Chapter 3

Exhibiting India:

Colonial and Indian Exhibition

Having lost the life of its original historical context, the historical artifact possesses the power of a specter, that is, the power of no longer fearing for its life. The deadness of the past is what shines through the museum piece. Collecting can begin only when the past assumes a collectable form: this collectable form is given by the object's uprooted abstraction from the past as well as from the present. For the museum piece stands aloof from the present. Removed from its context in the past, the object cannot settlecomfortably into the present either, for if it did, there would be no use for the museum.[1]

Didier Maleuvre
(Museum Memories: History, Technology, Art)

The set of objects the museum displays is sustained only by the fiction that they somehow constitute a coherent representational universe. The fiction is that a repeated metonymic displacement of fragment for totality, object to label, series of objects to series of labels, can still produce a representation which is somehow adequate to a non-linguistic universe. Such a fiction is the result of an uncritical belief in the notion that ordering and classifying, that is to say, the spatial juxtaposition of fragments, can produce a representational understanding of the world. Should the fiction disappear, there is nothing left of the Museum but "bric-a-brac," a heap of meaningless and valueless fragments of objects...

Eugenio Donato[2]

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[1] Didier Maleuvre*Museum Memories: History, Technology, Art,* Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1999, p. 270.

2. Eugenio Danto, 'The Museum's Furnace: Notes Towards a Contextual Reading of Bouvard and Pécuchet', in *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism*, ed. JosuéHarari, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 1979, p. 223.

Chapter 3

Exhibiting India: The Colonial and Indian Exhibition

Introduction

We have already seen in the previous chapter howE. C. Buck set the tenor and tone of his administrative vision for applying the S*chema* for collecting artifacts and for organizing the Calcutta International Exhibition in 1883. The *Schema*, I argue, foreshadowed greater changes of significance,whichhad much greaterconsequences that would follow the exhibition. I delineate how the 'Colonial and Indian Exhibition' *(CIE)*was a grand event that set in motion processes for transformations in the cultural and governance practices in India as well as other colonies. The systematic preparations for the collection for various departmental data and artifacts for the exhibition were a massive exercise that was to formulate, represent, test, and refine methods for running the machinery of the Government. Thus, I argue, that CIE had an epistemological agenda that outlined, on the one hand, the present state of the colonies, and on the other, represented what were the state-of-art governance practicesin the Indian Empire. CIE inaugurated and accelerated various operational and key activities into a synchronized occasion that showcased and demonstrated to the world, and the Britons in particular, the efficient machinery that was behind the smooth functioning of governments in half the world under the British Empire.

In this chapter,I will discuss how these design policies were aligned to apply themin the making of the CIE. In order to understand the very heart of the exhibition, particularly the CIE, I will first discuss the conceptual understanding of an archive, as eventually all documents and history begin and end in the archive. An object collected and exhibited is only a step away from the museum and the archive; or the oblivion. One side of the archive is memory, power; on the other side, there is dark uncertainty.

Derrida shows that the etymology of archive is from the Latin *archivum*, "residence of the magistrate," and from the Greek *arkhe*, to command or govern[3], colonial archives ordered (in both the imperative and taxonomic sense) the criteria of evidence, proof, testimony, and witnessing to construct moral narrations. In *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault does not treat the archive as an institution, but "the law of what can be said," not a library of events, but "that system that establishes statements as events and things," that "system of their enunciabilities".[4] The archive makes us rethink about the materiality and the imaginary of collections as well as their documentation. Archive, according to Foucault, is neither the sum of all texts that a culture preserves nor those institutions that allow for that record's preservation. The archive is rather that "system of statements," those "rules of practice," that shapes the specific regularities of what can and cannot be said. Students of colonialism have wrestled with this formulation to capture what renders colonial archives as both documents of exclusions and as monuments to particular configurations of power.

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3. Jacques Derrida, Archive Fever, p. 48

4. Michel Foucault, "The Statement and the Archive", *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, especially Part III (1972), 42.

During the last two decades considerable attention has been directed to further develop the concept of archive. Over the last decade, students of the colonial history have challenged the categories, conceptual frame, and practices of colonial authorities as well as their taxonomic states. Questioning the making of colonial knowledge, and the privileged social categories it produced has revamped what students of the colonial took to be sources of knowledge and what to expect of them. Apart from the writings of Foucault and Derrida many other theoretical contributions have built the archive into a major metaphor.

One important contribution is by Ann Laura Stoler. In her essay, 'Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance' (2002), she asks what insights about the colonial might be gained from attending not only to colonialism's archival content, but to its particular and sometimes peculiar form. Her focus is on archiving as a process rather than to archives as things. For her thecolonial archives are cross-sections of contested knowledge which can be consideredas epistemological experiments rather than as both transparencies on which power relations were inscribed and intricate technologies of rule in themselves.[5] I start by looking at various modes of cultural production discussed by Cohn to understand the "Colonial order of things"[6] the Crown administrators were introducing in India.

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5. Ann Laura Stoler, 'Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance', *Archival Science* 2, no. 1/2 (2002): 87–109, doi:10.1023/A:1020821416870.

6. This term is borrowed from Ann Laura Soler, Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance

"Factual storytelling," moralizing stories, and multiple versions – features that Hayden White ascribes to what counts as history – make sense of which specific plots "worked" in the colonial archives as well.[7]Thomas Richards follow Foucault in treating the imperial archive as "the fantastic representation of an epistemological master pattern".[8] For Richards, that archive is material and figurative, a metaphor of an unfulfilled but shared British imperial imagination. The imperial archive was both the supreme technology of the late nineteenth century imperial state *and* the telling prototype of a postmodern one, predicated on global domination of information and the circuits through which "facts" move. The archive, in Richard's view, is a template that decodes. What is the fiction of the archive? And what is it representing? Whether the "archive" should be treated as a set of discursive rules, a utopian project, a depot of documents, a corpus of statements, or all of the above, is not really the question. What is important to note is that the colonial archives were both sites of the imaginary *and* institutions that fashioned histories as they concealed, revealed, and reproduced the power of the state.

After seeing different surveys, collection of objects, and exhibitions I question and explore what insights about the colonial exhibitions might be gained from attending not only to colonialism's archival content and the ethnography of display, but also by trying to understand the sure, and

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7. See White, 1987, especially, pp. 26–57.

8. Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire* (New York: Verso, 1993), 11.

yet,sometimes strange form of these archives. This thesis examines the colonial collections, documents, and archives as epistemological experiments rather than as sources. I seek to interpret the *Schema* for collecting objects, discussed in detail in the previous chapter, as a prerequisite to making of the colonial archives and, subsequently, to the establishing of the museums in the metropole and their clones in the colonies. I focus on colonial collections and exhibitions as processes rather than as things.[9]I study the larger implications of the processes in these cultural technologies—if I can use Bernard Cohn's incisive formulation—as the cross-section of contested colonial knowledge,on which power relations were inscribed, and which became the sites for elaborate governance structure for the British to accomplish their Imperial mission.

I will show how the *Draft Scheme* was implemented by individuals (Watson), Institutes (Schools of Design), Publications (JIAI), and by sustaining networks furthering the cause of design and crafts—i.e., South Kensington's mobile exhibition series[10]**[Plate 16,17]**and a series of local exhibitions set up in different parts of India in collaboration with schools of design, museums, JIAI, and the Crown administration in residencies, presidencies coordinated by the Agriculture and Revenue Department in Calcutta.

It is instructive, and ironic, to note here that while SKM was trying to emulate Indian classics in the textile and other crafts and showcase them in twenty-six towns in England in five years, the Crown administration was trying

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9. Stoler, 'Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance', 4.

[10]http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/i/indian-textiles-and-empire-john-forbes-watson/

to justify making of new schools and museums in India on SKM model to "improve" the decaying crafts. The Crown administration in India was promoting English raw products to be used by the Indian industries. Thus, many of the textiles made in India were woven from English thread and British manufactures had become a real threat to the traditional Indian producers so highly appreciated by the British aesthetes. Indian arts had many sympathetic ears in London, they were concerned that unless some sensible steps are taken, living Indian arts will be wiped out completely. In 1879, in an open letter[11] written to Birdwood at the India Office, indicated wider circles of individual concerned about the perceived "rapid deterioration" of "the great historical arts of India". The letter expressed their belief that, 'the welfare of the arts in question is important both to India and to Europe and that the loss of them would be a serious blow to civilization, and an injury to the pleasure and dignity of life" (Birdwood, 1879).Apart from some sad words and sympathetic hopes they could not do much to change the state of affairs.

Watson had developed the concept of industrial museum to remedy many of the above concerns. It treated a museum as a moving show, a book, and a library. The samples collected were to be duplicated and be loaned to individuals or institutes. The idea of a 'portable museum,' probably, originated with the publication of John Forbes Watson's monumental Collections of the **Textile Manufactures of India** (1866) which consisted of 700 actual specimens of different fabrics in use across India assembled into a series of eighteen-volume sets to illustrate consumer demand.Watson's monumental

[11]The signatories included Purdon Clarke, a diplomat, several leading artists, William Morris, gallery owner Courts Lindsay, architects Richard Noman Shaw and Philip Webb, manufactures Henry Doulton and Thomas Wardle and the precedent of the Royal Society.

The Textile Manufactures and the Costumesof the People of India.**[Plate 33]**Compiled in London in the early 1860s, Watson was clearaboutthe project that his goal was to help British manufacturerscapture Indian markets. Hesaw the volumes as 'industrial museums ... promoting trade operations between the east and the west.' Thus, in the introduction he explained, “The 700 specimens . . . show what the people of India affect and deem suitable in the way of textile fabrics, and if the supply of these is to come from Britain, they must be *imitated* there. *What is wanted, and what is to be copied to meet that want*, is thus accessible for study.”[12]He was less interested in textiles as artistic objects than as a systematic collection of specimens of commercial value to manufacturers and importers and to the administrators of empire[13]. High cost of production of these volumes could never make it affordable and reach the popular audience as was done by Owen Jones’*The Grammar of Ornament* earlier.

What is the significance of Watson’s words in the introduction quoted above? He seems to have found out the secret to all the problems of the (British) manufacturers and the (British) buyers. By suggesting what might be the ideal taste they can choose to have and in order to achieve that what do the (British) designers need to copy? Here, we cannot help but remember Walter Benjamin’s anguished words about the impact of the technology for mechanical reproduction on hand-crafted works of art.

> *From a photographic negative, for example, one can make any number of prints; to ask for the "authentic" print makes no sense. But the*

[12]Italics in the original. John Forbes Watson, The Textile Manufacturers and the Costumes of the People of India reprinted in 1982 [1866], p. 3
[13]ibid

> *instant the criterion of authenticity ceases to be applicable to artistic production, the total function of art is reversed. Instead of being based on ritual, it begins to be based on another practice-politics.*[14]

In other words, when we start using mechanical reproduction we cease to be concerned about the authenticity. By copying the work of art, it becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility. If the industry gained in time and money, probably they lost on the quality of the textile. Here again we come across the Utilitarian concern for *only* quantity and the hope that somehow quality will emerge by following the numbers. This often leads to disappointment to all the parties concerned.

Compare this with another quotation after about twenty years in Jeypore where the Maharaja had the vision of reviving the local crafts and introducing new ones like the Blue ceramic pottery. The curator of the Jaipur Museum of Art Thomas Holbein Hendley put it in a catalog to the 1886 Colonial and Indian Exhibition in London,

> As every article is hand-painted and the designs are so rarely repeated, the prices are necessarily somewhat higher than those charged by European potters, but the purchaser has the pleasure of knowing, when he becomes the possessor of a Jeypore vase, as is the case with so many other articles of Indian manufacture, that he owns something that has required an individual effort of mind to produce, something in short which is not a mere mechanical repetition of the design of another person. 78

When we ponder on these two quotes by Watson and Hendley, we realize that we must focus on innovation in technology as well as design in order to succeed both in art as well as industry. Next, I will touch upon the mobility of the Indian textile and its impact on the world of manufacturers and

[14] Walter Benjamin, The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction

buyers. Sonia Ashmore calls textiles, “as diasporic objects, travelled east as well as west through the agency of these Anglo-Indian networks, as precursors of a modem trans-national textile trade. The collections made by Clarke and his predecessors indicated the effectiveness of these global networks yet embodied many of the tensions inherent in the colossal relationship.”[15]

Caspar Purdon Clarke, who was the curator of Indian section at SKM, had put together a broad network of 104 very influential people for the Royal Commission for CIE. Peter Hoffenburg refers to the Indian officers who were part of the Commission, as the “exhibitionwallahs,”[16] responsible for, “the production of imperial knowledge.” Seventeen Indian Maharajas or rulers were also included in the list. Their goodwill, donations and loans were crucial to the success of the exhibitions. Edward Buck guided with his vision and established extensive provincial committees for collecting and assisting him in forwarding objects.

CIE

I will situateCIE in this cultural and economic context. It was conceptualized in 1884, and inaugurated on 4thMay 1886 by Queen Victoria.By the time of its closure on 10 November 1886, more than of 5.5 million visitors had seen it.[17] The Exhibition took place in Earl’s Court; the

[15]Sonia: networks p.140
[16]Peter Hoffenberg, 2001, p.31
17. William Clowes, *Official Guide to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition* (London: William Clowes& Sons, 1886), 5.

grounds incorporated several pavilions, courtyards, and gardens. It was the last and the most important in a series of four thematic exhibitions held in London—Fisheries (1883), Health (1884), and Inventions (1885). It was also held to coincide with the Queen's Jubilee of 1887. Under the Presidency of the Prince of Wales, the Royal Commission was established for the proposed 'Colonial and Indian Exhibition' during the early 1884. It was supposed to be the biggest Colonial exposition till date, and was to lead Queen Victoria's Jubilee celebrations. India was highlighted as principal treasure trove of the British Empire, accentuating its prized status as the Jewel in the Crown.

The *CIE* was organised principally by the Department of Science and Art, located in South Kensington. Sir Philip Cunliffe-Owen, Director of the South Kensington Museum, served as the Executive Commissioner and as Secretary to the Royal Commission for the Colonial and Indian Exhibition and his nephew, Edward Cunliffe-Owen, served as the Assistant Secretary.[18] After a series of departmental shifts and reorganisation in the subcontinent during the 1870s and 1880s, the responsibilities of collecting, classifying, cataloguing, shipping and display of India's exhibits were left to the newly formed Museums and Exhibitions Branch of the Revenue and Agriculture Department.[19] Twenty-four executive commissioners were appointed for their respective countries. Edward C. Buck (the secretary for the Commissioner for the Government of India, and part of the London CIE Executive Committee), E. B. Havell (Madras committee), C. Purdon Clarke (Honorary Architect), J. R. Watson (Official Agent for the Government of India), Thomas Wardle

18. Ibid

19. Journal of Indian Arts and Industries, 1886 , 6

(arranged silk collection). For the Indian Empire, George Watt was selected as the Superintendent of the Economic Court. Two Indians T.N. Mukharji and B.A. Gupte, served as Watt's assistants. MancherjeeMerwanjeeBhownaggree (Commissioner for H. H. the Thakur Sahib of Bhawnagar), and B. J. Bose (Administration Court).

After a series of departmental shifts and reorganisation in the subcontinent during the 1870s and 1880s, the responsibilities of collecting, classifying, cataloguing, shipping and display of India's exhibits were left to the newly formed Museums and Exhibitions Branch of the Revenue and Agriculture Department. Twenty-four executive commissioners were appointed for their respective countries.[20]The Indian Court relied upon the assistance and involvement of the India Office in London and Indian Government, with work beginning in early 1885 to design the exhibition space and procure goods for display.

Unlike previous exhibitions for the exhibits in CIE, the Royal Commission established no central classification system; inviting the participating governments to classify their objects by evolving their own scheme for it. Apparently, the British government still retained complete control over collection, classification, as well as promotional and trading aspects of the exhibition. The CIE officials involved at the local level were given freedom to have their own goals, motivations, and ideas in exhibiting.[21]The Colonial and Indian Exhibition, with the exception of the Economic Court, was arranged according to region rather than by categories of objects. The *Official Guide* indicated that the Economic Court was intended to be a "survey of the

20. Clowes, William Clowes, *Official Guide to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition,* 13.
21. William Clowes, *Official Guide to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition,* 18

resources, the productive powers, and the commerce of India".[22]It exhibited the agricultural harvests and other "useful products of India" arranged by classes rather than by regions or technology.

'India' took up roughly one third of the exhibition space for the 1886 exhibition. 103,000 square feet were dedicated within the exhibition buildings to India at a cost of £22,000[23]. The Indian Government contributed £10,000 to this, with the rest of the money coming from the Royal Commission and various grants. Apart from the financial contributions needed, exhibits had to be procured, and in this the Indian Princes and Indian states were intimately involved, donating a range of goods.Art-wares were organized by Indian provinces, marking a break from previous exhibitions where displays had been ordered by juries on their rankings. This was a suggestion by E. C. Buck in order to create a healthy competition among the art schools and museums for providing best original artifacts or copies. The Calcutta exhibition had several prizes meant for different categories: students, professional craftsmen, exhibition commissioners and museum curators.

The Indian Court was received well by the press and the Royal Family. The Jeypore and Gwalior Gateways, in particular, attracted much attention[24]. The exhibition included a display of 'native artisans' - thirty-four men from Agra demonstrating various crafts and professions, from sweetmeat maker to potter to carpet weaver. These men were, in fact, inmates from Agra Jail who had arrived in Britain on 20 April 1886 with Dr J. W. Tyler, the superintendent

22. Ibid, 20

23. Ibid,11

24. Gwalior Gate is installed in an apologetic clumsy way in the present V&A museum, while the The Jaipur Gate, paid for by the Maharaja of Jaipur, has been reinstalled in the grounds of the Hove Museum and Art Gallery since 1926. Refer to the illustrations.

of Agra Jail. They all attended a reception at Windsor Castle to meet Queen Victoria in July 1886.

Layout

The layout of an exhibition is a very important part in its design as it not only guides the movement of the eyes and legs of the visitors; in fact, it can also invoke the desired emotional response to connect them with the patrons and their agenda in a subtle and aesthetic manner. Thus, as a blueprint for production, the layout also worked as a graphic representation of the physical territory of the exhibition. At the same time, it also carves out a space within the visitors helping them withempathetic participation, opening up the exhibition as an object that they can carry home as their possession. This way the layout can be simultaneously a map and territory depending on in its presence in the mind-space or in the physical-space. The plan, or 'the map of the exhibition' as it was called by the lay visitors, also worked as guide to the visitor, as well as the real provinces it represented and displayed and a signifier of the mental regions the exhibitionsrepresented. Although the displays were at full scale, they were just samples or replicas of the objects of the entire region. In the company of other such displays they were in direct territorial competition with their neighbours. As a score, the layout choreographed the loci the herds of visitors trailed, or an odd track a lone aesthete would wander through at his pace.

The entrance to the CIE was highlighted by a tall structure with a striking mural on its facade and the statue of mythic Britannia towering above the entire exhibition. *The Art Journal*featured CIE in a special supplement

depicting the view of the main structure in the exhibition on its cover. (**Plate 35)**It illustratedwhat a visitor would see during the summer of 1886. It represented the exterior of a building boasting a colossal coloured map of the two hemispheres of the world on which the possessions of the empire were prominently marked.[25] Beneath the map appeared statistical tables displaying area, population, and trade information about the colonies. Above the map were four clocks depicting simultaneous times in the colonial capitals of Calcutta, Ottawa, Sydney, and Cape Town. Above them was a much larger clock declaring the time in Greenwich, England, and above all these, topping the whole structure was a dominating statue of the mythic figure of Britannia overlooking the entire spectacle. Thus, even symbolically, Britannia was portrayed as supreme in the world of the Empire.

The mural captured, in a way, the main message of the claims of the Empire in more than graphic terms. In its bare symbolic skeleton,it referred directly to the spatial and temporal supremacy of the British by using the spread of their territory in over more than half the world and covering all the five time zones (of that era). These time zones also referred to the newly devised system of meridian based division of the globe, and geographical divisions of the world having the same time in a day. Moreover, the geographical map of the world bragged of the vast spread of the Empire with locations of individual colonies above their statistical data. The sheer magnitude and diversity of political, cultural, and design variety it promised would soon prove to be merely an understatement as the CIE was not possible to be imagined by a common citizen for its size, wealth, or cultural

25. The Art Journal, May 1886

varieties it brought home. Through CIE, the Prince of Wales wanted to silence the critics who claimed that the colonies were proving to be a loss-making proposition for the empire. It would soon be clear to everyone that the colonies could only enrich the Great Britain and could add an immense artistic value and cultural wealth. The feedback of the press and individuals writing about CIE showed the effectiveness of this claim. CIE was the last and most important in a series of four thematic exhibitions held in London—Fisheries (1883), Health (1884), and Inventions (1885). It was also held to coincide with the Queen's Jubilee of 1887.

CIE grew into a display of the Empire; further, the Empire itself became a metonymic substitute of the world as if the world was the Empire. One walked around the venue as if one were travelling around the world. One tended to read the Catalogue and walk through CIE as if both activities were similar or equivalent actions; both reducing the other into a two-dimensional affect. ArindamDutta invokes Foucault's term 'episteme'[26] to bind culture, exhibits, and text as products of a single formulation that was interchanged and substituted for one another in their manifestations of the Imperial power in CIE as the catalogue, the exhibition and the knowledge that was used to govern[27] made it apparent. I argue that the corollary is equally valid, that is one walked through the Exhibition as if one were reading it like a book. This reversal of the metaphor is more than a literary device, in fact, it was a subtle art of persuasion the Colonial discourse used as it was applied by the Empire.

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26. Dutta, *The Bureaucracy of Beauty: Design in the Age of Its Global Reproducibility*, 43.

27. In ArindamDutta's formulation, these representations can be understood as a series of heterogeneous devices which cohere together only in affiliation, as an array (Dutta:129). The Empire as power (*pouvoir*) is organized even as the Exhibition is categorized as visual (*voir*) display, at the same moment as it is written as knowledge (*savoir*).

Just like its grand predecessor the Great Exhibition of 1851, which had Britain display in half the area in the Crystal Palace, in CIE, India was allotted the largest area. It occupied one-third of the CIE or about 103,000 square feet of the area.[28] While besides India, CIE had displays from Australia, West and South Africa, New Zealand, Canada, Hong Kong, British Guiana, the West Indies, Malta, and Cyprus.[29]Colonial exhibitions mapped the political hierarchies of the empire, spatially as well as architecturally, separating the "modern" sections of the European displays from the past temporalities of colonial sections.

The South Galleries were devoted to India and Ceylon; while the Dominion of Canada was partly located in the Central Gallery. The Australian Courts were in the centre subdivided amongst the five divisions of the island continent: New Guinea and Fiji, flanked on the west by New Zealand, and on the east by the West Indies and British Honduras.[30] Malta and Cyprus were between the West Indies and Queensland, and British Guiana to the north of the West Indies, and the old Chinese Court housed Hong Kong. The Queen's Gate Annexe housed contributions from Africa – the Cape of Good Hope, Natal, the Gold Coast, Lagos and the West Africa Settlements; while the East Arcade had the Eastern and Atlantic Possessions. CIE took place in the midst of Thomas Cook's tours for Britons to 'exotic' India. The Prince of Wales had appointed Thomas Cook Passenger Agents to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, expressing his desire to enable everyone from "Indian maharajahs

28. Paul Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs, 1851-1939* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), 59-60.

29. William Clowes, *Official Guide to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition*.

30. Ibid.

to the British public" to visit the exhibition.[31] The agency became the unofficial travel agents for many of the rulers of India's independent states, as they engaged in India-to-Britain tourism. For SaloniMathur, the idea of travel for leisure was considered a "bourgeois, cosmopolitan, and worldly experience,"[32] and, I would argue, constituted a particularly modern form of experience. As the previous chapter illustrated, the opulent class, and the royal families often engaged with over-seas travel as a means of becoming modern and as a status of being close to the Crown Raj.

The Official Guide to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition described an ideal route suggested to the visitors through the exhibition, describing the objects as they passed them and the historical, geographical, and biographical contexts in which the audience viewed and understood them. The plan of the CIE,**(Plate34)** which accompanied the guide, had a certain peculiarity: sections of the schematic plan were keyed in to the pages of the *Guide* itself which described these areas. After the principal Gwalior Gate entrance, visitors first encountered the Empire of India section. On the map in the *Official Guide*, this area was represented by the pink shaded parts of the South, Middle, and North Courts, as well as the Indian Palace and gardens (**Plate38)**The Indian Palace included the Durbar Hall aptly having military collections. Carved screens, carpets, lamps, and hanging banners overlooked the three courts.[33]The Indian Palace, marked by #23, 24, and 50 on the plan, comprised of three parts. The first accommodated workshops forjewellers,

31. Piers Brendon, *Thomas Cook: 150 Years of Popular Tourism* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1991) 205.

32. Mathur, *India by Design*, 55.

33. William Clowes, *Official Guide to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition*.

weavers, and carvers. The second part was the Durbar Hall, designed by Caspar Purdon Clarke; with its intricate woodcarving,it was intended to be animitation of an Indian Palace. The third section was the garden vestibule (marked as #50 in the plan) with a mosaic floor and a Ceylon Tea House and a fountain, draped over with a marquee tent.

WithinCIE, the Indian section had a tripartite division of space--the Art Ware Courts, the Economic Court, and the Administrative Courts. These courts displayedjewellery, furniture, curtains, shawls, teas, metal work, and raw materials. Visitors entered the Middle Court through the Jeypore Gateway to the art-ware courts, divided regionally by "stylistically distinctive screens" from locations such as Rajputana, Central India, Bombay and Baroda, and Bengal and Nepal.[34]Levell describes the ornately carved Jeypore Gateway, as the "threshold dividing nature from culture," through which the visitors "entered into the idealized microcosm of Indian civilisation."[35]

ArindamDutta interprets this particular form of indexing as a subtle act of persuasion that gently nudged the casual visitor to read a textual explication of the background and to resituate the object back to the context from which it had been displaced.[36]Indexing was an innocent tool thateffortlessly domesticated the objects in their new context and visitors, as enthusiastic as high school students, felt more knowledgeable at the end of the tour. The layout and reading of the layout, both; were training the visitors into a new

34. Levell, *Oriental Visions*, 72-4. These screens were the products of specially commissioned designs that were distributed by colonial officials to Indian artisans in DSA schools and created specifically for the exhibition.

35 . Nicky Levell, *Oriental Visions: Exhibitions, Travel, and Collecting in the Victorian Age* (London: Horniman Museum and Gardens, Museum, 2000), 71-72.

36. Dutta,*Politics of Display*, 128.

kind of visual literacy for them. Anthony Bennett and others have stressed the importance of this aspect of educating the visual sensibilities of citizens as an important aspect of urban disciplining of the masses.

In the CIE itself, and in the various publications and catalogues accompanying the Exhibition, the artifacts displayed from particular regions were referred to as if they were the regions themselves. Thus, two descriptions from successive pages of *the Guide* illustrated this: *'Beyond the Punjab lies Kashmir, the screen of which is of exceptional interest... Beyond Madras we find Mysore and Coorg.'* I argue that this is more than an idle figure of speech--it is indicative of the most prevailing, almost invisible, notions about dealing with the colonies; i.e., that of treating the part as a whole and the whole as a part.

The Three Courts

The plan of the Indian Empire Section was designed as per the guidelines by Mr. E C Buck. It was a series of three spaces designed as separate distinct spaces: Art Courts, a Court devoted to Economic Products and Agricultural and Ethnological Exhibits, and the Administrative Courts—a space set apart to give an idea about the chief departments of the Government of India. The tripartite division of the Indian section subtly encapsulated the spirit of governance that involved the interconnected departments and how design policies were helping the convergence of their area of activity. In a way it was symbolic of three stages of modalities that evolved during the East India Company rule and their final integration by the policies for crafts objects. Indian section had separate Courts occupied by private Indian exhibitors, and

others for the display of Indian teas, coffees, and tobaccos. These displays were experiential; more than the vision, they gratified senses with the rich aroma, colour and taste. The North Court section was devoted to private exhibits that featured private exhibitors. It was organized to simulate a bazaar for Indian objects; where they were available for purchase but without the ethnographic focus of the Economic Court and the Indian Palace.[37] Beyond, and independent of these, was the Indian Palace whose magnificent and oriental external structure and exotic lavishly ornamented interior attracted huge crowds. Indian palace was designed by Casper Purdon Clarke.

The 'Indian Palace' section of the 1886 Exhibition, was placed opposite the 'Old London' exhibit and immediately north of the rest of the Indian exhibits,comprised of a similar enterprise (**Plate 39**). Designed as an approximation of what the Guide informs us is the 'Hindu-Persian style known as Moghul Architecture', it was decorated within an abstracted and canonized vernacular idiom, sifted from the areas surrounding Agra. The windows were genuine plaster-of-Paris casts from sandstone originals at FatehpurSikri, and the interior of the palace was lined in what one commentator calls a 'Sikh style'. This particular appellation derives from the fact that the decoration[38] was executed in England by two wood carvers from the Punjab,under the supervision of the then superintendent of the South Kensington Indian Museum, Mr C. Purdon Clarke. Representing no particular building so much as an idealization of India as a 'feudal' civilization of exotic and magnificent kings and princes, the 'Palace' was divided into three main areas, the outer

37. "The Colonial and Indian Exhibition," *Times* (London), 24 April 1886, 7.

38. *Guide to Colonial and Indian Exhibition*, 1886, 132.

Court, the Durbar Hall, and the Garden Vestibule. The outer Court consisted mainly of shops on three sides, depicting, as in the Old London display, live native artisans from different parts of India at work on their respective metiers.

The 1886 *Colonial and Indian Exhibition* separated the central, provincial, and state courts in the Indian Pavilion. The Central Hall, devoted to the central Government of India, contained exhibits of political, social, and commercial development.[39] The central courts included displays of forestry and timber, railways, geological surveys, the army, co-operation and education, commercial intelligence, cotton, and tea. The Education department, the Empire Cotton Growers Association, the Forest Department, and the Indian Tea Association headed their respective sections[40]. The spaces allotted to the Government of India were categorized in three main divisions. These were the Art-ware Courts, containing specimens of art-ware and ornamental fabrics from each Indian Province or State; the Economic Court, for economical products, and exhibits of agriculture and ethnology from the whole Empire; and the Administrative Courts, containing exhibits about the administrative departments.

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39. CIE Catalogue; page:112

40. CIE Catalogue; page:113

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