

LHP: AGNEW

RHP: REFRACTING THE RAJ: HARIOT DUFFERIN'S PHOTOGRAPHS

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**REFRACTING THE RAJ: HARIOT DUFFERIN'S PHOTOGRAPHS OF INDIA,
1884–88**

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In a photograph of Queen Victoria, working at her dispatch boxes at Frogmore and attended by her Indian servant Sheik Chidda, the queen looks down at her desk, apparently engrossed in her official duties and unaware of the photographers' presence.¹ This image was broadly received as an authentic and objective representation of a day in the life of the monarch. Victorian attitudes to science and technology encouraged a belief in the truth-telling properties of the camera, and the photograph was accepted as a rare glimpse of Queen Victoria as sovereign; as Helmut and Alison Gersheim have noted, the queen generally preferred to be portrayed as wife and mother rather than ruling authority.² But of course, the two personas were inextricably linked: the familial photographs had a profound impact on the British public's perception of their monarch, who they came to regard as a maternal figure, nurturing and benevolently caring for her subjects.³ Furthermore, the image at Frogmore served as a reminder that the queen's subjects included indigenous peoples from the colonies. Indeed the decision to photograph her Indian servant, rather than one of her ladies-in-waiting or British attendants, along with the canvas pagoda, consciously gestured toward her role as Empress of India; therefore, this picture of the monarch hard at work at her estate in Berkshire was, as James Ryan has argued, used to convey a particular message to her citizens.⁴

We now readily accept Ryan's argument that photography is a social practice whose

meanings are structured through aesthetic and cultural codes and conventions; as such, we can be sure that this photograph of the queen is a carefully orchestrated image that was conceived through particular ideas about imperial authority.⁵ In the latter decades of the nineteenth century, long exposure times of 20 or 30 minutes meant that spontaneous opportunism did not generally produce clear photographic images. Arguably, the fact that the queen is looking down rather than directly at the camera is a result of these prolonged exposures: because subjects were required to hold their pose for a significant amount of time, it was generally considered easier to look away from the camera. Yet, by 1893, Queen Victoria had had some practice sitting for photographic portraits and she was able to remain completely still while the chemical process took place. Unfortunately the tablecloth was less well behaved: it lifted in the wind during the procedure, a movement that meant the far left corner of the fabric is forever preserved as blurred motion and a sign of how difficult it was for the Victorian photographer to control everything in the frame. Nonetheless, for some time, there was little acknowledgment that this process of “posing”, as elucidated by Roland Barthes, alters the “truth” of what is being represented.⁶

Photography was generally regarded as an authoritative science and, for many Victorians, the only obstacle to the camera’s accurate documentation of truth was the exposure time; thus there were consistent efforts to reduce this and shrink the margin of error. Sir David Brewster felt sure that when photography became instantaneous and surreptitious there would be “absolute truth” in the portrait.⁷ Similarly Scottish inventor Sir John Robison believed in the existence of a single truth that could be recorded for all to see. In a letter to the *Athenaeum*, he publicly praised the “truth, distinctness, and fidelity of the minutest details” of the early daguerreotypes; he wrote that “living objects, if they remain motionless during the short periods of exposure are given with perfect fidelity”.⁸ Robison’s total belief in the veracity of the photographic image, despite the contrivance of the situation, was echoed by many of his

authoritative peers. John Thomson (1837–1921), official instructor in photography for the Royal Geographic Society (RGS), exclaimed that “photography is absolutely trustworthy”.⁹ Therefore, it is not surprising that, in this context, it quickly became common practice for members of the Society to present photographic evidence of their adventures when they returned to England.¹⁰ These images were produced as accurate reflections of what the travellers had seen as opposed to subjective (and Western) interpretations and representations.¹¹ However, Harriot, Lady Dufferin, Vicereine of India and amateur photographer, was one practitioner who was less assured about the camera’s ability to document objectively and accurately.

During her time in India, Lady Dufferin took numerous photographs that complement her written records, and these images offer a wonderful insight into life in the upper echelons of Anglo-Indian society. The vicereine’s visual and textual documents generally exude the kind of confidence we expect from someone at the centre of the British establishment. When Lady Dufferin took photographs of India, she sought to represent her authoritative position in relation to the subjugated subcontinent, albeit through a seemingly passive role. Nineteenth-century practitioners of photography placed the authority in the instrument itself, playing down the actions and intentions of the photographer. However, as we now understand, the act of capturing an image is often a gesture of power; this has been explained by Susan Sontag: “To photograph is to appropriate the thing photographed. It means putting oneself into a relation to the world that feels like knowledge – and, therefore, like power”.¹² Similarly James Ryan argues that photographs “reveal as much about the imaginative landscapes of imperial culture as they do about the physical spaces or people pictured within their frame”; he goes on to explain that, “in this respect they are themselves expressions of the knowledge and power that shaped the reality of Empire”.¹³ This imperial discourse, as I have argued elsewhere, is apparent in Lady Dufferin’s photographic images.¹⁴ But the vicereine’s colonial

confidence was by no means unequivocal. Whereas her photographs certainly reveal her attempts to assert knowledge and power over India, occasionally her letters reveal an anxiety that undermines the imperial rhetoric of the images. In particular, she expresses an uncertainty about the purported truths of the photographs she produced.

Sara Mills explains that the lack of an explicitly authoritative voice in women's travel writing can be understood as a discursive negotiation, a result of Victorian gender discourses that situated femininity and colonialism as entirely incongruous.¹⁵ Indeed Lady Dufferin clearly expresses her imperial views through the feminine spheres; her representation of the viceregal home, for example, is unequivocally charged with colonial rhetoric.¹⁶ In a similar way, Lady Dufferin clearly reflects her intention to assert power and control over indigenous people and places through her use of the camera. At the same time, the vicereine's letters reveal that this desire was frequently thwarted. She reveals her frustration at the instrument's inability to represent truthfully the scene before her; this concern can be understood as a broader apprehension about colonial authority. Although Lady Dufferin's photographs are expressions of the desire for knowledge and power, her discussions of them also demonstrate that the camera, a symbol of power and authority, was unable to wholly control, condense, and contain the native subject. We come to realise, through the vicereine's letters, that her photographic efforts made her aware of India's resistance to imperial authority; thus, for her, the Western superiority implied by colonial photographs was not the whole story. Lady Dufferin's hobby actually brought about a realisation that the so-called truths revealed by the imperial gaze of the camera were in fact subjective representations and inaccurate constructions.

Hariot Georgina Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, was born in County Down, Northern Ireland, in 1843. She married Lord Frederick Temple-Blackwood, Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, who was also from County Down, in 1862. She accompanied her husband on all his

diplomatic postings and was a valuable aide, particularly in India, where she worked hard to establish herself as an imperial figure in her own right. She travelled extensively, entertained generously, and founded the National Association for Supplying Female Medical Aid to the Women of India.¹⁷

Hariot Dufferin, as the viceroy's wife, was at the centre of colonial life and her writing was received with particular interest. Like previous vicereines, her letters were collated and bound by the official viceregal printing press. After her return from the subcontinent, the epistolary collection was edited and published as a two-volume narrative entitled *Our Viceregal Life*.¹⁸ The letters were initially very popular, but like a lot of nineteenth-century women's travel writing, Lady Hariot Dufferin's work fell out of favour and is only now regaining some recognition in academic circles.¹⁹ The collection of her photographs, however, remains largely unknown.²⁰ This may be due to the fact that they were never widely available in Britain. Indeed her only public exhibition took place in India.

At a first glance, Lady Dufferin's photographs exemplify the amateur nature of her efforts: some of the pictures are blurry, a few of the images are poorly composed, and there are photographs that are a little out of focus. As such, we can approach them in much the same way as we might the watercolours produced by women travel writers and wives of governing officials, such as Fanny Parks, Charlotte Canning, and Emily Eden. Photography can then be understood as another suitably unprofessional "feminine" pastime, such as sewing, reading, writing letters, or playing a musical instrument, all of which took place within the domestic sphere. Certainly Lady Dufferin encourages this impression by somewhat trivialising her intent; she writes that her aim is simply to take "a few views".²¹ Of course such proclamations can be understood in the context of Mills's discussion of feminine discursive negotiations: it was extremely important that a public figure, like the vicereine, extolled archetypal Victorian values, not least because gender discourses underpinned imperial

ideologies. Thus, although Lady Dufferin plays down any explicit desire for colonial authority, we may wish to consider that her choice of hobby demonstrates her decidedly modern and imperialist attitude. Other members of the Dufferin family chose more traditional medium, such as portraiture, through which to record their impressions of India.²²

Lady Dufferin's early photographic efforts primarily focussed on documenting the more domestic aspects of life in India. She used her camera, in addition to her letters, to record the social activities of the Anglo-Indian community, depicting picnics and fancy dress parties for the benefit of family members, friends, and fellow Anglo-Indians. The vicereine creates an impression of India that evokes a sense of familiarity in readers and viewers, despite the colonial locations. At times she so vividly evokes Victorian Britain that she feels it is necessary to remind her readers that she is no longer in Northern Ireland:

Please to remember that I am in India, for if you don't keep that fact before your eyes you will not find the following description of a flower show at all interesting. You will only imagine that I am in the County Down, and will wonder why I should tell you anything so commonplace.²³

Of course, the illusion of normality was precisely the point of such seemingly banal descriptions and, arguably, this was also her motivation for the photograph of the viceregal boudoir in Simla.²⁴ This picture bears little trace of the Himalayan locale, at least until the viewer takes a closer look. The bulky Victorian furniture captured by Lady Dufferin had been transported from Britain in order to re-create a Victorian domestic interior in the subcontinent. But, of course, it was impossible to transplant British homes to India, no matter how hard the colonisers tried. The absence of family members, as indicated by the various photographs on the central dresser, was a pervasive problem. No amount of English chintz could compensate for missing loved ones. Nonetheless, British women continued their

efforts, as part of the imperial mission, to enact Victorian domestic discourses and it was important to advertise one's efforts in this respect. Hence, Lady Dufferin's decision to include the decorative screen in her photograph was rather pointed: screens were no longer fashionable in nineteenth-century Britain but they had become a common feature of Anglo-Indian homes, being used to break up the much-denigrated open-plan spaces and secure some privacy from prying Indian eyes.²⁵ Thus, Lady Dufferin's portrayals of Anglo-Indian life were surely bolstered by an imperial belief in the superiority of British culture, an attitude that also affected her responses to the Indian landscape.

Lady Dufferin was unable, because of her gender and her position, to go out exploring on her own, but, armed with a camera and accompanied by an instructor, she was occasionally able to venture beyond Anglicised areas and she produced a number photographs that sought to reveal "India" to her friends and family in Britain, not to mention Queen Victoria, who never made it to India herself. Initially, Lady Dufferin's quest to represent India prompted her use of the panorama, a popular aesthetic form which had been established as a way of enabling viewers to imagine they were actually present at the painted scene. The panoramic had developed in the eighteenth century as a visual model based on 360-degree paintings. Early female settlers in Australia had used this wide frame to convey their surroundings as accurately and as comprehensively as possible to people at home;²⁶ it is surely with this background in mind that Lady Dufferin sought out higher and higher planes from which to view subcontinental India. At the same time, this desire to look down on the native landscape was rooted in colonial power structures, as discussed in David Spurr's analysis of the imperial gaze:

The gaze is also the active instrument of construction, order and arrangement. What one might call the ideology of the gaze takes on one of its clearest forms in the convention of the commanding view. One knows the commanding view – the panoramic vista – to architecture,

landscape painting, and sites of tourism, as well as to scientific research, military intelligence and police surveillance: it offers aesthetic pleasure on one hand, information and authority on the other. This combination of pleasure and power gives the commanding view a special role in ... the colonial situation, for it conveys a sense of mastery over the unknown and over what is often perceived by the Western writer as strange and bizarre. At the same time the commanding view is an originating gesture of colonisation itself.²⁷

Lady Dufferin's various panoramic photographs can then be understood as a desire for mastery over the unknown landscape of India.²⁸ Her letters reveal that she did not find it easy to represent India. She explains that when she stood at the edge of the Bolan River, it was "quite impossible to describe the scenery"; she could not find the right words to depict the "great barren hills, gigantic cliffs, and rough river course", all of which were "at variance with any evidence of civilisation".²⁹ The undomesticated spaces were so far removed from her points of reference that she struggled to encapsulate them. This frustration encouraged her to seek out privileged positions and to utilise the commanding gaze of the camera. Many of her panoramic photographs are taken from the area surrounding the viceregal lodge in Simla, the centre of British colonial society.

British settlements in the Indian hills initially came into being because they offered respite from the intense summer heat on the plains, but their increasing popularity can be read through Foucault's analysis of modern Europe's broader preoccupation with the surveillance of society since the Enlightenment.³⁰ Like Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon Prison, which was the architectural paradigm of the panoramic perspective, the hill stations placed the subalterns in a position of constant visibility; in this environment, the observed people interiorise the gaze and society eventually regulates itself. Throughout the empire, the camera contributed to this power structure by recording all that was being surveyed.

The colonial photographer Samuel Bourne was extremely proud of the camera's ability to

document the empire and contribute to the “imperial archive”.³¹ He declared that “there is now scarcely a nook or corner, a glen, a valley, or mountain much less a country, on the face of the globe which the penetrating eye of the camera has not searched”.³² This statement ascribes the power of penetration to the camera rather than to the person operating it. The scientific instrument is given authority and the person behind the lens is no longer implicated in the procedure; this rhetorical flourish denies the subjectivity of perspective and perpetuates the fallacious notion of the photograph’s objective authority. Lady Dufferin’s panoramic photographs similarly imply a neutrality by seeming to offer an unbroken view of the terrain below. But, as Lady Dufferin learned, the frames of these wide-angle shots were selected by the photographer, and, no matter how commanding the view, it was impossible to accurately depict the whole scene:

Such a lovely day and such a view from the house! Imagine looking through a frame of green leaves and branches and trunks of trees on to a rolling sea of mountains; the brown rippling hills near at hand gathering in magnitude and in depth and variety of colouring as they get further from you, and ending in a great range of glistening snow mountains which look like crested waves dashing up against the clear blue sky; that is our view! We admired it till 11, and looked at the people going to the Fair. I took some pictures of them, and I even committed the almost sacrilegious act of trying to condense the splendid and gorgeously coloured map which Nature had spread before us into 8 and half inches of plain brown photograph! I shall probably be punished when I see the result.³³

These comments are interesting for the insight they offer into the way in which photography influenced the vicereine’s view of India and also how she composed this view for the camera.³⁴ But perhaps what is most interesting about her observations is the acknowledgment that India cannot be easily contained within the photographic frame. Lady Dufferin

recognises that the magnificent vista before her cannot be truthfully reflected in a small monochrome reproduction. India's alterity, its overpowering enormity, makes it impossible for her to contain it in a paragraph or even a photograph. It is precisely this inability to exert imperial mastery that causes her consternation. She is aware of the increasing support for Indian nationalism, as fuelled by the Indian National Congress and inspired by the Irish Home Rule movement, and she fears for the displacement of both Anglo-Indian and Anglo-Irish rule.

The extent of Lady Dufferin's anxiety about the political situation is demonstrated by the fact that, uncommonly for a nineteenth-century woman, she comments on it. In her correspondence, she notes that proposals in the British Parliament for the Irish Home Rule Bill were worrying her and her husband. She also writes of their relief at its defeat.³⁵ Despite the outcome of the Irish Home Rule movement, the current situation in Ireland had alerted the Dufferins to the possibilities of what could happen when suppressed peoples gained independent ideas. As a result, they were alarmed by the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. In this context it is hardly surprising that the vicereine becomes sensitive to the endurance of Western superiority, and she is by no means alone in her concerns.

Samuel Bourne expressed similar apprehensions during his time in India. Like Lady Dufferin, he sought out panoramic perspectives that would help him to document the vast Indian landscape and, as we have seen, he revelled in the success of camera. But, on some occasions, particularly in the Himalayan region, India simply overwhelmed him and his camera:

As I sat down on a grassy mound contemplating this scene a feeling of melancholy seemed to steal over me, as it has done on several occasions when travelling among these tremendous hills. Here was I, a solitary lonely wanderer, going Heaven knew where, surrounded by the gloomy solitude of interminable mountains which seemed, in fact, to stretch to infinity on

every hand. To attempt to grasp or comprehend their extent was impossible, and the aching mind could only retired into itself, feeling but an atom in a world so might, yet consoling itself with the thought that the Power which formed these ponderous masses was greater than they, and they in the marvellous and benevolent operations of that Power, itself, however humble and insignificant was not lost sight of ... How often have I lamented that the camera was powerless to cope with these almost ideal scenes, and that with all its truthfulness it can give no true idea of the solemnity and grandeur which twilight in a vast mountainous region reveals partly to the sense and partly to the imagination.³⁶

Bourne's response highlights the fact that Lady Dufferin's anxiety over the authoritative powers of the camera cannot simply be reduced to a gender constraint. Bourne, a professional photographer and imperial representative, also grapples with the limitations of the camera; in this instance, it cannot capture the rather spiritual experience he undergoes when confronted with this vast and overwhelming landscape. The scientific instrument was unable to register his Burkean response to the sublime scene. The sheer magnificence of the Himalayas brings about an awareness of his own fragility; however, this response is not compatible with British imperial ideologies, not least because Bourne acknowledges that the camera, a symbol of Western superiority, was rendered impotent by the power of India's natural landscape. Thus, as in the case of Lady Dufferin, his written expressions of concern have been broadly overlooked in colonial histories in favour of reading his photography as an imperialist tool. In actual fact, photographers in late nineteenth-century India shared some apprehension about the infallibility of Western power and authority.

Lady Dufferin anxieties about imperial rule are registered through Bourne's analogy of the atom when faced with similarly sublime scenery. She, too, is made aware of her own vulnerability and attempts to regain composure by recalling Britain's imperial strengths:

At the bottom of one tremendous cliff we could see before us a tiny hole, the opening of a

tunnel through which we were about to pass. We did indeed look miserable little atoms in this desolate region of stupendous rocks, and we should have felt small indeed had we not recollected our gigantic intellects, and gloried in the power and ingenuity which have conquered the difficulties and opened a way through this “impossible” country!³⁷

Lady Dufferin is determined not to be overwhelmed by the Indian landscape. She argues that in spite of appearances, Britain is the greater nation and it can conquer indigenous landscapes through intellect and ingenuity. She goes on to cite the railway as an exemplification of Britain’s superiority, a symbol of modernity and progress that the colonial power imposed successfully upon the natural landscape, unlike the camera, which only served to reiterate for her the precarious nature of British authority in late nineteenth-century India.

In Lady Dufferin’s experience, it is not only the Indian landscape that refuses to submit to the imperial gaze of the colonial photographer; the native people are equally uncooperative. Lady Dufferin’s description of her efforts to arrange a group of dancers at Darjeeling into an appropriate pose highlighted the Indian people’s unwillingness to sit for the camera:

I was trying to photograph these strange people, and when I was getting this group into position, the boy suddenly stood on his head, and all the others begun to shake and gesticulate in the most bewildering fashion. This was their idea of sitting for a photograph and it had the funniest effect!³⁸

Indigenous reactions to the camera resisted the Victorian ideal of capturing people in a “natural” pose, a problem also experienced by Bourne:

By no amount of talking and acting could I get them to stand or sit in an easy, natural attitude. Their idea of giving life to a picture was to stand bolt upright, with their arms down as stiff as pokers, their chin turned up as if they were standing to have their throats cut; the consequence

was that I had often to leave them out when I should otherwise have introduced them.³⁹

The irony here is that the “natural” behaviour sought by Bourne was as much a pose as the poker-straight posturing he complained about. On occasion, Lady Dufferin was lucky enough to contain her native subjects long enough for the photograph to take, but the sheer amount of effort required highlighted the extent of the manipulation. As such, she came to realise that the so-called truths depicted by the camera were, in fact, reconstructions of what the British perceived as truth.

The artificial nature of colonial representation is particularly evident in Lady Dufferin’s photographs of Burma, taken in February 1886, after Lord Dufferin’s annexation of Burma and once the last rulers, King Thibaw and his Chief Queen Supayalatt, were dispatched to India.⁴⁰ By the time the vicereine arrives at the palace in Mandalay, the royal seat has already been plundered and the Burmese people were no longer in residence. Lady Dufferin writes that during her visit she amused herself with photography taking possession – both literally and figuratively – of the empire’s newest acquisition.⁴¹ Her letters list the various items she acquires for personal and imperial possession; she also photographs specific scenes and objects, such as King Thibaw’s throne, that signify the existence the colonial forces were destroying. She attempts to reconstruct a scene of authentic Burmese life by employing actors and actresses to pose in indigenous costumes inside the now defunct palace.⁴² This photograph is therefore posed in order to create an ostensibly “authentic” view, but what emerges is a manufactured image, an oriental spectacle that Lady Dufferin creates rather than reveals. Susan Sontag discusses the effects of such images in *On Photography*: “Reality as such is redefined – as an item for exhibition, as a record for scrutiny, as a target for surveillance”.⁴³ Indeed Lady Dufferin’s redefinition of India attempted to construct reality in accordance with preconceived orientalist and picturesque images that perceived the colonial

country in particular ways.

At times the vicereine's representation of India is totally distanced from any kind of stylistic realism; instead it fosters a sense of artificiality to satisfy expectations of oriental opulence.

Once again this is explicitly revealed in her letters:

The *mise en scene* is very superior to that of the station; here a magnificent river, filled with splendid ships, all dressed with flags, and every variety of boat and launch flying about, Calcutta itself on either bank, and the Ghat covered with red cloth, flags, and smart spectators. We went ashore at 5.30 and were met by the great officials in their best uniforms, and by Blanche in her best gown, and we walked up the crimson pathway, speaking to people as we went along, and treading upon flowers that were thrown at our feet.⁴⁴

This elaborate occasion is represented as though it is being viewed through the proscenium arch. Lady Dufferin brings all the aspects of the scene together into a single theatrical vignette that revels in the luxuriance and wealth she so admired about the East; she also emphasises a ruling model which was influenced and facilitated by the magnificence of the orientalisised images of native princes.

Indigenous rulers, such as Maharajah Tukoji Rao Holkar II, made quite an impression on the British colonisers. When the Maharajah met with Lord and Lady Dufferin in his court dress at Jodhpur, the vicereine described his outfit in great detail:

The petticoats are in thick folds, and are all made of pink muslin; halfway down the skirt they are tied in with a scarf, so that at the bottom they stand straight out and sway about as the wearer moves. They are so full that when a man rides in them they fall quite naturally over each leg as if they were "divided", but in a carriage they are most awkward, and no ball dress was ever so difficult to tuck in as was the Maharajah's skirt when he followed the Viceroy into the beautiful yellow carriage awaiting him. The headdress worn with this is also very peculiar.

It is red and yellow, and rather pointed. The Maharajah wore the Star of India collar and ribbon. [...] I had a delightful companion in my carriage – the heir-apparent, aged six, dressed in red court petticoats, which he told me he found hot, and which he had only put on to show me.⁴⁵

The Maharajah provided her with an archetypal image of princely pomp and circumstance, which in the late nineteenth century was commodified and commercialised, partially through photographic images taken and circulated by Bourne and Shepherd.⁴⁶ Over time, the British preference for orientalist spectacles came to be institutionalised within the colonial framework, as David Cannadine has identified.⁴⁷ British requests for indigenous princes to don traditional dress were understandably resented and the outfits were often donned only in order to please and pacify.⁴⁸ Although Lady Dufferin does not acknowledge any resentment from the native rulers, she is entirely aware of the fact that the Indians representatives dressed in their best finery in order to impress her. Such details do not perturb her as she, too, seeks to make an impact through her appearance. She wears her best apparel, her “most showy gown”, in ceremonial circumstances in order to present herself in the requisite manner.⁴⁹ This was particularly important as visual and textual reports of her behaviour were circulated both in India and in Britain.

Lady Dufferin is aware that while she surveys the Indian landscape and the indigenous people with her camera, she, too, is being surveyed by photographers of viceregal life, such as the eminent Lala Deen Dayal (1844–1905), who, like her, utilised advantageous viewing positions:⁵⁰ “The number of frightful caricatures of us which is being called into existence is fearful, for we never move anywhere that we don’t see a photographer pointing at us from the top of a carriage, or from some unexpected vantage ground.”⁵¹ She is very conscious of how she appears to people at home, acutely aware of her own objectification. Thus, while she acts

as an observer of the colonised peoples, persistently monitoring and representing their behaviour to the metropolitan centre, simultaneously she is observed by the British public, continually being photographed and written about in newspaper reports.

The degree to which Lady Dufferin's actions are scrutinised is evident from an anonymous letter she received which criticised her for interacting with indigenous women too much.⁵² This correspondence demonstrates a level of anxiety attached to British behaviour in India. The fears and desires of the contact zone continually raised questions concerning national identity and stressed the importance of conveying the "right" image to the people at home. As a result, the vicereine takes great care about how the viceregal couple present themselves to the public:

I took Dufferin to be photographed. Two photographers were begging to be allowed to do him "in his native dress" as they call his uniform, and I "personally conducted" him through the ordeal. We spent one hour at each place, and I think Dufferin will be able to rest upon these photographs for the remainder of his time here.⁵³

Lady Dufferin demonstrates an awareness of the performativity of the imperial role and how this can be manipulated for the camera, particularly as the Raj becomes increasingly forward-facing nature. As such, she seeks to harness the power of the camera as a means of exerting her imperialist identity and ideologies. Her photographic images are relatively successful in this respect, but her writing shows that she is troubled by the lack of authenticity in the carefully constructed pictures.

Lady Dufferin's photographs generally present a familiar view of India being composed of Anglo-Indian life, panoramic landscapes or exotic and orientalist scenes, all of which followed Western conventions. Indeed imperialism had established modes of viewing that shaped the composition, reproduction, circulation, and consumption of photographs during

the nineteenth century; evidently, photographs are not reflections of a single identifiable truth. The camera does not then render India accurately, but continually offers a narrative of British imperial authority, a narrative that Lady Dufferin recognised as being keenly flawed. For her, photographs were certainly expressions of a *desire* for knowledge and power, but, crucially, the fact that the photographs did not reflect accurately or entirely simply illustrated the extent to which this desire was continually thwarted by the colonised subject; this assertion was rather troubling to an empire built on confidence and consistency. Certainly Lady Dufferin found it difficult to give a voice to her fears and concerns. She can allude to such matters in her letters, but these anxieties were generally edited from the published manuscript. As part of the establishment, it was virtually impossible for her to be anything but supportive of the empire. Thus her frequent concerns about the objective authority of the camera, a symbol of power and knowledge, can be read as giving expression to a wider fear about the future of British rule.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

¹ This photograph was taken by Robert Hills and John H. Saunders in 1893.

² Helmut and Alison Gersheim, *Queen Victoria: A Biography in Word and Picture* (London: Longmans, 1959), p. 257.

³ Natalie McKnight argues that the queen's portrayal of idealised family life was mostly a public show. Whereas she was superficially the epitome of wifely duties and maternal instinct, in her personal correspondence she was scathing about pregnancy, childbirth, and motherhood. Natalie J. McKnight, *Suffering Mothers in Mid-Victorian Novels* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), pp. 14–16.

⁴ James Ryan, *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualisation of the British Empire* (London: Reaktion Books, 1997), p. 14.

⁵ Ryan, *Picturing Empire*, p. 17.

⁶ Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida* [1980] (London: Vintage Books, 2000), p. 10.

⁷ Frances Dimond and Roger Taylor, *Crown and Camera: The Royal Family and Photography 1842–1910* (London: Penguin, 1987), p. 30.

⁸ Dimond and Taylor, *Crown and Camera*, p. 30.

⁹ Quoted in Ryan, *Picturing Empire*, p. 24.

¹⁰ Ryan, *Picturing Empire*, p. 24.

¹¹ Ryan, *Picturing Empire*, p. 16.

¹² Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Allen Lane, 1978), p. 4.

¹³ Ryan, *Picturing Empire*, p. 19.

¹⁴ Éadaoin Agnew and Leon Litvack, “The Subcontinent as Spectator Sport: The Photographs of Lady Hariot Dufferin, Vicereine of India”, *History of Photography*, 30 (2006): 348–59.

¹⁵ Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women’s Writing and Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1991); see also Indira Ghose, *Women Travellers in Colonial India: The Power of the Female Gaze* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 63.

¹⁶ Éadaoin Agnew, “Relocating Domesticity: Letters from India by Lady Hariot Dufferin”, in Julia Kuehn and Paul Smethurst, eds., *Travel Writing, Form, and Empire: The Poetics and Politics of Mobility* (New York: Routledge, 2009), pp. 95–107.

¹⁷ This association was often known as the Countess of Dufferin Fund. Its purpose was to offer relief to Indian women who were suffering the effects of illness and child bearing. The vicereine’s plan was to recruit and train women doctors, nurses, and midwives to provide medical advice and attendance under conditions which respected patients’ wishes. By the time she left India, her scheme had been adopted in every province, and there were Countess of Dufferin Fund hospitals and dispensaries for women in all the principal states.

¹⁸ Lady Hariot Dufferin, *Our Viceregal Life in India: Selections from my Journal* (London: John Murray, 1889), 2 vols.

¹⁹ The letters' popularity is apparent from the fact that *Our Viceregal Life* was subsequently published in a cheaper single-volume edition and that the vicereine was also asked to revisit her Canadian journals and rework them for publication.

²⁰ The images in the Public Record Office form part of an album entitled "My First Efforts in Photography, India, 1886, Hariot Dufferin"; the full album, in the possession of the Dufferin family at Clandeboye, is not accessible to researchers. Clandeboye has been the family estate since 1674. The Fifth Marquess of Dufferin and Ava, Sheridan Frederick Terence Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, died in 1988; the estate is owned and operated by his widow, Selina Belinda Rosemary Guinness (b. 1941).

²¹ Dufferin, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, p. 189.

²² Lady Dufferin writes, in connection with her daughter: "Nelly is doing a series of portraits in chalk, and Major Cooper [a member of the Viceroy's staff] provides her with models. She did one of the jhampani men with great success, but at the first sitting given her by a second model, a wild man wrapped in a sheet, he fainted, and having first subsided into an arm-chair he next rolled on to the floor and lay with his head under his wing. The jemadar had gone to dinner, and Nelly and her maid were left for some time vainly calling for assistance, and doing their little best to resuscitate the victim, who declined all their pressing offers of brandy and water, and would have no remedy but fresh air" (Dufferin, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, p. 145).

²³ Dufferin, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, p. 53.

²⁴ Hariot Georgina Hamilton Temple-Blackwood, Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava, Lady Dufferin's Boudoir, Viceregal Lodge, Simla. From the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, D/1071.

²⁵Lady Hariot Dufferin, “Letters Written to Her Mother 1884–1888”, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, D/1071. Letter 15–22 December 1884, vol. 1, p. 30. All further references to Dufferin’s letters are also taken from this source.

²⁶ Lionel Lambourne, *Victorian Painting* (London: Phaidon Press, 1999), p. 163.

²⁷ David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire* (London: Duke University Press, 1993), p. 15.

²⁸ Dufferin, *The Stables from the Viceregal Lodge, Simla*, D/1071.

²⁹ Dufferin, Letter 16 November 1887, vol. 3, p. 210.

³⁰ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* [1975] (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1991).

³¹ Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (London: Verso, 1993).

³² Samuel Bourne, “Photography in the East”, *The British Journal of Photography*, 9 (1863): 268-70.

³³ Dufferin, Letter 13 May 1886, vol. 3, p. 121.

³⁴ Agnew and Litvack, “Subcontinent as Spectator Sport”, pp. 348–59.

³⁵ Dufferin, Letter 8 June 1886, vol. 3, p. 137.

³⁶ Bourne, *Photographic Views*, p. 24.

³⁷ Dufferin, Letter 16 November 1887, vol. 3, p. 208.

³⁸ Dufferin, Letter 7 March 1888, vol. 4, p. 52.

³⁹ Bourne, *Photographic Views*, p. 22.

⁴⁰ In response to an ultimatum from the British, King Thibaw declared war in October 1885. Ten thousand British troops marched from Rangoon, and by November 1885, Mandalay was occupied. Thibaw and his immediate family went into exile in India, and he ended his days in a small brick palace at Ratnagiri in 1916.

⁴¹ Dufferin, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, p. 321.

⁴²Dufferin, *Burmese Actors and Actresses, Mandalay*, D/1071.

⁴³Sontag, *On Photography*, p. 156.

⁴⁴Dufferin, Letter 8 March 1885, vol. 1, p. 25.

⁴⁵Dufferin, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, pp. 234–35.

⁴⁶This company had originally been Shepherd and Robertson, but Robertson left the firm, and in 1864, when the firm moved to Simla, Samuel Bourne joined as partner. The business enabled Bourne to undertake more journeys and adventures.

⁴⁷David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism: How the British Saw Their Empire* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 2001).

⁴⁸Cannadine, *Ornamentalism*, p. 142.

⁴⁹Dufferin, Letter 23 February 1885, vol. 1, p. 70.

⁵⁰Unfortunately this album of photographs is unavailable for consultation; it is in the private family collection at the estate in Clandeboye, County Down. Lala Deen Dayal was appointed as photographer to the viceroy in 1885.

⁵¹Dufferin, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, p. 8.

⁵²Dufferin, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 2, p. 190.

⁵³Dufferin, *Our Viceregal Life*, vol. 1, p. 178.