. The area surrounding the Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery has remained relatively unchanged in the intervening century; the beautifully kept greens of the Park, the smooth meander of the River Kelvin, Park Circus on the hill to the one side, the Gothic revival masterstroke, the University of Glasgow on the other. This institution encapsulated the new ideals for the city, which had moved a considerable way from the industrial collection formed several decades before.

The architect would further benefit from the ‘public spirit and the proverbial liberality of Glasgow’, as well as the opportunity ‘of providing a monument of enduring honour at once for himself and the city’, because, Paton emphasised, ‘treasures of Art should be enshrined in a fitting casket.’⁸³⁴ These aims were repeated in art publications beyond the city, suggesting that they had been successfully disseminated. Owen Fleming, reporting on the winning designs by J. W. Simpson and E. J. Milner Allen, observed that ‘the latest enterprise of the citizens of Glasgow – will serve to strengthen the reputation already enjoyed by the city of the north for civic liberality and public spirit.’⁸³⁵ Moreover, that the project was only possible because of the 1888 surplus and Glaswegian generosity.

⁸³⁴ Ibid.

⁸³⁵ Owen Fleming, ‘The Kelvingrove Art Galleries and Museum-Glasgow’, *The Magazine of Art* 16 (1893), p.92.

Efforts to promote Glasgow's civic cultural standing had clearly found purchase, suggesting that the museum events of the previous chapters had successfully disseminated a more fitting image of the 'second city of the Empire.'

While Paton's professional vision and civic agendas shaped developments in Glasgow, very different pressures lay behind the origins of the Victoria Memorial. Curzon similarly set out his ideas in two speeches, the first at a public meeting in the Calcutta Town Hall on 6th February 1901, and the second to the Asiatic Society on 26th February.⁸³⁶ The first was given to allow Curzon to express his immediate 'sorrow at the death of our beloved Queen,' and to outline his suggestions for how best to memorialise her life.⁸³⁷ He sketched out why India should 'act independently' and have its own memorial, why this memorial should not be a charitable cause and should instead take the form of a physical memorial surrounded by a beautiful garden, why it would not interfere with local memorials but a Central Fund should be prioritised, why Calcutta was the natural choice for this memorial, the amount of interest which had already been shown by 'all the representative organs of the Press, both European and Native, in Calcutta', and, lastly, the style of financial contributions which had been made and were expected to be made in the future. This fits Robert J. Blyth's *Empire of the Raj* thesis, that British India was so big it formed an imperial system of its own – an empire within an empire.⁸³⁸ Curzon's conclusion urged that they should 'give the rein to generosity' to honour 'Bengal and Calcutta, the capital Presidency and the capital city of this country, lastly of India, the mightiest and the most loyal dependency of the British Crown.'⁸³⁹ The order of his priorities are notable, Bengal followed by Calcutta, followed by India. Curzon was enamoured with the story of Calcutta as an emblem of British endeavour.

By this point, Curzon had already circulated a scheme for the project in the press. Given the centrality of Calcutta in the plan, there was an expectedly enthusiastic response from European residents in the city. Though there was some debate over the form the memorial would take, which will be discussed shortly, Curzon believed it should be a physical monument 'to house the first comprehensive period museum on British India, placing on display a collection of paintings and sculptures, engravings and busts, weapons,

⁸³⁶ *Lord Curzon in India Being a Selection from his Speeches as Viceroy & Governor-General of India 1898 – 1905* (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1906), pp. 517-547.

⁸³⁷ *Ibid.*, 'Victoria Memorial, Public Meeting, Calcutta', p. 517.

⁸³⁸ Robert J. Blyth, *The Empire of the Raj, India, Eastern Africa and the Middle East, 1858 – 1947* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

⁸³⁹ *Lord Curzon in India*, pp. 525 – 526.

documents and other memorabilia of the Raj.⁸⁴⁰ Through his memorial, he intended to ‘bolster imperial confidence and self-esteem’, which again relates to the paradox of second cities.⁸⁴¹

The second speech, given at the Dalhousie Institute twenty days later, aimed to clarify some of the misapprehensions cast on the first. Again, Curzon stressed that a National Memorial would not impede different Provinces from creating their own memorials, but, in the interests of posterity, it would be better to create a grand imperial monument which would draw the attention of visitors to India.⁸⁴² He was incredibly optimistic about the number of donations the Central Fund would receive, yet dismissed calls that money should be directed towards charitable causes and a technical institution instead, because he considered these to be wider governmental issues. In answer to whether he was the right person to take on the all-Indian memorial, he propositioned, if the role of Viceroy was what ‘it ought to be, the opportunity of fusing and giving expression to the aspirations of the entire community is one that he should be proud to seize.’⁸⁴³ Hardly surprising given that virtually the entire scheme was his idea. Like Paton, Curzon had very particular ideas about what his role should entail, and he considered it:

a great imperial duty, viz. the handing down to posterity of what the past has failed to provide for us, that is, a standing record of our wonderful history, a visible monument of Indian glories, and an illustration, more eloquent than any spoken address or printed page, of the lessons of public patriotism and civic duty.⁸⁴⁴

Though artificially prompted by Victoria’s death, contemporaries were suspicious of the speed with which the memorial was brought to public attention. Certainly, such in-depth plans would have been impossible in the time frame, and, actually, the scheme in some form had ‘rarely been out of his mind’ during his two years in India, and he was desirous ‘to carry the idea into execution’ before he departed.⁸⁴⁵ He had therefore begun seeking advice from friends long before 1901, and had gone as far as to ‘prepare designs for a building and to think of where it might be placed.’⁸⁴⁶ The monarch’s death fortuitously gave him the opportunity to germinate his plans ‘of a great imperial memorial’, which could then be deemed ‘worthy of Queen Victoria and worthy of India.’⁸⁴⁷ Victoria posed a

⁸⁴⁰ Guha Thakurta, ‘Traversing’, p.2.

⁸⁴¹ Ibid.

⁸⁴² *Lord Curzon in India*, p. 526.

⁸⁴³ Ibid., p. 529.

⁸⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 530,

⁸⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid.

common denominator behind which he was sure the entirety of India would rally. Vitrally, the ‘universal sorrow’ experienced throughout India gave Curzon access to funds to build his great monument to the British Raj, because, its success was to be afforded by public subscription.⁸⁴⁸ In his mind, his public would contain Europeans and Natives alike, working together to create a world-leading imperial monument, although, as the following sections will explore, his enthusiasm was not felt elsewhere.

Importantly, Curzon based much of his argument for placing a central Memorial in Calcutta on its position as a capital city, which was on an almost level plane with London. He contended that the people of India would be ‘anxious to give something’, but would prefer to contribute to one ‘in this country’ over anything in the metropole. Rather than a memorial they would never see, they ‘would wish for a visible Indian memorial of a reign which has left so conspicuous and enduring a mark upon Indian history.’⁸⁴⁹ Consequently, part of justifying such a large Indian memorial was the apparent lack of interest in contributing to anything in Britain. This is significant because a committee was simultaneously established to create ‘a new imperial space in London’ to commemorate the late Queen.⁸⁵⁰ Compared with the national memorial in Britain, Curzon’s plans were tactically directed towards a truly imperial monument, which would embolden trust in the value of British rule. In fact, he asked ‘why should we not do for the Queen herself in the capital of India what she asked to have done for her husband in the capital of Great Britain?’⁸⁵¹ Victoria had insisted that the Prince Consort should be commemorated with a physical memorial in the metropolis, which resulted in the ‘noble Albert Memorial, which no one ever goes to London without seeing.’⁸⁵² He thought the same could be applied to Calcutta, because, as the ‘seat of Government, everybody finds his way here, whether he be an Indian Prince, or a European traveller, or an English merchant.’⁸⁵³

Purportedly, the Albert Memorial was ‘one of the glories of the metropolis’, known to many more than knew the Albert Orphan Asylum or Albert Institute.⁸⁵⁴ He made this point to quash suggestions for memorialising the Queen with an institution or fund to alleviate the suffering of the poor in India. Curzon wanted a grand imperial gesture, so,

⁸⁴⁸ ‘The Death of the Queen. The News in Calcutta’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 24 January 1901, p.23.

⁸⁴⁹ ‘Memorial to the Late Queen-Empress’ in *Victoria Memorial Hall Correspondence*, p.4, Mss Eur F111/454, *British Library*

⁸⁵⁰ Tori Smith, ‘“A grand work of noble conception”: the Victoria Memorial and imperial London’ in *Imperial Cities Landscape, display and identity* ed. by Felix Driver and David Gilbert (Manchester: Manchester University Press), p. 21.

⁸⁵¹ *Lord Curzon in India*, p.521.

⁸⁵² *Ibid.*.

⁸⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

whilst he acknowledged they were ‘admirable objects fully worthy of support’, this tack could only please a small portion of the population, and not the swathes of people he envisioned. Critically, Curzon knew that there was a demand in India to commemorate Victoria’s reign in a different way, but he overrode it because charitable works would draw attention to the Raj’s failures in the social and economic spheres, instead, he chose to commemorate historical successes. He argued that ‘posterity is apt to forget those in whose honour charities were originally founded’, so, to his mind, it was more fitting for India to have a physical monument to commemorate the Queen, and British and Indian history for the eyes of future generations, than fund support for famine victims.⁸⁵⁵

In this vein, whilst he did not openly object to local memorials, they posed a threat to his grand plan, so he argued that ‘the more they give to the Central Fund, the more truly representative and Imperial will it be’ and, moreover, ‘each Province may thus earn its place in the national collection.’⁸⁵⁶ Furthermore, that in order to ‘appeal to the general contributions of the Indian Princes and people, as well as the official and European public’ it ‘should have a broad and representative character’, with regards to its collection. It also needed to be ‘located in some spot which has a metropolitan character, where it is likely to be seen or visited by the largest number of people.’⁸⁵⁷ All ideological and logistical roads led to Calcutta.

Curzon used the same justification for creating an institution on this scale used by the Asiatic Society half a century before. It was claimed that as Calcutta was a capital city it should be furnished with institutions equivalent to other capital cities. Again, as Chapter One has shown, Calcutta’s historical importance was used by the city to promote its status as a second city in the early twentieth century. He reasoned that, although ‘It is quite true that Calcutta is not the gate of India’, which was of course Bombay, neither was ‘Washington the gate of America, nor Ottawa the gate of Canada, nor Rome the gate of Italy’, yet no one would imagine to place an important national site outside of these capital cities. Curzon posited Calcutta as an unchallenged and steadfast capital, which he affirmed by confidently referring to Bombay as the ‘gate of India’. He held a misplaced confidence that Calcutta would retain its status as the capital of British India forevermore. Indeed, he thought ‘no political or commercial changes are likely’ and therefore ‘the importance of

⁸⁵⁵ *Lord Curzon in India*, p. 520.

⁸⁵⁶ Telegram from Lord Curzon to Governments of Bombay, Madras, North Western Provinces and Oudh, , Punjab, Burma, Central Provinces, 1 February 1901, in *Victoria Memorial Hall Correspondence*, p. 3. Mss Eur F11/454, *British Library*.

⁸⁵⁷ ‘Memorial to the Late Queen-Empress’ in *Victoria Memorial Hall Correspondence*, p.3, Mss Eur F111/454, *British Library*.

Calcutta will probably grow rather than diminish.’⁸⁵⁸ In a clear rejection of Nationalist ability to change the political situation in India, he asserted that it may not have been the present generation that made it a capital, but, in any case, it was ‘now too late for the present, or for succeeding generations, to unmake it.’⁸⁵⁹ Entirely unwavering on his choice, because to him:

Calcutta is the inevitable site. Though the principal city of one only among the provinces of India, Calcutta has also been for 150 years the seat of the Government of India, and is the capital of the Indian Empire.⁸⁶⁰

Calcutta therefore needed, and was owed, a memorial fitting of its capital status. Yet, as the previous chapters have demonstrated, Calcutta’s primacy was far from universally accepted. Whereas Calcutta had been the natural location for the first public museum in India midway through the century, by 1901, its selection for the national memorial and public collection to honour Queen Victoria needed continual validation. Its position as the capital of India was no longer accepted as justification, and instead, proved a source of contention.

More than a memorial, it was intended as a space where the history of the British in India could be curated and solidified for public consumption, something which all capital cities should have. As Guha Thakurta synthesises, ‘the memorial to the Queen was conflated, as intended, into a memorial to the Raj itself.’⁸⁶¹ As previously mentioned, this Memorial fit within Curzon’s wider web of ambitions to establish heritage sites and modes of commemoration across India from 1899 onwards. Low noted that ‘Thanks largely to the Viceroy, the old memorials have been restored, and new ones erected.’⁸⁶² Tellingly, Low also stated that, ‘The history of Calcutta is a record of great events, on which Englishmen might be excused for dwelling with much more self-satisfaction than they commonly exhibit.’⁸⁶³ Consequently, the Victoria Memorial may have been a memorial to the late Queen herself, but it was also a memorial of British rule in India, inside which an Englishman may dwell on his countrymen’s successes. Curzon’s ‘advocacy of empire, often accompanied by vivid pageantry and egoism, reflected a belief that British power could and would bring the fruits of peace and prosperity to subject peoples’, which was something he wanted to project through the Memorial.⁸⁶⁴ His Victoria Memorial Hall was

⁸⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid,

⁸⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁸⁶¹ Guha Thakurta, ‘Traversing Past, p.2.

⁸⁶² Low, *A Vision of India*, p. 213.

⁸⁶³ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁴ Keck, ‘“It has now passed”, p.51.

intended to contribute to the ‘fabric of British rule in India’, which had been developing for 150 years. He wanted to make the Memorial’s messaging as unshakable as the city’s position as the capital of India. It was Curzon’s contribution to apparent permanence, mirrored in the indelible quality of the marble eventually selected.

Curzon’s second oration was, significantly, directed at the highly knowledgeable audience of the Asiatic Society. Both Curzon and Paton deliberately presented their ideas to engaged members of the civic elite. Approval from groups like the Philosophical and Asiatic Societies would no doubt have assisted the formation of a new institution, and perhaps approaching them first was a way of securing their blessing. Whilst the Victoria Memorial was designed specifically as a memorial space, the new Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery was not devoid of this function, as Bailie Crawford suggested that the central hall could ‘be spacious, and fitted to receive public memorials, in the form of statuary, mural tablet, or other permanent record of the names and memory of those the city delights to honour.’⁸⁶⁵ Those which it would honour were however centred on the civic, rather than the national or imperial. By contrast, the novelty of the Victoria Memorial centred on the attempt to create an all-encompassing institution, which could speak for India’s very varied provinces.

Whilst the Victoria Memorial was posited as something Calcutta, as the capital of India, had long been lacking, the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum was imagined as an institution which Glasgow had been working towards for decades. This new space provided an opportunity for the Glasgow Corporation to distinguish the city from its competitors through the novelty of its scale, value of its collection, and the worthiness of its cause. Glasgow was creating something new based on previous endeavours, and the art world looked on with interest as developments were announced. In acknowledgement of the assistance he had received from other ‘cities and institutions’, Paton asked, ‘why should we not repay them by teaching something to those who are to follow us?’⁸⁶⁶ For the first time, Paton saw Glasgow’s role as a leader in the field, contrasting decades spent reacting to museum initiative elsewhere. Rather than simply aspiring to institutions Paton had seen and admired, the city had the funds and the momentum to create something truly befitting the ‘second city of the Empire.’ Indeed, just as Calcutta’s Victoria Memorial was firmly enmeshed with its position as the capital, Glasgow’s new Galleries were shaped around what a second city should have. In this way, Glasgow did not need to copy the

⁸⁶⁵ Paton, ‘Art Museum’, pp.10-11.

⁸⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.10.

South Kensington Museum or the National Gallery, but, instead, along with other key imperial provincial cities, create something which was somewhere between the two, and worked best for the people it served.

Building the Collections

Like their predecessors, beyond the initial plans what would be collected in these institutions was of primary interest. Aspirations for ‘complete’ and ‘comprehensive’ collections, discussed in Chapter Four, were still an influential force by the turn of the century. Compared to the International Exhibition movement of the 1880s, however, the fullness or completeness of a museum was not a direct indication of quality. Indeed, the new institutions were designed to facilitate the comfortable expansion of the collection. By 1902, *The Museums Journal* purported that ‘it is a happy quality of museums that they never are complete, for, in the words of Brown Goode, “a finished museum is a dead museum.”’⁸⁶⁷ In Glasgow’s case, unlike the old Kelvingrove, the new museum was not a temporary solution, but a permanent structure, intended to grow as the collection inevitably expanded. In Calcutta, Curzon planned to create a comprehensive, if not altogether complete, collection of the areas of history he considered important. It was intended that the Victoria Memorial’s collection would be representative of the different peoples of India. It was also supposed to contain originals or copies of the most important points in Britain’s endeavours in India. The aims and objectives of both institutions informed the types of things Paton and Curzon wanted to collect within them. For Paton, the longevity of Glasgow’s existing art collection was of the uttermost importance, and, for Curzon too, there was a focus on preserving valuable materials, many of which had yet to be officially collected.

Due to the perceived value of the art collections in Glasgow, serving the existing collection was given precedence over any additions. If significant changes were not made, these irreplaceable cultural commodities would not be available to future generations. Indeed, H. M. Cundall commented in the *Art Journal*, that Glasgow held ‘one of the finest, if not the finest, public collection of Old Masters, in the provinces’, yet, it was only ‘within the last few years’ that the ‘authorities have become alive to the value of their property.’⁸⁶⁸

⁸⁶⁷ E. Howarth, (ed.), *The Museums Journal* 1 (London: Dulau and Co., 1902), p. 3, *GMRC*

⁸⁶⁸ Cundall, ‘Glasgow’, 244 – 246.

In Glasgow, the art collections were vitally impeded by ‘impure air.’⁸⁶⁹ Confirming O’Reil’s impressions, discussed in Chapter Two, Paton decreed that ‘few people and very few collections of pictures are fated to live in a more filthy atmosphere of dust, soot, acid-vapours, and sulphur compounds than it is our fate to endure in this grimy city.’⁸⁷⁰ In this way, the commercial benefits, which had been reaped on Glasgow from its industrial outputs, actively detracted from the value of its art collection. Though, the soot was a necessary by-product of Glasgow’s lifeblood and helped make it the ‘second city of the Empire’, the conditions were ‘deleterious to human life’ and ‘fatal’ to the ‘life of a picture’.⁸⁷¹ The city was environmentally barred from maintaining cultural assets on an equal footing with other, less industrial cities, unless they were removed from the city centre. The move to a new institution, not only provided greater square footage within which to store new artworks, but better conditions to protect them in.

Following on from the previous section, Paton envisaged this new institution to be an Art Museum, which allowed for hybridity in a more deliberate way. Compared with the mishmash created by the donations-based collecting strategy, which had been in place throughout the lifetime of the City Industrial Museum, Paton’s proposals centred on orderliness. In his 1891 speech to the Philosophical Society, Paton asked his audience to:

look upon Art in its more comprehensive aspect, and thus we use the term Art Museum for the institution we imagine. And as we cannot limit the sphere of the artist’s activity, so it is contrary to sound principles to limit the scope of an Art Museum.⁸⁷²

An ‘Art Museum’ was therefore necessarily broad, so the new institution should not be bound by a strict code or collecting strategy. Whilst the accommodation provided by the City Industrial Museum meant that the collection amassed there was vitally cramped and disorganised, the new Galleries afforded Paton the opportunity to properly arrange a wide range of exhibits. He was adamant that this new institution ‘must have purpose, method, order, and classification; and, moreover, it must have its scientific and general education as well as its art point of view.’⁸⁷³

Order was key to this holistic approach, but, somewhat problematically, Paton has a particularly broad conception of what an Art Museum should contain. He foresaw galleries containing a ‘collection of antiquities or historical art’ and the ‘ethnographical collections

⁸⁶⁹ Paton, ‘Art Museum’, p.6.

⁸⁷⁰ Ibid., p.8.

⁸⁷¹ Ibid.

⁸⁷² Ibid., p. 4.

⁸⁷³ Ibid.

which illustrate the art instincts and abilities of the primitive races, tribes, and nations', as well as being:

the technological arts, or art in its relation to industry – the collections of pottery, glass, metal-working in all its phases, carving in wood, stone, ivory, and other substances which can be so treated; and the textile arts, embracing weaving, bleaching, dyeing, calico-printing, tapestry making, and lace-making.⁸⁷⁴

Add to these; 'constructive collections, illustrating building, shipbuilding, engineering, and the physical and chemical sciences with which these and other industries stand related' and collections of the 'Biological Sciences – Natural History and Botany' – all of which might 'find a fitting place in our Art Museum.' However, these he thought of as 'more strictly and purely scientific' and therefore they should be 'separated and treated by themselves.'⁸⁷⁵ Paton had always had ambitions but until the new Kelvingrove Art Museum, he was unable to put his ideas into action due to the physical limitations of the buildings in his care. The classification which stands out is the intensely imperialist 'ethnographic collections' pertaining to 'the primitive races, tribes, and nations', which Paton thought would contribute to the wider taxonomy of the new Art Museum. The active pursuit of materials which reinforced racial and cultural superiority feels tagged on in Paton's description and yet it was crucial to the proposed institution's imperial parameters.

Not wanting to make the same mistake twice, Paton suggested that the space should be designed with expansion in mind so that additions to the collection could be facilitated 'without structural alterations, in a simple, symmetrical, and orderly manner.'⁸⁷⁶ Reflecting on past challenges, and, in all likelihood, conversations with other provincial museum curators, Paton argued that 'to begin with buildings on a great scale' were 'not desirable' because 'vast halls and galleries encourage the acquisition and retention of objects of indifferent merit, which add nothing to the real value of a museum.'⁸⁷⁷ Here, it is clear that, though not yet designed or built, Paton was thinking about the future in a way which was symbolised by Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum as a whole.

He considered a collecting system which privileged the choicest of specimens for display had far greater value than acquiring anything and everything and putting it all on display. The size of the museums should therefore reflect its quality and scope not the volume of specimens it contained. Certainly, this is a marked contrast to the pleas for

⁸⁷⁴ Ibid, p.5.

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷⁷ Ibid.

specimens to fill Kelvingrove house published in the press, discussed in Chapter Three. To Paton, this new institution would mark a break with past strategies, despite part of the focus being to preserve existing collections, because, even these would be presented so differently visitors would appreciate them with new eyes. In fact, the museums ‘should increase and become richer – not by mere expansion, but by a relentless weeding-out of the halt, the lame, and the infirm’, a process which he thought could ‘be applied to our Glasgow collection with beneficial effect.’ Unlike the collecting process employed to hoover up items from the 1888 International Exhibition, analysed in the previous chapter, Paton suggested, only two years later, that this would not be the case with the new museum. The Annual Report from 1901 (the same year as Glasgow’s second International Exhibition), noted that, while purchases were ‘more extensive than usual’ owing to the ‘opportunities offered by the Exhibition’ a ‘sub-committee specially constituted to consider the question of purchases’ had ‘resolved to confine their attention chiefly to sculpture’, which suggests that a more discerning attitude to collecting had taken hold.⁸⁷⁸

Paton’s expertise and years of experience made him an asset to the Glasgow Corporation’s aspirations. Curzon, by contrast, though overtly zealous, did not have professional museum experience, so sought advice from a wide range of people. These individuals included former holders of government positions in Calcutta, and others who were supposed to ‘be representative of all classes and parts of the country.’⁸⁷⁹ That said, he seemed, unsurprisingly, to be most convinced by the arguments he made himself. Unlike Glasgow’s new institution, which needed to house an existing collection of valuable museum specimens and art works, the Victoria Memorial was to house a collection created specifically for the purpose. Compared to the first public museums in Calcutta and Glasgow, the collecting situation – that Glasgow’s City Industrial Museum had required a wholly new collection, and Calcutta’s Imperial Museum had been built to house the Asiatic Society’s collection – was reversed. Prior to his speech to the Asiatic Society, Curzon appealed to experts, with a certain degree of urgency, requesting their opinions on what should be collected in the new Memorial. A letter from Government House, Calcutta dated 18th February reveals that Curzon was:

⁸⁷⁸ *Corporation of Glasgow (Parks Department) Museum and Galleries. Report for the year 1901* (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1901), p.7.

⁸⁷⁹ ‘Aims of the newly instituted “Queen Victoria Memorial Fund” for India Memorandum’, 8 February 1901, L/P/J.6 562 563, *British Library*.

endeavouring to formulate, with some attempt at precision, the character of the objects to be collected, and the sources, whether in India or at home, from which they should be derived, with the idea of making some early announcement on the subject.⁸⁸⁰

This highlights that whereas Paton's ideas were motivated by concerns for Glasgow's existing collections, Curzon needed to reverse a collection into his existing idea, to meet his own political objectives. Experts were asked to 'furnish him, after due consideration, with any ideas' they had on the matter. Importantly, 'the desirability of representing, not merely British individuals or achievements, but Native also' was stressed at this idea gathering stage.⁸⁸¹ Arguably, this mirrors the creation of the first Kelvingrove Museum, which was prompted by civic defensiveness and the anxiety that Glasgow was falling behind. The Victoria Memorial was a way of filling a perceived gap in Calcutta's cultural infrastructure as a capital city, but, also, crucially, to establish an imperial narrative which defended the validity of British rule. Its contents would formulate and reify a version of the past which made British rule appear inevitable, justified, and permanent.

These objectives were highlighted by the sorts of things Curzon did and did not think suitable for the Memorial's collection. Curzon specifically stressed that 'the idea is not to convert this hall into an archaeological museum, or to compete with the various institutions of that character that already exist in different parts of the country.'⁸⁸² Whether or not he was aware of the archaeological dispute in 1883, he argued that such specimens as 'Buddhist sculptures, or implements of the bronze and stone ages' would be better suited to 'the imperial and provincial museums.'⁸⁸³ Clearly then, the Victoria Memorial was intended to serve a unique and overarching function, when compared to existing museums across India.

In contrast to the Victoria Memorial, which was predicted to graciously bestow a historic narrative of British victories on the people of India, the new Kelvingrove was more closely aligned with the principals of social elevation through art. Indeed, Paton referred to Bailie Robert Crawford, the Chairman who had planned out an institution to simultaneously cater 'to the taste of the most cultured' and provide 'recreative, innocent, and elevating attractions to the humble and untutored.'⁸⁸⁴ Paton concurred that 'the

⁸⁸⁰ From W. Lawrence to Government of India, Foreign Department, 18 February 1901 in in *Victoria Memorial Hall Correspondence*, p.20b, Mss Eur F111/454, *British Library*

⁸⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸² *Lord Curzon in India*, p.532.

⁸⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.533.

⁸⁸⁴ Paton, 'Art Museum', p.10.

Museum is of the people and for the people, for rich and poor, high and low.’⁸⁸⁵ He projected a distinctly democratic rationale that, in fact, the institution would better serve ‘the humble and needy’ than ‘the wealthy, who possess their own pictures, their own sumptuous books, and their own art objects.’⁸⁸⁶ The ideals for the Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery, from Paton’s perspective, were egalitarian, as the art collections would be owned by the people ‘in common’ and he hoped that the people ‘should learn to regard as their own property’ the museum ‘placed within their own park, and surrounded with their own flower gardens.’ It was therefore ‘a duty’ of the institution to be ‘cheerful, bright, and gay’ in order to attract the people to it. The Committee, for example, stipulated that the galleries should contain a central hall for musical performances, and the final design included an organ. As Fleming recorded, it was ‘intended to be a place of popular resort’, of which the musical element had ‘the merit of novelty.’⁸⁸⁷ Visitors to Kelvingrove today are still given daily organ recitals.

To summarise, while Curzon noted that the galleries of his Memorial would ‘look relatively empty’ at the beginning, he believed that by ‘slow degrees we shall be able to fill them with a historical collection worthy of the Empire.’⁸⁸⁸ Notably, the Memorial came first and the collection second, and yet the collection was fundamental to the narrative Curzon wished to project. Contrastingly, what was considered ‘worthy of the Empire’ in Glasgow came from a place of civic confidence, whereby the city had an existing collection and therefore needed a fitting casket to present it in, one which would truly reflect the aspirations of the ‘second city of the Empire.’

Public Reception

This section deals with three core questions, firstly, who were the institutions targeted at? Secondly, how were they introduced to the public? Thirdly, how did people respond? As the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum and the Victoria Memorial were at opposite ends of their opening development in 1901, the focus is on press reactions at these different stages. Reporting on Glasgow’s 1901 International Exhibition by publications based in the metropolis are particularly illuminating, because they reflect the extent to which the

⁸⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁸⁷ Fleming, ‘The Kelvingrove Art Galleries’, 92.

⁸⁸⁸ Letter from Curzon to varying governors and commissioners explaining misunderstandings in the provincial press, 8 February, 1901 in *Victoria Memorial Hall Correspondence*, p.13, MSS EUR F11/454, IOR

objectives emanating from Glasgow percolated more widely. Many lavished commendations on the Glasgow Corporation and the city's leading citizens for delivering such an accomplished International Exhibition in a provincial city. As Flanders illustrates, 'museum evolution was closely tied to the concept of civic and a motivated Victorian public was receptive to – indeed, at times positively craved – information about developments.'⁸⁸⁹ The press, she concludes, 'was a forum for this debate on all levels' and therefore provides 'a record of public opinion as well as editorial preferences.'⁸⁹⁰ By 1901, press coverage of museum developments had not only become more plentiful, but the public were better equipped to engage with them. In Glasgow, the Kelvingrove Museum had been part of the civic landscape for thirty years, and had therefore become ingrained in the Corporation's responsibilities. Similarly, Calcutta had long been endowed with the Imperial Museum, so, whilst notable additions had been made over the years, it was rarely newsworthy. Consequently, these new institutions caused a flurry of excitement, however, reporting on the Victoria Memorial at this stage was largely limited to significant donations to the Central Fund.

The Central Fund was created because the Victoria Memorial was envisioned to serve all of India's people, but, owing to its location, more especially those in Calcutta and Bengal. The Calcutta Corporation granted Rs. 25,000 from Municipal funds on the grounds that the Municipal Act 'empowered' them to 'provide funds for laying out and ornamenting public gardens and squares.'⁸⁹¹ Its Chairman intimated that 'the Calcutta Corporation would yield to none in feelings of loyalty to her late gracious and beloved sovereign', and this would be their 'last tribute' to the memorial.⁸⁹² This highlights that, whilst the Corporation was financially involved, the Memorial was not primarily conceived as a civic enterprise, in stark contrast to the Kelvingrove Art Galleries.

Support was evident within the resident British population in the city. A letter to the Editor of the *Englishman's Overland Mail*, reflecting on Victoria's death purported that 'we have mourned, and are still mourning [...] But men's memories are short, and we need something to remind us of those who have gone before.'⁸⁹³ To this end, the writer suggested that 'statues, charitable institutions, and such-like mementoes' may well be 'praiseworthy enough as local memorials', but asked 'why should not we, the British

⁸⁸⁹ Flanders, 'Early museums', p. 72.

⁸⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 81.

⁸⁹¹ 'The Calcutta Victoria Memorial', *Englishman's Overland Mail*, 11 July 1901, p. 15.

⁸⁹² Ibid.

⁸⁹³ C. W. 'A Victoria Memorial, to the editor of the "Englishman"', *Englishman's Overland Mail*, 21 February 1901, 15.

Nation, have an Empire-wide memorial of her late Imperial Majesty.’⁸⁹⁴ This, they argued, would serve a ‘treble purpose’ of maintaining her memory, reminding us ‘we belong to one great Nation’, and of ‘being of great practical utility.’⁸⁹⁵ The decision to send this letter to the *Englishman’s Overland Mail* was no doubt an attempt to muster support among like-minded people.

Those in favour of a central memorial in Calcutta were not limited to British residents in the city; Mr Justice Syed Ameer Ali, a Muslim Judge of the Calcutta High Court from 1890, but originally from Oudh, claimed it was a ‘splendid’ idea.⁸⁹⁶ He considered that it ‘should be raised in Calcutta’, because, ‘besides being the capital of the Empire, Calcutta is the one city in India, whose growth marks in the highest degree the history of British rule’, which was ‘intimately associated with the glory Her late Majesty’s reign.’⁸⁹⁷ This was, after all, an explicitly imperial project, and therefore the city’s central position to the governance of India was noted by those Curzon sought for advice. Ameer Ali was a respected member of Calcutta society, and when he retired, Curzon provided ‘warm encomiums.’⁸⁹⁸ Whilst he supported the rationale for the memorial in the capital, he questioned whether ‘confining the collection [...] to the period of British connection with India, would limit both the ‘field of choice and also perhaps the interest in the subject.’⁸⁹⁹ Unlike the Imperial Museum, which had been proposed by the Asiatic Society as a means of concentrating scientific endeavours across the city in one place, the Victoria Memorial was, through the collection, supposed to tell an array of stories about Calcutta, Bengal, and India. Though Curzon sought advice from knowledgeable sources, the Memorial was not intended to create knowledge. While it appears the most self-confident of imperial structures, this appearance is in itself defending Britain’s right to governance for posterity.

As discussed in section one, the Victoria Memorial was announced to the public in a newspaper address and then in two speeches, through which it was claimed that as Calcutta as a capital city it should be furnished with institutions equivalent to other capital cities, because, Curzon argued, ‘other countries have their National Galleries or Imperial Museums.’⁹⁰⁰ Importantly, when comparing Calcutta to other capital cities, Curzon failed

⁸⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁶ Mr. Justice Saiyid Amir Ali to W. Lawrence, 30 January 1901, in *Victoria Memorial Hall*

Correspondence Commencing from January 1901, Vol. I, p.4, C408, VMH.

⁸⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁸ A. Yusef Ali, ‘The Right Hon. Syed Ameer Ali’, *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 4 (1928), 986 – 989.

⁸⁹⁹ Amir Ali, 30 January 1901.

⁹⁰⁰ *Lord Curzon in India*, p.545.

to include a fellow imperial city, which would have been more comparable. In doing so, he attempted to elevate Calcutta's status from an imperial to world capital. This equation was challenged by Alfred Comyn Lyall, who engaged in the archaeological specimens debate in 1883 as the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces and Chief Commissioner of Oudh, but, by 1901 he was a Member of the Indian Council in London.⁹⁰¹ He considered 'the complete success' of the National Memorial to be dependent on 'its general reputation throughout India', though he did not pretend to have 'been paying much attention to the local or provincial discussions which may have been going on about the project.' Nevertheless, he thought that 'the establishment in India of a National Memorial' on the scale proposed was 'less easy, less likely to be acclaimed universally, than in the European countries or capitals' cited by Curzon.⁹⁰² Whilst Curzon considered Calcutta on a par with any other capital city, and therefore a national memorial would be only too appropriate, others, like Lyall, with perhaps more experience, did not agree. Lyall went on to explicitly state that cultural strategies should be subordinated to policies of rule in a colonial context. He believed there to be 'some risk of stirring up conflicting currents of national feeling', and that 'old political divisions' in the Indian Empire were 'not yet so entirely obliterated' to expect 'the unanimous concurrence of the different races and classes for the support of a National Memorial' like those in 'the capitals of Western Europe.'⁹⁰³ Indeed, even compared to its own imperial centre, the social, cultural and political context for Calcutta's 'National Memorial' was far removed from the London one. By explicitly championing British imperialism, Curzon may have hoped to override dissenting voices, but it seems unlikely that he gave them much thought at this time. Yet, contrary to these other nations, Lyall impressed that there was 'a growing tendency' for 'a kind of nationalism that is little disposed to join us in celebrating the achievements in war and politics of the English.' Whilst he conceded that he 'may be miscalculating, from this distance, the trend of Native opinion', it is clear that Curzon's vision of imperial nationalism did not align with the increasing Indian Nationalism on the ground. Lyall charitably suggested that the scheme 'embodies a generous, high spirited, imperial idea which may overcome local prejudices and racial animosities.'⁹⁰⁴ However, looking at the finished Victoria Memorial, any notion that it could quell rising anti-colonial tension, seems wildly misplaced.

⁹⁰¹ From Sir A.C. Lyall to Lord Curzon, 3 May 1901 in *Victoria Memorial Hall Correspondence Commencing from January 1901*, Vol. I, pp.139-141, C408, VMH.

⁹⁰² Ibid.

⁹⁰³ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁴ Ibid.



Figure 6.6 Lord Curzon's statue outside the Victoria Memorial, Kolkata. Photograph by author (2018)

In line with Paton's ideas for uniting Glasgow's different public collections under one roof, Lyall agreed that 'so far as memorial of English achievements and rulership are concerned', it would be best to 'assemble them in one building' for the 'great advantage for their preservation, and for their value historically and politically.'⁹⁰⁵ Lastly, in terms of procuring the desired collection, Lyall made an interesting observation – 'remembering how short official life is in India, and that Government House, like the King's palace in the Oriental tale, is but a caravanserai, where people come and go, and where different tastes and policies incessantly prevail', he expected that much of what Curzon sought would be found at the country estates of men who had made their money in India in the eighteenth century.

Of those most vocally discordant, Bombay was, expectedly, an outlier of the national memorial. Curzon wrote to Henry Stafford Northcote, 1st Baron Northcote (1846 – 1911), Governor of Bombay on the 19th February to thank him for his efforts to recommend the Calcutta scheme, which had been 'so consistently misrepresented and belittled by the Bombay papers.'⁹⁰⁶ Although, in a letter to the Secretary of State for India, Curzon confided that Northcote had 'signally failed to rise to the situation, and to give any sort of lead to Bombay,' thus allowing it to become 'the bitterest critic and the stoutest

⁹⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁰⁶ 'Extract from a letter from the Viceroy to H.E. the Lord Northcote Gov of Bombay', 19 Feb 1901 in *Victoria Memorial Hall Correspondence*, p.20b, Mss Eur F111/454, *British Library*.

opponent' to the scheme.⁹⁰⁷ This attitude is reflective of Curzon's mindset in India generally.

Even before it opened, external commentators noted that Glasgow's new art gallery and museum was a project of which its citizens would be proud. In this way, it was framed as a uniquely civic enterprise. In 1893 *The Magazine of Art* asserted that 'the Kelvingrove Art Galleries and Museum – the latest enterprise of the citizens of Glasgow – will serve to strengthen the reputation already enjoyed by the city of the north for civic liberality and public spirit.'⁹⁰⁸ Such a grand and popular institution needed a grand and popular opening. The sub-committee on the Galleries had deliberated 'the most fitting way of inaugurating the buildings' and proposed 'to hold an exhibition in the year 1901', on the basis that the new Kelvingrove would be completed in 1900.⁹⁰⁹ Bolstered by the success of the 1888 International Exhibition, they felt justified in their 'hope that another exhibition might prove even more successful than its predecessor.'⁹¹⁰ Attractively, the 'architectural beauty' of the new Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum would act as a 'nucleus' and negate the need to build the usual temporary structures required for such an Exhibition. As for 'selecting the year 1901', it was believed 'the exhibition would form a fitting inauguration of the twentieth century', with the added hope that they would be able 'to secure some of the finest exhibits' from the Paris iteration in 1900. The general scheme was unanimously approved.

Pictured below is the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum in the centre of a panoramic view of the 1901 International Exhibition, with the temporary exhibition buildings to the left and the University of Glasgow on the right. The *Daily Telegraph* reported that 'Over against this shimmering of battlemented walls, lofty minarets, and domed roofs, of the many-tinted kiosks, balconies, and the wide-sweeping pathways glows the warm red of the City Art Gallery, the memorial of the last Exhibition...'⁹¹¹ This highlights that the Glasgow Corporation's aims for the new Kelvingrove were well known and considered to have been successfully achieved.

⁹⁰⁷ 'Extract from a letter from the Viceroy to the Secretary of State for India' 14 March 1901 in *Victoria Memorial Hall Correspondence*, p.28, Mss Eur F111/454, *British Library*.

⁹⁰⁸ Fleming, 'The Kelvingrove', pp.92 – 94.

⁹⁰⁹ 'Glasgow Corporation', *The Scotsman*, 19 February 1897, p. 3.

⁹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹¹ *Daily Telegraph* cited in 'Glasgow International Exhibition', *The Morning Post*, 11 July 1901, p. 1.

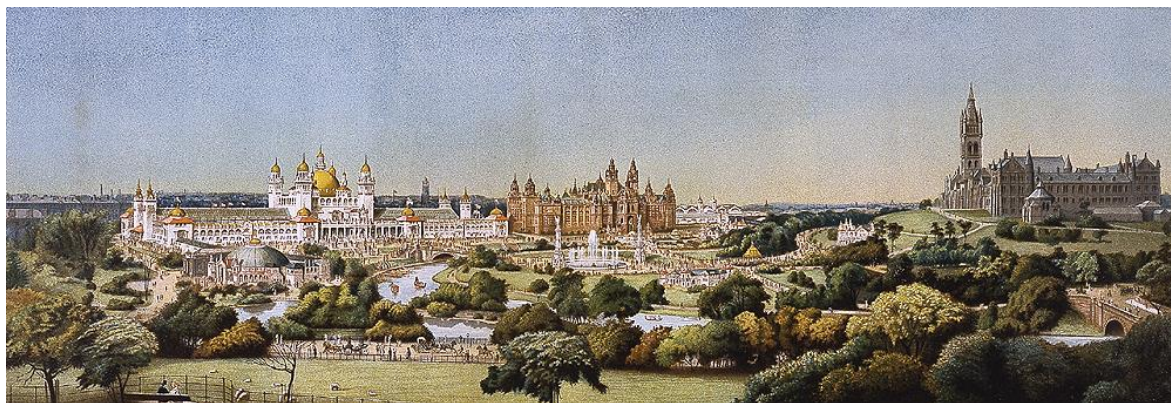


Figure 6.7 *Glasgow International Exhibition 1901* by unknown artist. Reproduced with permission of Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Museums.

In 1901, Glasgow invited the world in on a grand scale, calling the ‘leading newspapers and journals of the world’ to inspect their International Exhibition.⁹¹² A report in *The British Journal of Photography* reveals that the new Kelvingrove had been kept hidden from ‘idle visitors’ and was therefore only seen by those working on it until the International Exhibition. Undoubtedly this would have fuelled anticipation, but may have been less deliberate than the article suggests, as the 1901 Annual Report noted that there were ‘anxieties as to its being ready on time, which had been increasing for quite a year, at the beginning of 1901 assumed a very acute form.’⁹¹³ Indeed, ‘it was largely owing to the incessant energy and urgency’ of Councillor John Shearer that it was ‘possible to have the vast and valuable collections arranged and catalogued for the opening of the Exhibition.’⁹¹⁴ When the reporters were allowed in, they came ‘face to face with what can only be termed “a superbly magnificent palace of art,”’ which was felt to have ‘no rival in the United Kingdom.’⁹¹⁵ At this International Exhibition, ‘Glasgow’s councillors were determined to better their municipal rivals elsewhere, to visibly demonstrate the outward-looking focus of the Scottish city and its important industrial role in the British Empire.’⁹¹⁶ Certainly, as Maver argues, this Kelvingrove ‘projected the kind of image that councillors wished outsiders to identify with Glasgow.’⁹¹⁷

Further journalistic receptions suggests that the Committee was successful in their task to promote both the new Kelvingrove Galleries and Glasgow’s place as ‘the second city of the Empire’. *The Morning Post*, a London daily paper, declared that ‘the second city

⁹¹² ‘Glasgow and the International Exhibition’, *The British Journal of Photography*, 48 (1901), 280 – 281.

⁹¹³ *Corporation of Glasgow (Parks Department) Museum and Galleries. Report for the year 1901* (Glasgow: Robert Anderson, 1901), p. 4.

⁹¹⁴ Ibid.

⁹¹⁵ ‘Glasgow and the International Exhibition’, pp. 280-281.

⁹¹⁶ Maver, ‘Glasgow’s public parks’, p.345.

⁹¹⁷ Ibid.

of the Empire has proved itself worthy of an occasion which is a remarkable testimony to the progress of Scotland as a nation since the Union of Crowns.’⁹¹⁸ The paper therefore acknowledged the city’s central role as a seat of Unionist Liberalism by making a direct link between the Union and progress, which amounts to a rather backhanded compliment! Moreover, the ‘present Exhibition is not merely international, but Imperial as no other Exhibition in this country has ever been before.’⁹¹⁹ Intriguing that this particular International Exhibition had another unnamed quality which, to the reviewer, elevated it beyond previous shows to make it ‘Imperial.’ Glasgow had become a model for imperial provinciality, particularly now it was equipped with the cultural infrastructure fitting of its status. From these reports, Glasgow appears to have become the second city that the whole Empire could revel in. Indeed, *The Morning Post* concluded that the ceremony ‘was one in which the Empire, and not Scotland alone, may take legitimate pride.’⁹²⁰

Unlike the 1888 International Exhibition, 1901 was seen as a more artistic than scientific or industrial enterprise, not only because of the central role of the new Galleries, but because of the loaned collection on display. This suggests that by early twentieth century, second city rhetoric had matured so that there was a focus on cultural assets. Certainly, as *The Morning Post* observed; ‘While an ever-expanding commerce must be the basis of our prosperity, it would be a poor thing in itself if we neglected the arts,’ which had surely been a driving force for developing Glasgow’s cultural institutions throughout the century.⁹²¹ Glasgow had very conspicuously contributed to Britain and its Empire’s commerce over the previous century, but 1901 proved that it could also contribute to the nation’s cultural capital.

Additional responses from the first city’s newspapers demonstrate that conceptions of Glasgow had risen from a city of provincial to national importance. The *Daily Telegraph* reported that ‘such a scheme, undertaken by a single city – a “provincial centre merely,” as Londoners, in their conceit might style it – indicates that Scottish energy, pluck, and administrative and business genius are not dead yet.’⁹²² These purportedly Scottish qualities were, arguably, often attributed to Glasgow specifically, particularly within second city rhetoric, which claimed that Glaswegians were uniquely resourceful and industrious. Provincial, here, no longer meant that Glasgow was an inferior city, even to its

⁹¹⁸ *The Morning Post*, 11 July 1901, p. 1.

⁹¹⁹ Ibid.

⁹²⁰ Ibid.

⁹²¹ Ibid.

⁹²² *Daily Express* cited in ‘Glasgow International Exhibition’, *The Morning Post*, 11 July 1901, p. 1.

secondary capital, instead, its achievements were more remarkable as a result.

Furthermore, the *Daily Express* argued that ‘The southern visitor will realise not only that the British Empire is a great Empire, but also that Scotland, and especially Glasgow, is an important part of it.’⁹²³ Similar to the layered identities posed by the Victoria Memorial, at local, national and imperial levels, the Kelvingrove Museum belonged locally to Glasgow, but it was also a national and imperial success. In this way, the Victoria Memorial contrasted significantly because it was an enterprise achieved through financing sourced from people across India. Thus it was supposed to be a ‘national’ institution paying tribute to an imperial monarch. Whereas other parts of Britain were starting to embrace Glasgow as a key component of their empire, Calcutta’s significance was increasingly rejected.

By the turn of the twentieth century, Glasgow was a self-consciously modern city.⁹²⁴ The previous decade had shown the city make ‘some extraordinary advances’, including, the first subway system beyond London in Britain, so that in 1901 it was ‘perhaps quite the most up-to-date city in the world.’⁹²⁵ As previously discussed, the Municipal Government was one of Glasgow’s core assets in this regard, and one of the failings in Calcutta. The *Daily News* noted that ‘the largest and most beautiful and comprehensive’ International Exhibition ‘seen in the United Kingdom’ was the culmination of four years’ work by ‘the people of Glasgow as represented by their municipal government, which is distinguished above all civic governments.’⁹²⁶ In particular, the paper praised ‘its bold and remarkably successful experiment in what is usually called Collectivist rule.’⁹²⁷ Collectivist could be taken as a euphemism for municipal socialism. Similarly, the *Globe* noted the triumphs in other cities – London, Paris and Chicago, but acknowledged that ‘Glasgow aspires for pride of place, and is doing its best to place itself at the highest point which any municipality has succeeded in attaining.’⁹²⁸ The municipal government, which was a key aspect of Glasgow’s claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire’ was recognised by external commentators as having serious value. Not only this, but such a system elicited very tangible and impressive results, which had the power to create a vital impression of the British Empire across the world. Furthermore, that these actions were deliberate, and Glasgow’s aspirations for an increased status within the imperial hierarchy was observed and applauded. This discredits any

⁹²³ Ibid.

⁹²⁴ ‘Glasgow and the International Exhibition’, pp. 280-281.

⁹²⁵ Ibid.

⁹²⁶ *Daily News* cited in ‘Glasgow International Exhibition’, *The Morning Post*, 11 July 1901, p. 1.

⁹²⁷ Ibid.

⁹²⁸ *Globe* cited in ‘Glasgow International Exhibition’, *The Morning Post*, 11 July 1901, p. 1.

notion that the ‘second city of the Empire’ was seen as merely rhetorical, because, as these reports illustrate, Glasgow’s aspirations in this direction were part of a very real process of civic improvements. Yet, in Calcutta, the city’s municipal government barely registered as an important feature in the opening stages of the Victoria Memorial. Instead, the Calcutta Corporation featured only as a passive donor of Rs250,000 to the project.

Whilst these extracts from other newspapers were selected by the *Morning Post*, presumably, to better illustrate the paper’s own political affiliations, this does not negate the fact that these sentiments were trending across a variety of prominent London publications. These reviews show that the Glasgow Corporation’s actions to heighten the city’s status were deliberate, and were acceded by external commentators. Whereas rhetoric surrounding the 1888 International Exhibition had centred on Glasgow outperforming its peers, and producing something on par with the greatest exhibitions in London, the 1901 attempt was posited as an attempt to surpass Glasgow’s own previous success in a way which was both confident and defended status gained previously.

The Second City Paradox

Drawing on the different facets of second city status – population, administrative role, commercial and industry, and cultural infrastructure, the paradox of the associated rhetoric was employed both at times of greatness and weakness. As this thesis has explored, second city rhetoric was paradoxically incited in Glasgow and Calcutta when the city’s status was most secure, and, when it was most unstable or vulnerable. The different approaches to the new century, presented by the new Kelvingrove Galleries and the Victoria Memorial, reflect this paradox and goes to the heart of assertions of what it meant to be the ‘second city of the Empire’. In this way, the new Kelvingrove was intended as a beacon to advertise Glasgow’s broad achievements, designed to impress the world and solidify beyond doubt its position as the ‘second city.’ Such an ostentatious structure does however suggest a plan to quell long standing criticism that Glasgow was devoid of the cultural assets required to be a significant imperial provincial city. Doubts that Glasgow could successfully present a cultural spectacle, which had been present in 1888, were dispelled by 1901. Though, the Victoria Memorial appears to be as strikingly brazen as Curzon himself, it was a defensive gesture too.

The official opening of the Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery in October 1902 was reported with great aplomb in *The Scotsman*. Following the removal of the loaned art exhibits from the International Exhibition, the ‘Glasgow Corporation collection of pictures and sculpture’ were finally taken from the old galleries into ‘the palatial buildings at Kelvingrove.’⁹²⁹ The ‘ample accommodation’ was divided to also receive ‘museum specimens’, and, in doing so, ‘this handsome building and its interesting contents form a suitable memorial of the enterprise and enlightenment of the Corporation and leading citizens of Glasgow.’⁹³⁰ The report goes on to describe the origins of the Corporation’s art collection, along the familiar lines of the narrative described in Chapter Three, and the subsequent important donations by other notable Glasgow citizens. The lower galleries ‘are devoted to the exposition of archaeology [...] geology, ethnography, zoology, and natural history.’⁹³¹ A further gallery was ‘illustrative of “Old Glasgow” – there appearing in it, amongst other things, drawings of old Glasgow buildings from the end of the eighteenth century.’⁹³² Interestingly, a notion of “Old Glasgow”, related back to the pride in the city’s historical footing, discussed in Chapter One, it also implied a new Glasgow. Further galleries were ‘devoted to technology, to machinery, and to the exhibition of models of steamers and yachts.’⁹³³ *The Scotsman* concluded that ‘The Glasgow people have altogether an Art Gallery and Museum of which they may be proud, and in which many pleasant and profitable hours may be spent by gentle and simple alike.’⁹³⁴ The impressed tone would have been all the more gratifying to Glaswegians, coming as it did from the most famed of Edinburgh papers, which proclaimed to capture the feelings of the nation. Indeed, Glasgow’s feat was all the more impressive precisely because it was a provincial city, and this enterprise was therefore a wholly civic one. Private funds, from interested parties, like Muir, were seen to reflect an engaged and active citizenship, a key component of a developed civic culture, in a British context. Moreover, the collaborative process between the Glasgow Corporation, its citizens, and private enterprise seemed to present the city as a truly world-leading municipality. This was heightened by the impressive scope of the new institution, in terms of its collection, its contribution to science, and role in education across the city.

⁹²⁹ ‘The Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum, Kelvingrove’, *The Scotsman*, 25 October 1902, p. 10.

⁹³⁰ Ibid.

⁹³¹ Ibid.

⁹³² Ibid.

⁹³³ Ibid.

⁹³⁴ Ibid.

No longer constrained to the position of commercial capital of Scotland, London-based commentators were willing to name Glasgow their favoured second in command within the network of imperial cities. This was highlighted by the favourable comparisons made between Glasgow's Exhibition and one held in Paris the year before. This is particularly interesting as the *Glasgow Herald* had reprinted scepticism from *the Daily Telegraph* in September 1900, that it was 'a bold project for St Mungo's city to organise an International Exhibition so soon after the great world's show in the French capital.'⁹³⁵ Yet, Glasgow managed to impress nonetheless. Consequently, the rhetoric which could be classified as self-congratulatory, and perhaps hyperbolic, in the mid-nineteenth century, was, by 1901, replaced with confident declarations by external commentators. Praise levied at the public works conducted by the Glasgow Corporation, discussed in Chapter Two, was truly exemplified by the triumphant Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum.

On the reverse, the Calcutta Corporation was not recognised for its ground-breaking or even successful administration of the city. While the Calcutta Town Hall was physically crumbling, the new Victoria Memorial was an opportunity to showcase the particular merits of the city. Yet the public mood towards the Memorial did not improve over time. In 1907, Donald Smeaton, Liberal MP for Stirling Burghs, asked a question in the Commons to the Secretary of State for India, Mr John Morley, about the viability of progressing with the Victoria Memorial.⁹³⁶ Smeaton stated that 'there is a growing public opinion in favour of abandoning the original design of a huge hall, and of using the balance subscribed in providing each province with memorials.'⁹³⁷ Morley dismissed the question on the basis that 'the money is not held by Government, nor are the works on the Memorial being carried on by Government establishments.' Instead, the funds collected had been transferred to 'a body of trustees, who are charged with the erection, maintenance, and management of the Memorial.'⁹³⁸ The Trustees included the Government of Bengal, the Chief Justice of the High Court of West Bengal, the Mayor of the Corporation of Calcutta, persons nominated by the Central Government based on either their expertise in 'commerce and industry' or their knowledge as 'museologists, historians or art historians', as well as representatives from Central Government.⁹³⁹ This move shifted responsibility

⁹³⁵ 'The Glasgow Exhibition', *Glasgow Herald*, 12 September 1900, p.4.

⁹³⁶ House of Commons, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates: The Official Report* (13 June 1907, vol.175, cols. 1585-6) [Online] < <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1907/jun/13/victoria-memorial-hall-calcutta> > [accessed 28 April 2021]

⁹³⁷ Ibid.

⁹³⁸ *The Victoria Memorial Act 1903* (No.10), passed by the Governor General of India in Council, 20 March 1903, [Online] < <http://www.victoriameorial-cal.org/uploads/VMAR.pdf> > [accessed 25 April 2021]

⁹³⁹ Ibid.

away from the Government of India and onto Calcutta and West Bengal, highlighting a fall in the city's status as the capital, which Curzon had tried so confidently to assert through the Memorial. Smeaton's question was based on 'remarks made by the Maharaja of Darbanga', who was a powerful and respected voice. Morley replied that he had 'read the remarks of the Maharaja of Darbhanga referred to' and thought they would 'doubtless receive the consideration of the trustees of the Memorial.' It is interesting that princely voices were taken very seriously at this juncture. A month later, Sir Arthur Fell, Conservative MP for Great Yarmouth, asked 'if the proposal to erect a great hall in Calcutta' had been abandoned, which was answered in the negative.⁹⁴⁰

Calcutta became more closely connected with the 'second city of the Empire' title when its position as the capital of India was threatened and eventually lost to Delhi. Both second city rhetoric and the Victoria Memorial were ways of asserting Calcutta's historical significance when its political dominance was waning. The new capital, importantly contained many historical assets far preceding any endeavours of the British Empire. Whilst no one could deny the historical significance of Calcutta for the British in India, Delhi was an older city, and the Durbar in 1911 illustrated a closer connection to the form of imperial rule popular at the time. The consternation at a national memorial being centred in Calcutta before 1911, does, however, suggest that its position was threatened in more ways than purely politically. In fact, Curzon asserted that he 'had to decide whether the site of the Victoria Memorial Hall should be at Delhi' and chose Calcutta instead.⁹⁴¹ Whilst the Victoria Memorial was challenged on the basis that it was prioritised as a national memorial over local memorials, it was also contentious because it was in Calcutta specifically. Even after the removal of the capital to Delhi in December 1911, Curzon rejected the cogency of the move. In the House of Lords in 1912, he stated his 'very warm feelings for Calcutta', which to him had always been 'a worthy capital of British rule in India.'⁹⁴² He credited English endeavour and commerce for making Calcutta the 'second city in the Empire' in terms of 'population and size', and the varying 'offices of the Government in Calcutta' which had 'built up to its present commanding height the fabric of British rule in India.'⁹⁴³

⁹⁴⁰ *House of Commons, Hansard's Parliamentary Debates: The Official Report* (15 July 1907, vol. 178, cols. 318-9) [Online], < <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1907/jul/15/victoria-memorial-calcutta> > [accessed 28 April 2021]

⁹⁴¹ *House of Lords, Hansard's Parliamentary Debates: The Official Report* (21 February 1912, vol. 11, cols.137-88) [Online], <<https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/lords/1912/feb/21/india>> [accessed 28 April 2021]

⁹⁴² Ibid.

⁹⁴³ Ibid.

Crucially, Curzon made reference to Calcutta as the second city only when it had been dethroned as the capital. He furthered that ‘Calcutta has had a splendid past, and whatever happens to it in the future nothing can alter that.’⁹⁴⁴ This ‘creation of a new capital’ uprooted Curzon’s conviction in his initial address on the memorial, that no offence could be ‘reasonably entertained in any quarter at the selection of the capital of the Empire as the site of an imperial monument to the first Queen-Empress.’⁹⁴⁵ Indeed, tellingly, he did not use the ‘second city of the Empire’ epithet in this context, though he cited the different facets of Calcutta’s second city status, namely, its position as a rail and sea port city, its ‘great mercantile importance’, ‘its metropolitan character’, the presence of Government House and ‘the many offices of Government.’⁹⁴⁶ The ‘metropolitan character’ was really his equivalent to the ‘second city of the Empire’, but at a time when he considered the city’s position within the imperial network to be steadfast.

Whilst second city rhetoric was not deployed to justify the creation of the Victoria Memorial, the monument encapsulated Calcutta’s claim retrospectively. It remains a monument to Calcutta’s former supremacy within India; an indelible mark on the landscape, which ironically, does a lot of what Curzon wanted – a memorial to him – and a memorial to what the British did in India. Curzon relied heavily on the city’s position as a capital, which was equal to other capitals, such as Washington, Ottawa, and Rome. In fighting for a specific monument for the Indian nation, he challenged the notion that only the first city should be endowed with such grand symbols of imperial power. By doggedly pursuing a central monument in Calcutta, rather than encouraging smaller local mementos, Curzon attempted to refocus growing Nationalist sentiment towards a united India, under the banner of the British Empire. To this end, engaging second city rhetoric would have undermined his core rationale by positioning Calcutta as subsidiary to London. Consequently, this ostensibly confident pile of robust marble is actually deeply rooted in colonial anxiety.

As this thesis has illustrated, Calcutta was only sporadically referred to as the ‘second city of the Empire’ throughout the latter stages of the nineteenth century, yet, by the turn of the twentieth, it was increasingly labelled as such.⁹⁴⁷ In fact, the Prince of

⁹⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁵ Aims of the newly instituted “Queen Victoria Memorial Fund” for India Memorandum’, 8 February 1901, L/P/J.6 562 563, *British Library*.

⁹⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁴⁷ ‘Calcutta Trades Association’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 19 February 1903, p. 11; ‘The Royal Tour in India’, *The Scotsman*, 30 December 1905, p.9; ‘Early History of Calcutta’, *Morning Post*, 10 July 1905, p.9; ‘Speech by the Prince of Wales’, *Belfast News-Letter*, 30 December 1905, p.6;

Wales' trip to Calcutta in 1905 seems to have a formative effect on these claims. After an address from the Corporation of Calcutta, and 'a magnificent necklace of jewels presented to the Princess', the 'Prince made a graceful reply, emphasising the fact that Calcutta was the second city of the Empire.'⁹⁴⁸ In commentary provided by Low on the Prince of Wales laying the foundation-stone, Low recognised that the memorial:

is to be built all of stainless white marble, and no doubt it might be made very splendid with domes and minarets, but so conceived, it would not respond to the local tradition. Calcutta is an English city, the second of the Empire, and it does well to be conscious of the fact.⁹⁴⁹

Calcutta's position as the 'second city of the Empire' is plainly stated and, more importantly, connected to the enterprise of creating the Victoria Memorial.

By the time it was finally opened to the public in 1921, a book of images commemorating the event, was entitled *Souvenir of the Visit of HRH Prince of Wales to the Second City of the Empire*.⁹⁵⁰ Whilst the connections between second city rhetoric and the Victoria Memorial had been less than concrete during the immediate planning stages, by 1921 the 'second city of the Empire' was explicitly incited and recorded for posterity. This shift is important for understanding the paradox of second city rhetoric, in a way which is applicable to other cities beyond the remit of this study. Observing occasions when the 'second city of the Empire' is specifically referenced exudes significant insight into the image commentators were trying to evoke. Moreover this process, whereby the Victoria Memorial became connected to the title only when doubts were circling about whether it was appropriate for Calcutta, mirror the arguments which emerged to expand the Kelvingrove House museum once it had already been established.

Conclusions

Between the mid and late nineteenth century there was a notable shift between motivations for establishing public museums in Glasgow and Calcutta, which has been highlighted by the different drivers behind the Kelvingrove House Museum and Imperial Museum, and the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum and the Victoria Memorial. During the mid-century, governing bodies in both cities were directed towards creating a public museum

⁹⁴⁸ 'The Prince and Princess at Calcutta', *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 25 January 1906, p.8.

⁹⁴⁹ Low, *A Vision of India*, p. 212.

⁹⁵⁰ *Souvenir of the Visit of HRH Prince of Wales to the Second City of the Empire* (Calcutta: W. Newman & Co., 1921), R7271, VMH.

by the presence of such institutions in comparable cities, whether provincial centres or secondary capitals. By the latter period, it was increasingly important that these institutions should befit the status of the city. In Glasgow, the second Kelvingrove, unlike its predecessor, was a grand status symbol from the outset, and the ideas behind the Victoria Memorial were even more monumental.



Figure 6.8 Interior of the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, 1901, Glasgow City Archive



Figure 6.9 Central view inside the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, 1901, Glasgow City Archive

In Glasgow, the resulting airy museum and gallery (pictured above) was a welcome antidote to the cramped, cluttered, and claustrophobic Kelvingrove Museum. Kelvingrove House, which had been extended and adapted throughout the closing decades of the nineteenth-century, was demolished in 1900. This was a new Glasgow, one which its citizens could enjoy and be proud of and erasing any physical remnants of the past seemed important. It was argued that ‘its appearance and close proximity to the new Art Galleries might strike a jarring note.’⁹⁵¹ The *Glasgow Herald* reported in 1898 that ‘the decision of the Executive of the 1901 Exhibition to ask for the removal of Kelvingrove House has naturally aroused in a large and happily increasing class the most decided opposition.’⁹⁵² This request from the manager was read to the Glasgow Corporation on 15 December 1898 after it had received the approval of the whole Executive Council.⁹⁵³ It was hoped that, as ‘one of the last of the historic landmarks which the city’s growth has spared’, it might be allowed to stay.⁹⁵⁴ A correspondent for the *Glasgow Herald* noted that ‘without overstating the value of Kelvingrove House’, at ‘nearly 120 years old’ it had ‘become the memorial of an age which is rapidly fading from us to live only as history.’⁹⁵⁵ Rationale for retaining the building was thus diametrically opposed to the arguments for removing it. Evocatively, and perhaps truly, the report furthers – ‘sweep it away and you break the power of comprehension, sever the bond of sympathy which enables you to call up even a faint and ghostly image of the past.’⁹⁵⁶ Today, the site of the old Kelvingrove Park is covered by a skatepark, and all that remains of the museum are a few photographs and drawings. Still, in 1898, the correspondent felt that ‘we suffer in Glasgow for lack of guidance and instruction in matters of art and taste.’⁹⁵⁷ Indeed, a previous letter to the *Glasgow Herald* from ‘The Growler’ asked ‘What good will result from the letters bemoaning the fate of Kelvingrove Mansion?’⁹⁵⁸ Because, ‘Our civic lords have no artistic or sentimental adviser’ and they had decided it needed to be removed.⁹⁵⁹ The Growler argued that, if the ‘poor old place could speak, it would explain, “Take me away!”’, because it was ‘like an antique member of a club who has outlived one generation of its members, and whose only claim to mingle with the new bloods is that he was there before them.’⁹⁶⁰ As the new

⁹⁵¹ ‘New Office’, 1 December 1898 in press clippings, *GMRC*

⁹⁵² ‘The Retention of Kelvingrove House’, *Glasgow Herald*, 10 December 1898, p. 4.

⁹⁵³ ‘A meeting of the Executive Council’, *Glasgow Herald*, 1 December 1898, p.6; ‘Glasgow Corporation’, *Glasgow Herald*, 16 December 1898, p.4.

⁹⁵⁴ *Glasgow Herald*, 10 December 1898, p. 4.

⁹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵⁸ The Growler, ‘Kelvingrove House’, *Glasgow Herald*, 9 December 1898, p.4.

⁹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum so completely outstripped the previous Kelvingrove, the old building had no ostensible purpose other than to nod to Glasgow's history. 'The Growler' observed that 'it's very rear is now to be impertinently gazed upon by that marvel in red.' This new image of Glasgow, epitomised by the new Kelvingrove, was thus hoped to eclipse the old one, so that it might be like the Kelvingrove House had never been there at all. The letter concludes, 'soon nothing will remain to remind us that the place was ever worthy of a visit.' Responses varied, but were clustered around the idea that, for better or worse, raising Kelvingrove to the ground was an erasure.⁹⁶¹ It would sever a connection with the city's past, a severance from the past which, once done, could not be undone.

Significantly, useful parallels can be drawn between this reaction in Glasgow, and responses to removing the Calcutta Town Hall in the early twentieth century, discussed in Chapter Two. On the one hand, Kelvingrove House was demolished, on the other, the Town Hall still stands, albeit very precariously. The comparable colonial historicity of the Town Hall in Calcutta gave it a value which could not be replicated, and therefore its existence was used to assert the city's significance in the imperial network. By contrast, Glasgow's Kelvingrove House would have stood as a reminder that the city and its cultural infrastructure had come from humble beginnings, and only recently achieved the status which emanated from the new Galleries. Erasing the Town Hall in Calcutta would have suggested that the infrastructure of the city could be replaced, and, if it could be replaced, then what would replace it was up for debate.

By the opening of the twentieth century, Glasgow and Calcutta's claims for 'Second City of the British Empire' were diametrically positioned, yet both paradoxical. Glasgow's strengthened position meant its assertions of second city status were based on its self-conceived modernity and belief in its future prosperity. By contrast, Calcutta's politically and colonially weakened position prompted more overt assertions of the second city epithet, which elites based on the metropole's historical significance. While Glasgow's rhetoric was self-consciously modern, Calcutta was trapped in its reputation as the 'City of Palaces' and its image was therefore tied to its former grandeur. Despite heralding a new age, both were, however, firmly Victorian in origin and ideology. The Victoria Memorial Hall, for instance, was intended not just as a memorial to the Queen herself, but to the Victorian era, and, in many ways, the new Kelvingrove Galleries were a memorial to Glasgow's significant achievements in the nineteenth century.

⁹⁶¹ C. E. I. A. 'Kelvingrove House', *Glasgow Herald*, 6 December 1898, p.9.

Writing in the 1990s, Tapati Guha Thakurta described the story of the Victoria Memorial as one ‘of slow-gathering rot and decadence, of imperial legacies grown old and mouldy, of India’s national indifference to the fate of its valuable holdings.’⁹⁶² Moreover:

The spectre of surface grandeur and internal decay stands like a parable of the empire and the colony that stumbled to independence under its tutelage. In particular, the tale of the Victoria Memorial becomes symptomatic of the tale of Calcutta: a city which witnesses some of the grandest moments of empire, whose problems nonetheless continuously threatened to explode beneath the veneer.⁹⁶³

Today, the external edifice and surrounding gardens are beautifully kept, and a new centre for the archives and libraries, as well as a lecture theatre suggests an institution transitioning to a postcolonial era, away from decay. It has been reappropriated to better suit the people of Kolkata today, as opposed to the European population it was really built for, who are long gone from the city. Whilst, Curzon and Victoria remain very present at the Memorial, they are also ignored by the majority of visitors that marvel at the white marble today.

It is vital to remember that institutions like the Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery and the Victoria Memorial, both essential sites today for locals and tourists alike, were established to meet a set of core objectives, which were set by elite men with imperial ideals. The buildings and collections visitors engage with now are not hugely different, though they may be presented differently, than those which opened to the public in the early twentieth century. The Kelvingrove is still divided in two – the Art galleries to the right and the Museum galleries to the left (using the Dumbarton Road entrance), and the park too remains relatively unchanged bar the skatepark, which stands over the original Kelvingrove House Museum. Similarly, the present offering at the Victoria Memorial has shifted, some statues have been removed, the galleries are used in slightly different ways, but Victoria is still a central figure. Visitors entering from Queens Way are greeted into the memorial park by giant lion gatekeepers, and their view of the building itself carefully frames an even bigger statue of Victoria. As the conclusion will discuss, this particular statue, which was commissioned specifically for the Victoria Memorial, mirrored the one displayed at the entrance to the new Galleries in Glasgow during the 1901 Exhibition.

The messaging of these buildings to meet imperial aims, and assert civic significance within the hierarchy of British imperial cities should be unavoidable, and yet,

⁹⁶² Tapati Guha Thakurta, ‘Traversing Past and Present in the Victoria Memorial’, *Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta* 153 (Nov., 1995), p.2.

⁹⁶³ Ibid.

are avoided by contemporary curators. Whereas the original Kelvingrove Museum was always posited as a temporary space, despite its extension and highlighted by its absence today, the new Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery was consciously designed for posterity. This was an institution which was tied, in all ways, to the city's status as the 'second city of the Empire.'

Conclusion - Where next for the 'second city of the Empire'?

The title of the 'second city of the Empire' was much more than self-congratulatory rhetoric, and should be evaluated more critically by future scholars. Such a reappraisal is enabled by the definition outlined by this thesis, which has identified four key components of second city claims, namely; a substantial population, a significant administrative or, even governmental profile, a full spectrum economy, and, a noteworthy civic culture. Without exploring how this rhetoric was variously applied to different cities, it would not have been possible to formulate a working definition. Although perhaps at first sight unpromising, the comparison between Glasgow and Calcutta has borne considerable fruit. The juxtaposition of two such radically different urban centres competing for the same title has highlighted change over time and the significance of the colonial and provincial contexts in which they were situated. Calcutta, as a colonial secondary capital and Glasgow, as a Scottish-British industrial and provincial city, has brought to the fore that second city rhetoric was used both confidently and defensively. Any status gained had to be developed over time, confidently asserted and defensively maintained. The second city paradox undoubtedly highlights that rhetorical devices struck more than one note and were far more complex than the existing literature supposes.

Though unquestionably a rhetorical tool, the title was used to both stimulate and respond to wider civic developments, including public museums and their collections. Recognition of the deliberate acts to promote Glasgow and Calcutta as the second city has stressed the impact that competition for the title had on developing urban landscapes and infrastructure. It has only been possible to discuss a small fraction of the material relating to second city rhetoric in Glasgow and Calcutta, leaving much more primed for closer analytical study.

Vitaly, the approach applied to Glasgow and Calcutta could, and should be neatly transposed to any of the cities vying for the title. Certainly, the other competing claimants, whether; Birmingham, Bombay, Dublin, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Manchester, or Sydney, would require a similar process of exploration. To do so would be to gain a better understanding of how these purported second cities related to each other, in both a hierarchical and networked conceptualisation of the British Empire. Whilst the competition for this accolade suggests an intensely hierarchical structure, the fact that multiple cities were able to claim this status at the same time demonstrates that relationships across the British Empire were both horizontal and vertical. Indeed, during the opening stages of

research, London was placed more centrally in my second city matrix; not least because that is where my own experience lay, but in the course of my research I found that the imperial provincial cities provided much better insight into the way that imperial power was articulated, divided and fought over. Provincial museums played a focal role in this development, because the communications between curators and municipal bodies criss-crossed the Empire, often by-passing London altogether. In Britain, London's superior claim to specimens and valuable collections was largely accepted, yet the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum is clearly a culmination of the idea that the provinces could have progressive and grandiose collections too. On the other hand, my discussion of Calcutta's Imperial Museum and Victoria Memorial Hall elucidate the complexity of the city's position, both as the Metropolis of India and a colonial centre. This thesis, through looking at public museums, has contributed to the idea of the Empire as both a collaborative and competitive project, within which its participants accepted key political and cultural frameworks but did not necessarily agree on the role they would play.

That said, between some cities there was more cohesion than others. Civic leaders and commentators in Edinburgh, for example, were often very happy for Glasgow to take the title of the 'second city of the Empire' because it demonstrated that Scotland was an important component of the imperial project. Moreover, both Glasgow and Edinburgh had a unique but distinctive contribution to make to Scotland as a whole. By contrast, the colonial context has highlighted the significant friction between colonial leaders in Bombay and Calcutta, which resulted in a rhetorically uneasy relationship, whereby neither was happy to concede that the other played a greater role in India's successes. Indeed, Bombay's leaders challenged Calcutta's superiority through museum discourses, as explored through the 1883 archaeological specimen debate in Chapter Four.

MacKenzie's argument that the race for second place uncovers 'something of the nature of imperial power', is strongly confirmed by the research presented in this thesis.⁹⁶⁴ Second city rhetoric, whilst by no means universal, begins to reveal the root of how imperial power was experienced by individual localised commentators in Britain, India, Australia and beyond. This research develops our understanding of the Empire's networks, which centres on interconnectivity. Interconnectivity between Glasgow and Calcutta, between museums and civic status, between museum professionals across the globe.

⁹⁶⁴ MacKenzie, "'The Second City of the Empire'", p.216.

While the contrasts between Glasgow and Calcutta have been the core focus, the cultural infrastructure of the two cities became more closely comparable by the twentieth century. Pictured below are identical statues of Queen Victoria, the first at Glasgow's 1901 International Exhibition, and the second, outside the Victoria Memorial in Kolkata. These matching statues sculpted by George Frampton (1860 – 1928) were part of a series of 'portrait statues of her [the Queen] for Calcutta, Southport, St Helens, Newcastle, Winnipeg, and Leeds,' originally commissioned for her Diamond Jubilee in 1897.⁹⁶⁵ Glasgow is omitted from this list because the one displayed was a cast. Victoria's presence made overt statements about each city's loyalty to both the crown and the empire, at a point in time when her death had prompted colonial anxiety.

⁹⁶⁵ 'Obituary. Sir G. J. Frampton, the Sculptor', *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 22 May 1928, p.8.



*Figure 7.1 Queen Victoria by Sir George Frampton, unveiled at the 1901 International Exhibition
courtesy of Glasgow City Council*



Figure 7.2 The Victoria Memorial, Kolkata, India ©Mary Evans/ Hubertus Kanus

Whilst Glasgow did not retain its statue after the Exhibition, Victoria still guards the entrance to the Victoria Memorial in Kolkata. Although her crown has been removed, the small diamond tiara, shown in the Glasgow photograph, was integral to her imperial image, particularly during the latter years of her reign. Set against the backdrop of these two flagship institutions, the figure of Victoria highlights the ways that imperial symbols were duplicated and transposed to different settings, in a way which mirrors second city rhetoric. Moreover, in line with the second city paradox, confident and defensive public strategies were developed in Glasgow and Calcutta and connected to flagship institutions, meaning that these spaces had become key arenas for broadcasting imperial messages about the city. Considering recent controversies surrounding statuary, these messages are neither incidental nor unimportant. Whilst statues are not, as many would argue, portrayals of history, they are intense expressions of the aspirations and ideas of those that put them there.

The dialectical engagement between the development of second city rhetoric and museums has generated significant findings. Symbiotically, civic competition for imperial status established a toolkit of cultural infrastructure across the Empire, and the rapid development of museums further fuelled civic emulation and competition. Drawing these competing urban centres together has revealed some of the underlying motivations behind the development of public museums. Calcutta's were unsurprisingly colonial, but the multiple connections between Glasgow's and the city's aspirations for imperial status were new. Longair and McAleer's *Curating Empire*, as a volume concerned with the 'subject of museums and their various conflicted and shifting relationships with the British Empire', has been a catalyst for this research.⁹⁶⁶ Through analysis of the rhetoric surrounding key events in the history of museums, such as the opening of the Kelvingrove Museum or the closure of the Bengal Economic Museum, the connection between these public institutions and the status of the city has become clearer.

Owing to the sizeable gap in the existing literature, much remains to be done. To give an indication of where this research could go if the time period were extended into the twentieth century, I will return to Rosebery's particular predilection for proffering the title of 'second city of the Empire' to whichever city he was addressing, discussed in the Introduction. In November 1912, Rosebery presented a mace to the Glasgow Corporation in a ceremony shrouded in the expected civic pomp. Press reports reveal that the proceedings were heavily infused with second city rhetoric. During the speeches, the Lord

⁹⁶⁶ Longair and McAleer, (eds.), *Curating Empire*, p. 4.

Provost, Daniel Macaulay Stevenson, stated that ‘the right to the title of Second City had been wrested from them by the Sassenach.’⁹⁶⁷ Sassenach, a derogatory Scots term for the English, can be taken to refer to Birmingham, which, by 1911, had a population of 840,372, compared to Glasgow’s 783,401.⁹⁶⁸ As suggested in Chapter One, census reports provoked a flurry of press speculation about which city could viably be called the ‘second of the Empire’, and this was increasingly the case into the twentieth century. No doubt prompted by commentary that Glasgow had been dethroned by Birmingham, the Lord Provost argued that ‘they could not admit for a moment that a few thousand inhabitants more or less made a city’s status.’⁹⁶⁹ Population statistics, previously one of the core characteristics that Glasgow’s second city claims rested on, were dismissed because they did not make ‘a city’s status.’ Instead, the status of Glasgow was such that it ‘was, is, and should be the second of the Empire’, because of the:

ancient seat of learning, of her eminence in science and art, her wealth, her extensive and exceptionally varied industries and manufactures, her enormous trade, her world-wide commerce, and, he hoped he might add, in virtue of her pre-eminence in municipal government.⁹⁷⁰

The different aspects of second city claims, which have been identified by this thesis, are clearly presented here. Glasgow’s civic culture, namely its university and museums, is given precedence over the more established aspects of second city status – population, commerce and industry, and administration. Without the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, or the Corporation’s other civic cultural initiatives like the People’s Palace and Camphill Gallery, such assertions would not have been viable. By this point too, the issue of a suitable public library had been resolved. Research into the development of this rhetoric in the second half of the nineteenth century sheds vital light on its further evolution in the twentieth. In reply to the Lord Provost, Rosebery referred to Glasgow ‘transforming herself from a small fishing village into the second city of the Empire,’ which, as this thesis has explored, was a prolonged, diverse and complex process, and, moreover, applicable to Calcutta too.⁹⁷¹ Again, this trajectory suggests that Glasgow’s second city claim had matured. Moreover, by asserting the long-standing nature of its claim, Glasgow became harder to unseat, even though different factors were being foregrounded.

⁹⁶⁷ ‘Lord Rosebery in Glasgow.’, *The Scotsman*, 9 November 1912, p.7.

⁹⁶⁸ Birmingham: ‘The Second City. Glasgow’s Proud Distinction’, *Christchurch Times*, 9 November 1912, p.6; Glasgow: ‘First of the Census Returns’, *Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*, 25 April 1911, p.7.

⁹⁶⁹ *The Scotsman*, 9 November 1912, p.7.

⁹⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁷¹ Ibid.

As more viable challengers entered the arena for the ‘second city of the Empire’ title, namely Sydney and Birmingham, historicity rose in importance – not just the historical nature of the city, but its long-held claim to the title. Calcutta did not have a long history, or at least not a long English History, so historicity became about the city’s ‘colonial’ past. Consequently, even ideas of time are mutable in forging second city discourses. The loss of its capital city status meant its claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire’ was far more important in the early decades of the twentieth century. A letter to the Editor of the *Englishman’s Overland Mail* in 1927, highlights the interconnectivity between the Indian Museum and Calcutta’s claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire’:

Rumour is current that the Government of India have decided to shift the offices, Museum and the splendid library of the Geological Survey of India from Calcutta to Delhi. It is high time that the citizens of Calcutta should raise their voice against the vagary of the Government and enter an emphatic protest against this vandalism of depriving Calcutta of a body of men together with their splendid equipments and collections. Since the removal of the capital of India from Calcutta to Delhi, the second city in the Empire has patiently suffered many idiosyncrasies of the Government, but this thoughtless and indiscreet action should not be allowed to go unchallenged.⁹⁷²

Like Glasgow, the Imperial Museum had become incorporated into Calcutta’s claim to be the ‘second city of the Empire.’ No longer new, these institutions were well-established as spaces for projecting certain messages about the city. The Imperial Museum was a well-known piece of Calcutta’s civic landscape, and the suggested removal of any part of it naturally met resistance. By this more mature stage of second city rhetoric, the inclusion of museums, universities, and other civic cultural institutions were commonplace, and indeed, an expected part of projecting a city’s status. What was considered worthy of Calcutta and Glasgow’s public museum was necessarily tied to other conceptions of civic and imperial status, and necessarily changed over time. Research into the preceding decades has been vital for providing context to these claims. They did not emerge out of thin air and these twentieth century claims are a manifestation of much earlier developments. The latter nineteenth century was therefore pivotal, and provides a useful springboard for further investigation.

Second city rhetoric combined with the development of museums in the nineteenth century raises questions about efforts to decolonise museums, both in Britain and India. Disruption of existing patterns relies on a thorough understanding of how each museum came to exist, and the specific local, national and global contexts within which they

⁹⁷² ‘Letters to the Editor. A Protest’, *Englishman’s Overland Mail*, 14 July 1927, p.19.

developed. Following the rallying cries of the Black Lives Matter and Decolonize movements, museum professionals need to move towards a better understanding of imperial collections and the languages and rhetoric that justified their creation and consolidation. Most are earnestly committed to the challenge, and consider decolonising to be an ongoing process, which cannot be neatly ticked off to suit museum boards. Dan Hicks, Curator of World Archaeology at Oxford's Pitt Rivers Museum, for example, very publicly argues that:

we need to open up and excavate our institutions, dig up our ongoing pasts, with all the archaeological tools that can be brought to hand, sometimes a teaspoon and toothbrush, other time a pick-axe or jack-hammer.⁹⁷³

As a professor of Contemporary Archaeology, the toolkit he proposes is apt. Importantly, wider societal attitudes are shifting, as evidenced in the growing public debate about repatriating objects currently held in museums across the world. Consequently, knowing exactly how and why an object became part of a collection has never been more important. These stories are, necessarily, hugely complex.

Throughout researching for this project in Scotland and India, I have spoken to museum professionals who are eager to read this work as a way of gaining insight into their institutions. Geraldine Kendall Adams, writing for the *Museums Association*, has called the situation 'an identity crisis', whereby the 'question of what a museum is, its purpose and who it is for has prompted much soul-searching'.⁹⁷⁴ These questions neatly mirror those that were being asked during the early stages of public museum development in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Perhaps, as publicly funded institutions, this was always destined to be the case, because, there is always a need to justify that the museum is providing value for money. Moving forward with these parallels, debates about repatriating the Benin Bronzes (looted by British forces during a violent assault on the city of Benin in February 1897 and then deposited in various museums), reached the popular press in early 2021. *The Times* alone printed six articles on the issue across March and April.⁹⁷⁵ Drawing

⁹⁷³ Dan Hicks, *The British Museums, The Benin Bronzes, Colonial Violence and Cultural Restitution*, (London: Pluto Press, 2020), xiii- xiv

⁹⁷⁴ Geraldine Kendall Adams, 'A new approach to repatriation', *Museums Journal*, 2 November 2020, <<https://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/features/2020/11/a-new-approach-to-repatriation/#>> [accessed 23 April 2021]

⁹⁷⁵ 'The Times view on returning Benin bronzes: Home Territory', *The Times*, 25 March 2021 <<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/the-times-view-on-returning-benin-bronzes-home-territory-gjcrb6n5j>>

Mark Bridge, 'Return of Benin bronze piles pressure on British Museum', *The Times*, 25 March 2021 <<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/return-of-benin-bronze-piles-pressure-on-british-museum-l0zv9xhdt>>

on Flanders' work, it would appear that the contemporary museum, much like its nineteenth century counterpart, is a "media event", whereby the press offers a vital 'forum for this debate.'⁹⁷⁶ The call to repatriate the Benin Bronzes is not new, but attitudes have shifted significantly enough to make such calls better received, though not unopposed. Museums have a significant role to play in navigating these shifts to ensure that they best reflect the ideals of the societies they serve.

This current discourse is particularly enlightening for addressing the different dynamics of national and provincial museums. Lanre Bakare reported that 'Regional UK museums could lead a wave of repatriations of disputed Benin bronzes.'⁹⁷⁷ If this occurs, and the example the University of Aberdeen's museum suggests it might, then this would represent a direct reversal of the balance of innovation between metropole and province as it existed in the nineteenth century.⁹⁷⁸ Provincial museums took their cue from London; now the provincial institutions are forging their own strategies. Interesting, though not surprising given the focus on provincial museums in this thesis, institutions outside the metropole are communicating with each other, progressing in different ways, taking novel approaches, and adapting far quicker to societal pressures. That said, *The Times* reported that the National Museum of Ireland 'intends to return 21 historical artefacts looted from Nigeria in the 1890s.'⁹⁷⁹ In terms of the history of museums, the question arises again whether the national museums provide examples for provincial museums, or whether, as a class of their own, they set their own agendas. Responses vary somewhere on a scale between proactive and reactive to either encourage repatriation or deny its necessity. Gareth Harris for *The Art Newspaper* questions whether 'the trickle of museums pledging

Sarah Crompton, 'Loot by Barnaby Phillips review – the fight over the Benin Bronzes', *The Sunday Times*, 4 April 2021 <<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/loot-by-barnaby-phillips-review-8mjcg7z6>>

Kaya Burgess, 'Archbishop of Canterbury's Benin bronzes will return to Nigeria', *The Times*, 9 April 2021 <<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/archbishop-of-canterburys-benin-bronzes-will-return-to-nigeria-plqswlhsm>>

Eithne Shorthall, 'National Museum of Ireland forges plan to return looted Benin bronzes', *The Sunday Times*, 11 April 2021 <<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/national-museum-ireland-plan-return-looted-benin-bronzes-rmx7rdtpk>>

Mark Bridge, 'Auction house cancels sale of Benin bronze over looting concerns', *The Times*, 27 April 2021 <<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/auction-house-cancels-sale-of-benin-bronze-over-looting-concerns-vgpvsr9dm>> [all accessed 27 April 2021]

⁹⁷⁶ Flanders, 'Early museums', p. 72 and p.81.

⁹⁷⁷ Lanre Bakare, 'Regional museums break ranks with UK government on return of Benin bronzes', *Guardian*, 26 March 2021 <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/mar/26/regional-museums-break-ranks-with-uk-government-on-return-of-benin-bronzes>> [accessed 23 April 2021]

⁹⁷⁸ Lanre Bakare, 'University of Aberdeen to return pillaged Benin bronze to Nigeria', *Guardian*, 25 March 2021 <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/mar/25/university-of-aberdeen-to-return-pillaged-benin-bronze-to-nigeria>> [accessed 23 April 2021]

⁹⁷⁹ Shortall, 'National Museum of Ireland'

to return looted art to Africa’ will ‘grow into a flood?’⁹⁸⁰ Decolonising museums, in all its forms, is a deeply political as well as ideological issue, which has starkly divided public opinion.

Mistakes occur by thinking that museums emerged in an ideological vacuum, perhaps influenced by other institutions, but certainly not by the outside world. The museums included in this thesis remain part of the civic fabric of Glasgow and Kolkata today. They are visited by locals and tourists alike, and, consequently, they continue to inform local identities, and broader impressions of the city. In particular, the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum and the Victoria Memorial, remain iconic. Even more so now than then, these institutions reflect civic identities. They are the focus of school visits and weekend outings, they are part of the indelible fabric of many peoples’ lives, and, to this extent, the degree to which their displays explain the Empire and the city’s role in it is vitally important. City museums should not just bolster civic pride but prompt reflection and wider critical engagement.

Whenever delivering a research paper in Glasgow, I have asked my audience if they know that Glasgow was called the ‘second city of the Empire’, and, usually, almost everyone replies that they do. Asked again if they know that other cities, namely, Calcutta, Birmingham, Bombay, Dublin, Edinburgh, Liverpool, Manchester, and Sydney, also called themselves the ‘second city of the Empire’, and they fall silent. For Glasgow, the ‘second city of the Empire’ remains embedded in the story it tells about itself. Though not a thread I have focused on, this research contributes to pressing contemporary debates about Scotland’s distinct role within the Empire, which both enforces and contradicts ideas of Scottish exceptionalism.

Throughout this thesis, digitised newspaper databases have offered rich possibilities for further study. As more newspapers are made available, the opportunity to amplify different voices looms larger. The next stages of this research will therefore draw narratives which do not privilege the white, male colonisers. Exposing the plethora of contemporary references to the ‘second city of the Empire’ in various contexts has made the dearth of existing literature more noticeable. Returning to the *Aberdare Times*, quoted in the Introduction, ‘London, of course, is absolutely the first without question or comment, but this point as to the second is a bone of contention that seems always ready to

⁹⁸⁰ Gareth Harris, ‘London’s Horniman Museum – home to 15 Benin bronzes – announces new “transparent procedures” for looted object requests’, *The Art Newspaper*, 7 April 2021
 <<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/horniman-museum-policy-on-restitution>> [accessed 23 April 2021]

be picked,' and now, this question is primed to be challenged by historians as vigorously as it was in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁹⁸¹

Beyond different cities and larger time frames, the other components of second city status – population, administrative profile and full spectrum economy, are now primed for further exploration. Any scholar looking to untangle the messy legacy of the British Empire should consider rhetorical choices more closely. The 'second city of the Empire' has led to a degree of remapping the urban landscape, which incorporates the whole city and promotes an understanding of Glasgow and Calcutta's hybridity.

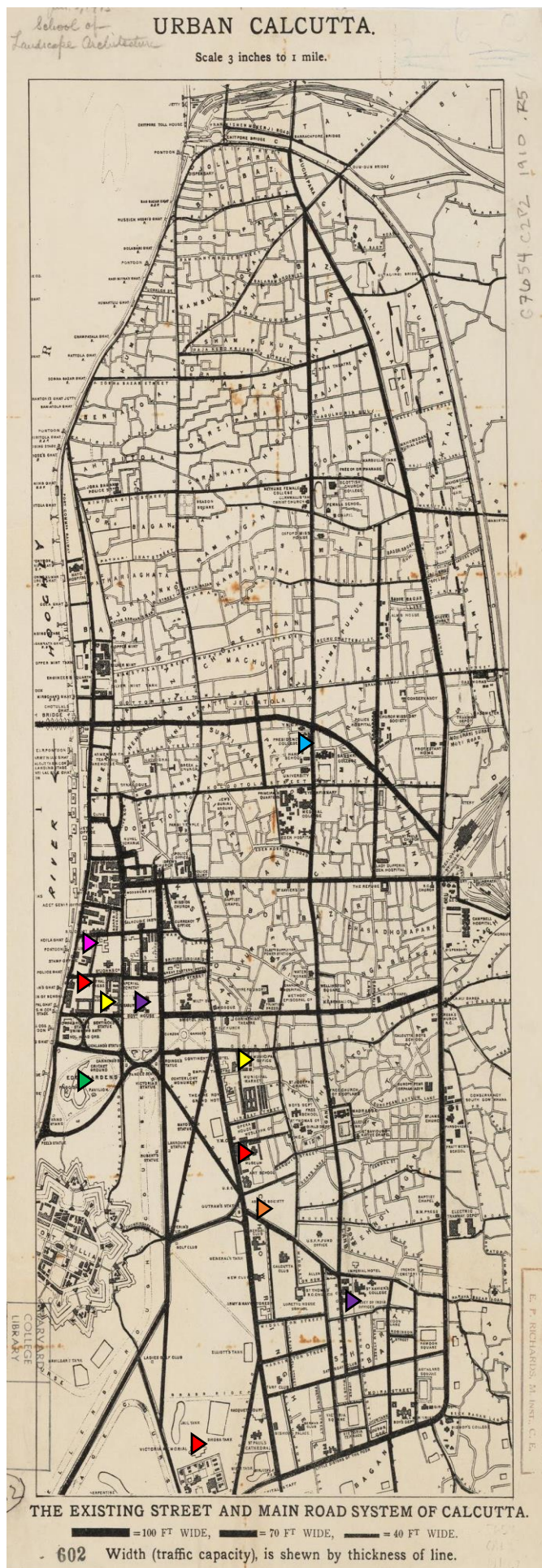
⁹⁸¹ 'Our London Correspondent', *The Aberdare Times*, 24 November 1894, p.2.

Appendix I - References to the “second city of the Empire” in Hansard c. 1845 - 1939

Date	Title of Debate	Named ‘second city of the Empire’
17 March 1847	Factories Bill	Glasgow
29 June 1857	Supply—Miscellaneous Estimates.	Manchester
9 March 1868	Second Reading	Glasgow
5 August 1870	Committee	Bombay
HL 19 July 1878	Second Reading	Glasgow
3 June 1881	Motion of Censure	Dublin
23 March, 1885	Boroughs to have Additional Members	Glasgow
4 June 1889	Class II	Glasgow
28 March 1892	Second Reading	Bombay
4 July 1893	Second Reading	Glasgow
25 April 1895	Fatal Accidents Inquiry (Scotland) Bill	Glasgow
14 February 1899	Calcutta Municipal, Bill.	Calcutta
3 May 1899	Liquor Traffic Local Veto (Scotland) Bill	Glasgow
18 June 1902	Finance Bill	Glasgow
9 August 1905	Adjournment (Partition Of Bengal.)	Calcutta
26 February 1906	Unrest in India and Partition of Bengal	Calcutta
6 July 1910	Birmingham City Boundaries	Birmingham
16 February 1911	Mr Staveley-Hill	Birmingham
HL 21 February 1912	India	Calcutta
4 July 1913	New Clause. – (Exemption of the City of London)	London
13 May 1918	Proportional Representation	Liverpool
11 April 1919	Small Landowners (Scotland) Act (Amendment) Bill	Glasgow
17 March 1922	Miscellaneous War Services (Foreign Office).	Glasgow
23 November 1922	Debate on the Address	Glasgow
29 November 1922	Housing (Unemployment)	Glasgow
1 December 1922	Unemployment	Glasgow
18 March 1925	Glasgow Boundaries Bill	Glasgow
20 July 1926	India Office	Calcutta
11 June 1928	Board of Agriculture, Scotland	Glasgow
5 February 1930	London and North Eastern Railway Bill (Certified Bill)	Glasgow
29 February 1932	Civil Estimates And Estimates For, Revenue Departments, 1932 (Vote On Account).	Calcutta
20 October 1932	Ways and Means	Glasgow
15 Nov 1932	Transitional Payments (Determination of Need) Bill.	Glasgow
14 December 1933	Unemployment [Money] (No. 2).	Glasgow

11 March 1936	Location of Industry	Glasgow
6 April 1937	Special Areas (Amendment) Bill.	Glasgow
15 April 1937	Local Government (Financial Provisions) Scotland Bill	Glasgow
19 April 1937	Clause 1. – (Continuation of 25 & 26 Geo. 5. C. 1)	Glasgow
22 April 1937	Clause 5.—(Financial assistance for provision of factories in certain other areas.)	Glasgow
3 June 1937	Clause 10.—(Interpretation and determination of questions.)	Glasgow
24 June 1937	Department of Health for Scotland	Glasgow
6 July 1937	Burials, Glasgow (Public Assistance)	Glasgow
23 November 1938	Pensions	Glasgow
28 November 1938	Clause 1.—(Continuation of Acts in Schedule.)	Glasgow
11 July 1939	New Clause – (Deduction in respect of dependent and infirm relatives)	Glasgow
6 December 1939	Debate on the Address	Glasgow

Appendix II - Maps of Calcutta and Glasgow



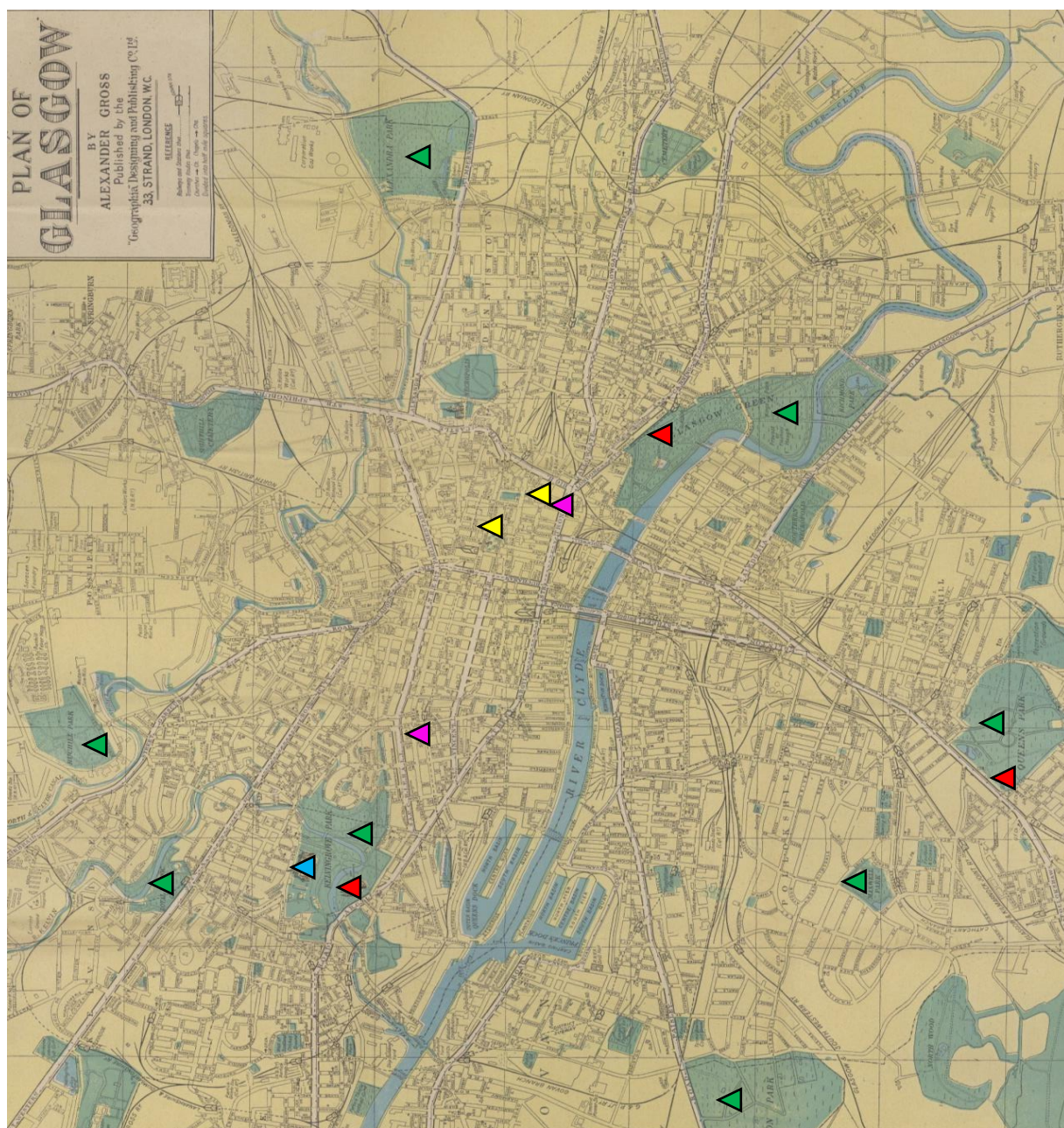
Urban Calcutta; the existing street and main road system of Calcutta by E. P. Richards for Calcutta Improvement Trust, 1910.

<<https://id.lib.harvard.edu/curiosity/scanned-maps/44-990114911200203941>>

[accessed 27 April 2021]

- ▲ Government
- ▲ Municipal
- ▲ Public Museum
- ▲ Private Society
- ▲ University
- ▲ Library
- ▲ Public Park

- ▲ Government
- ▲ Municipal
- ▲ Public Museum
- ▲ University
- ▲ Library
- ▲ Public Park



Plan of Glasgow by Alexander Gross, 1913. Maps.194.35

©National Library of Scotland <<https://maps.nls.uk/view/142842704>> [accessed 27 April 2021]

Appendix III - Search results for “provincial museums” in Hansard c. 1845 - 1902.

Date	Title of Debate	Summary
HC 6 March 1845	Museums of Art	Mr Ewart moved toward the Bill to enable town councils to ‘establish Museums of Art in corporate towns.’ Included discussion on Sunday openings.
HC 3 April 1882	Provincial Art Galleries and Museums – Resolution	Mr Jesse Collings called for greater assistance for provincial museums.
HC 29 June 1883	Resolution	Question: That a Select Committee be appointed to consider how the Ministerial responsibility under which the Votes for Education, Science, and Art are administered, may be best secured. Sir Lyon Playfair – ‘The British Museum and those great Galleries were administered by Trustees or Commissioners, with no direct responsibility to that House. Then there were arising Provincial Museums and Galleries, in Birmingham, Nottingham, Bradford, Sheffield, Manchester, Derby, and Glasgow, and those Provincial Institutions asked for the loan of our National Collections. But they always received the reply that Parliament had forbidden them to do so... These Provincial Museums had a fair right to complain that they were not fairly treated.’
HC 16 November 1888	Class IV – Education, Science, and Art	Discussion centred on the new Science and Art Department. Mr A. H. Dyke Acland raised the issue of whether the working classes should have a technical education, and the role the South Kensington had played with elementary schools. Mr Jesse Collings suggested increased support for procuring collections at provincial museums.
HC 18 December 1888	Literature, Science, and Art Grants in Aid to Provincial Museums.	Mr Jesse Collings asked that the Grants in Aid to Provincial Museums for the purchase of objects of Art, which has been successful but discontinued in 1887 would be renewed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer hoped he would be able to help, especially if localities were able to meet the Government half-way.
HC 25 February 1890	Class I.	Discussion on unfinished state of the South Kensington and whether a new museum should be placed in the same vicinity or different part of London. Mr J. Chamberlain said; ‘in a matter of this kind we are bound to take cognisance of

		the experience we have had of what has been the case in connection with the provincial museums and exhibitions. Where-ever the community show the great value they attach to these collections, they have at once been met by the public spirit of the inhabitants, and large gifts have been made in consequence. The collection at South Kensington is both splendid and unique, and one of which any nation might be proud; but it is improperly and inadequately housed.'
HC 18 May 1893	Grants in Aid to Provincial Museums	Mr Jesse Collings asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if it is the intention of the Government to reduce the grant-in-aid to provincial museums from £800 to £500 in that financial year. Mr Acland stated that this was correct but the Purchase Vote for the museum and for circulation to local museums has been increased by £3,450. Birmingham took 6/7ths of the grant that year.
HC 12 September 1893	South Kensington Museum	Mr Jesse Collings asked if any of the £3,500 increase of finding for South Kensington Museum would be devoted to the acquisition of original objects for the permanent collections of provincial museums? The answer was no. Collings also asked to be told how man Museum keepers and assistant museum keepers there were at South Kensington and how much they were paid.
HL 22 July 1901	Fine Arts Commission	Lord Stanmore proposed the appointment of a Royal Commission similar in character and object to the Fine Arts Commission of 1842. The Prime Minister and Lord Privy Seal (The Marquess of Salisbury), in response to suggestions of carrying on the Prince Consort's work said, 'Are you to take it as merely a curious thing to be written in your Museum that for forty years the British people and those by whom they were represented took none of those steps in favour of advanced art which my noble friend desires? Surely the more reasonable explanation is that the British people did not care about it. I am afraid that is what my noble friend will find.'
HC 26 May 1902	Class IV	Debate on the Board of Education. Sir John Gorst commented that 'the directors of provincial museums and the masters of provincial schools of art are constantly visiting the Victoria and Albert Museum, where they are in the habit of conferring with the circulation department, where they are treated with every courtesy.'

Appendix IV - Questions from the Report on the Provincial Museums of the United Kingdom, 1888.

1. By whom was the museum founded?
2. To whom does it now belong?
3. How is it supported?
4. How is it governed?
5. State in round numbers the annual cost of maintenance, viz: - Rent and taxes; salaries and wages; cases; purchase of specimens; mounting of specimens; other expenditure.
6. What is the staff employed? And during what hours?
7. Under what tenure and from what owner are the buildings or rooms held?
8. State the number of rooms or galleries, their length, breadth, and height, and how lighted and warmed.
9. State the general arrangement of the cases in the principal rooms, either in words or by a rough sketch.
10. How are the cases made dust-proof?
11. State any special details of fittings.
12. State any special methods adopted for preserving or exhibiting the specimens.
13. Are the natural history specimens set up pictorially with rock, grass, water, &c., showing their mode of life, or merely on separate pegs or stands?
14. Is any attempt made to exhibit the *family life* of birds and animals, showing male, female, young, eggs, nest, &c., grouped together?
15. Are the natural history specimens generally in good condition, or dirty and grub-eaten and requiring renewal?
16. Are all the specimens illustrating each group – whether skeletons, stuffed, or bottled – arranged together, or are the skeletons and the bottles kept apart from the stuffed specimens?
17. Are the fossils arranged zoologically with the recent specimens, or stratigraphically?
18. If there are any purely local collections, give some further account of these than in the answer to Question 5, Schedule A, and say whether they are kept apart from the other specimens, or only distinguished by special labels.

19. State the principal specialities in your district which ought to be represented by special collections but are not so at present.
20. Are there any collections especially arranged for *educational* purposes? If so, state method of arrangement and classification.
21. Have you any technical or industrial department in the museum?
22. Are there any classes or any arrangements for systematic teaching at the museum?
23. Is the museum much used for *study* by local naturalists, or archaeologists, or medical students?
24. Are there any facilities offered to students, such as private rooms, tables, or microscopes; and are they allowed, under any conditions, to handle the museum specimens?
25. Are the rooms used for any other purposes when the museum is not open?
26. Are there any aquaria or vivaria in the museum?
27. What catalogues or handbooks of the museum have been published? (Please enclose copies.)
28. How are the duplicates and surplus store kept and arranged? Have you any large stock of duplicates?
29. If the museum belongs to the public, and any local society is in any way connected with it, say what benefit the museum receives from such connection.
30. Are there many donations of specimens to the museum annually, and from what class of persons chiefly?
31. What style of labelling is adopted? (If you have a special form of label, please attach a specimen.)
32. If the museum has a library or scientific or archaeological works for the use of the curator or students state about the number of volumes and the average annual increase.
33. Can you give any estimate of the average *weekly* number of visitors? How is the estimate arrived at?
34. Is the museum centrally situated, or otherwise, in reference to the population?
35. At what time of day is the museum most visited, and how is it affected by public holidays?
36. Make here any remarks upon matters not included in the foregoing inquiries, or any suggestions of your own as to improvement in the general management of provincial museums.

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