"They were conquerors, and for that you want only brute force-- nothing to boast of, when you have it, since your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of others. They grabbed what they could get for the sake of what was to be got. It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a great scale, and men going at it blind--as is very proper for those who tackle a darkness. The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much. What redeems it is the idea only. An idea at the back of it; not a sentimental pretense but an idea; and an unselfish belief in the idea—something you can set up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to. . . ."

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*

Introduction

Europe's colonies were never empty spaces to be made over in Europe's image or fashioned in its interests; nor, indeed, were European states self-contained entities that at one point projected themselves overseas. Europe was made by its imperial projects, as much as colonial encounters were shaped by conflicts within Europe itself.

Ann Laura Stoler and Frederick Cooper, *Tensions of Empire*[1]

---

[1] Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World* (University of California Press, 1997), 1

Introduction

The main focus of my thesis is the study of the development of design policies regarding man-made objects by the British administration in India during the second half of the 19th century. In this study, I focus on the period leading up to 1851, the year that marks *The Great Exhibition* in London, to 1886, the year when the *'*Colonial and Indian Exhibition*'* (CIE) which took place in London to showcase the wealth of the colonies to the British citizens. I also extend my focus to the time that followed the CIE, up to 1893 when the follow-up conference on state of museums in India was held in Lahore.   A number of institutions came up to streamline, document, categorize, collect, and exhibit or publish these collections of man-made objects from India. I have used the exploratory method for my study, investigating the tenuous connections between various nascent institutions and organizations.

I use the term 'design policies' for the discourse created by these networks of organizations, which were temporary and at times created for specific purpose such as the CIE or institutions with a longer life cycle like art schools which institutionalized teaching of arts and journals, publications of books, journals, and monographs which documented man-made objects created in India for consumers in the metropolitan centre.

My thesis will trace the historical, socio-political, ideological, and theoretical background for these 'design policies', and will show how they contributed to the overall objectification of Indian culture and appropriation of Indian wealth. This process was initiated by the British administration through employing various modalities. 'Design Policies' as I term it, is a result of convergence of various colonial processes in the 19th century to meet the

British need to efficiently govern India so as to gain maximum advantage in collecting artifacts in a legal and systematic way.

In order to bring out intricacies of these colonial processes, I study various strategies that the British used to efficiently govern the colonies. Many processes that created and influenced the 'design policies' were initiated much before the mid-19th century. I shall examine them in order to study how they brought about the objectification of Indian culture. I start with two epochal events during the decade of 1850, which irreversibly changed British perceptions about the Indian subcontinent, namely, the Great Exhibition in 1851 and the "Great Mutiny" in 1857.

The Great Exhibition showcased India as the Jewel in the Crown, thereby highlighting the extent to which the empire had undermined the wealth of its largest colony. (Plate 2) It was a major breakthrough event and achievement for the Britain as it placed Britain as the global leader in Industry, showcasing its wide empire for the first time to the world. As a bonus surprise to everyone, there was India—the Jewel in the Crown—noticed and loved by all, visitors and critics alike. Everyone was talking about India and its amazing rich collections with exquisite workmanship. The "Great Mutiny" of 1857 effectively alarmed the authorities that they must not take India for granted. For the Britain it was indeed a rude awakening—bringing the ghosts of the American Revolution and the subsequent cessation of the United States from Britain. The panic of the Mutiny eventually led to the transfer of powers of Indian administration from the East India Company to Queen Victoria.

British Prime Minister Disraeli decided to use this transfer to please the queen by announcing to proclaim her the Empress of India in 1879. The

cartoon in Punch (Plate 3) captures Disraeli's cunningness and portrays Queen Victoria as seemingly coy, to suggest all that mattered then was the two of them.[2] India, the huge subcontinent, was objectified as a Jewel and was now just an inanimate object privileged to animate the empire. This was the epitome of caricaturing an entire subcontinent by defining it as an object; and as such it would be possible to deal with the country and all its resources as mere numbers and things that can be displayed or rearranged at whim. In this dissertation I will try to explore the manner in which the British tried to *know* what was India, how they went about *constructing* that into the reality they could handle and manipulate. I will also delineate how they *exhibited* India; in the process projecting their idea of India and their enumeration and construction of India to the entire world, as if that was the only thing about India the world needed to know.

The latter half of the Nineteenth century was considered to be the heyday for international expositions and trade shows. It was also the time when innovative urban spaces were evolving out of the fascination for the Crystal Palace (1851) and novel typologies of urban spaces were being worked out. (Plate 5) There was a visible demand for such massive shows and particularly for India's exotic artifacts, crafts, and the live ethnographic display of the 'primitive people.' Soon the British administration realized that they had to evolve new means for collecting ever more artifacts and introduce policies to completely transform Indian culture. To achieve this goal, the British administrators, thus, introduced many policy changes as they promoted industries and discouraged traditional crafts, along with encouraging teaching

---

[2] Tenniel, 'Cartoon', *Punch or The London Chronicle*, 15 April 1876.

of English language so as to produce '*Babus*' and promote western dress and furniture in order to inculcate western aesthetics as a 'progressive sensibility'.

I will trace the historical, socio-political, ideological, and theoretical background for these 'design policies', and will show how they contributed to the overall objectification of Indian culture and appropriation of Indian wealth. This process was initiated by the British administration through employing various modalities. 'Design Policies'[3] as I term it, is a result of convergence of various colonial processes in the 19th century to meet the British need to efficiently govern India so as to gain maximum advantage in collecting artifacts in a legal and systematic way.

In order to bring out the intricacies of these colonial processes, I study various strategies that the British used to efficiently govern the colonies. British Empire reaffirmed and consolidated its power positions by developing sets of new tropes and administrative customs for the new institutes and cultural apparatuses. These included a network of colonial exhibitions and museums, along with initiation of art academies and journals. They established Public Works Department (PWD) for new buildings and Archeological Survey of India for old monuments. Several survey departments started collecting data for Geology, Topography, Flora, Fauna, and Population. In the process they set up the stage for launching several western disciplines like Anthropology, Ethnography, Art History, Architecture, and Museology, in India. I argue that with these disciplines the British *defined* more than described the realities of the colonies: I even suggest that they

---

[3] My use of the term Design Policies is nearest in meaning to what design theoretician Guy Julier calls Design Culture. See Guy Julier, *Culture of Design* (London: SAGE, 2007).

inaugurated a new order for knowledge and power not just to change the political economy of the colonies but also their cultural identity forever. British administration had introduced many processes that influenced the 'design policies' which were initiated before the mid-19th century. I shall examine them in order to study how they brought about the objectification of Indian culture. In these deceptively simple phenomena of the nineteenth century, we find intersecting and overlapping discourses of Modernism, Colonialism, and Orientalism. I have negotiated theoretical interpretations of the policies with the larger design discourse as it unfolded within the dialogues between modernist and colonialist thinking of the time. I use the term 'Design Policy' for the study of interrelationships between designed artifacts, in all their manifestation, the work of designers, design production, and eventual consumption. My study has focused particularly on the British Design Policies primarily from the perspective of history and critique of art and design.

Nicholas Dirks aligns the Knowledge Power axis to position Edward Said and Michel Foucault, as both have done pioneering work, which is of exploratory fundamental concern for the British Indian historians in the recent decades.

> It has not been sufficiently recognized that colonialism was itself a cultural project of control. Colonial knowledge both enabled conquest and was produced by representing India through the mastery and display of archaeological memories and religious texts, Britain set in motion transformations every bit as powerful as the better-known consequences of military and economic imperialism.[4]

---

[4] Nicholas Dirks, 'Foreword', in *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, by Bernard S. Cohn, Studies in Imperialism (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), ix.

Bernard Cohn's early analysis of the East India Company's linguistic project[5] elaborated an investigation based on Foucault's concepts of information order, power, and governance. Cohn's useful concepts of modalities can be best augmented with the theoretical basis from Said and Foucault to integrate the information thus collected with the power used for governance. In my thesis I will extend the theoretical instruments from Said and Foucault that Dirks shows, in the quote above, to understand Indian arts and crafts policies during British India.

For Cohn, the colonial state marked a fundamental rupture within the South Asian past; its rise enacted a shift from a pre-modern and indigenous "theatre of power' to a series of 'officializing' procedures' that European states and their colonial projections used to extend their power over their new domains".[6] Cohn's *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge* (1996) highlights the increasingly organized and rigid view that the colonial state developed of South Asian culture and history. In a series of wide ranging essays,[7] many of them drawing upon his earlier work on the bureaucracy of the Indian Civil Service and his research on the social history where he pursues the same logic; he discusses how the British reduced "vastly complex codes and their associated meanings to a few metonyms".[8] Bernard Cohn used this

[5] Bernard S. Cohn, *An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays* (Oxford University Press, 1989).

[6] Bernard S. Cohn, 'The Transformation of Object into Artefacts, Antiquities, and Art in Nineteenth Century', in *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 106–62.

[7] Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton, 1996)

[8] Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge,* 3, 162.

simplification and essentialization as the key for imperial power: in short, India's colonisation was enacted through its intellectual and cultural objectification. Modalities were the default starting point for collecting and organizing information in several domains—from diplomatic ritual to the composition of grammars, from the working of the colonial legal system to curatorial practice, and from taking policy decisions to, even, making a laundry list for an event.

Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) and *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) both provided an important channel for the exploration of Foucault's discussions of discourse and the related knowledge/power relationship he elaborated in *Archaeology of Knowledge*. For the British Indian government, key to governance was knowledge about India conducted through various survey, enquiries and stored away in the archive for future analysis and policy making strategies. The knowledge, power, governance is further made clear in the analytic studies by various Colonial historians like David Arnold (Medicine), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Archives), Gyan Prakash (Science), Eugene Irschik (History), Saurabh Dube (Identity) etc. Although these historians[9]critique different limbs of the Imperium, they are describing the same elephant; namely how their area of scrutiny is related to the nexus of

---

9 Bernard S. Cohn, 'The Command of Language and the Language of Command', in *Subaltern Studies IV: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, ed. Ranajit Guha (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985), 276–329; David Arnold, *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-Century India* (Berkeley: University of California, 1993) and *Police Power and Colonial Rule: Madras, 1859-1947* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1986); Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'The Rani of Sirmur: An Essay in Reading the Archives', *History and Theory* 24, no. 3 (1985): 247–72; Gyan Prakash, *Another Reason: Science and the Imagination of Modern India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Eugene F. Irschick, *Dialogue and History: Constructing South India, 1795-1895* (Berkeley: University of California, 1994); Saurabh Dube, *Untouchable Pasts: Religion, Identity, and Power Among a Central Indian Community, 1780-1950*(Albany, NY: SUNY, 1998)

knowledge / power / archive. In order to flesh out the highly nuanced and tangled issues of the subject position and the agency we will focus on Spivak and Guha. In other words, if we privilege the visual analogy: what is the authors' assumed position in the picture, and what power enables them to describe the picture whether as an insider or outsider?

For Spivak, the archival search for South Asian women's subjectivities in the archive is analogous to being 'in the shadow of shadows'. She elaborated this vision of the 'shadowy' nature of the archive[10] in her seminal article 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' which rejected the possibility of recovering subaltern mentalities and subjectivities in general, but especially those of the 'female subalterns'. Spivak's authoritarian article about the silence and the subaltern elicited, ironically, noisy feedback. Lata Mani[11] is cautious, against seeing Spivak's argument as 'conclusions about colonial discourse in general', as any desire to affect a full recovery of [female or subaltern] subjectivity is misplaced and doomed to fail.

Ranajit Guha has pioneered his work by reading in and against the grain of the archive to put together the peasant insurrection. While reflecting on the archival base for the reconstruction of the colonial period, Guha advocates construction of a multi-vocal history grounded in 'listening to and conversing with the myriad voices in civil society'. Guha's realization of the

---

[10] Gayatri Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana, 1988), 266.

[11] Lata Mani, 'Cultural Theory, Colonial Texts: Reading Eyewitness Accounts of Widow Burning', in *Cultural Studies*, ed. Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula Treichler (New York: Routledge, 1992), 392–405. These arguments are elaborated more fully in her *Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

multi-vocality of the past and the ways in which women's voices have been elided calls the very future of 'history' into question. In his own words: "If the small voice of history gets a hearing at all … it will do so only by interrupting the telling of the dominant version, breaking up its storyline and making a mess of its plot".[12] So long as the historical analysis is now recognized as an inherently uncertain project, neither the archive nor the agenda of the 'recovery' of subjectivity can be considered transparent. This uncertainty, in a way, underwrites the prospect of equivocal and continuous negotiations for the discipline of history in post-colonial theory and criticism.

Cohn has famously recounted Colonial interventions in the British reading and writing of India as a culture, as a region, and as a system with a detailed instrumentality he labelled as modalities for cultural production. He deftly details out six major modalities the British applied to understand and domesticate the unknown subcontinent. These modalities included surveying, historiographic, observational or travel, enumerative, museological, and surveillance. I propose to use some of these modalities, namely Historiographical and Museological modalities to write the critical history of British knowledge of Indian cultures and the construction of India as a museum. Specifically in the second chapter I will also show the significance of the British policies on the man-made objects—whether made with hand or the machine; how artifacts that were collected were exhibited in India as well as sent abroad to London or other metropolitan centers. And finally how the British tried to 'solve the problem of decay' in Indian crafts by training their children in state run design schools. The third chapter will deal with the formal

---

[12] Ranajit Guha and Partha Chatterjee, *The Small Voice of History: Collected Essays* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2009), 12.

collections and display of these artifacts in International Expositions or in the museums in the metropole or in the colonies.

The Historiographic modality comprised of three strands. The first was what the British called the "enquiries" which investigated how revenue was assessed and collected in the places they had conquered. They also collected local histories and customs related to land tenure. They called it the land settlement process and prepared such reports for each district in their dominion.[13] The second strand of the historiographic modality was to create and ideological construction of the Indian civilization so as to project it as to justify, legitimize Britain's civilizing mission in India.[14]The colonialist discourse projected India as a dark place in need of light and rationality that the British rule was willing to provide it. Writers like James Mill abounds in negative generalizations about India.[15] The third strand of the historiographic modality is concerned with the histories of British in India and the representations of historical events from the British point of view – events such as the defeat of Tipu Sultan and other British victories in different parts of India appeared in different genres like theatre, popular performances.[16]

The Observational modality created a set of typified images of India as it was observed from the biased European lens. It would typically include descriptions of historical sites and that of population that did not fall into set

---

[13] Bernard S. Cohn, 'Introduction', in *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 5-6

[14] Ibid. 6.

[15] James Mill, *The History of British India*, vol. 3 (London: James Madden, 1858).

[16] Cohn, 'Introduction', 6.

categories – such as the holy men and entertainers. India was viewed through the dominant aesthetic principles in England.[17]

The Enumerative modality is another important investigative tool that was employed by the British. The enumeration of Indian population was a way of grasping the vast, myriad mosaic of identities and cultures in India. In the pre-colonial Indian society identities were 'fuzzy' as the communities had porous boundaries which allowed easy osmosis and transition from one category to other. Sudipta Kaviraj in his essay, 'The Imaginary Institution of India' (1992) has pointed out how the Indian communities developed a sense of identity as a result of census conducted by the British, when they realized the strength of their community in terms of numbers.[18] This enumeration of population led to division of communities along language and caste lines. As a result of this impulse for documentation, this 'fuzzy community' became an enumerated community, which led to freezing and hardening of community boundaries, as Nicholas Dirks has pointed out in his book *Castes of Mind* (2001). The caste system was solidified as a result of this documentation of the population.[19]Thus, we see that because of the enumerative modality, the fuzzy boundaries between the communities within India hardened and the social, cultural and linguistic differences.[20] This also objectified the Indian population as types, to be prejudged by their origins.

---

[17] Ibid 7.

[18] Kaviraj Sudipta, 'Imaginary Institution of India', in *Subaltern Studies VII: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, ed. Partha Chatterjee and Gyanendra Pandey (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992), 1–39.

[19] Nicholas B. Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001).

[20] Cohn, 'Introduction', 7.

The Surveillance modality is a result of the British tendency to view India and its vast and varied population from a safe distance. The attempt at enumerating the population helped the British to classify the population in neat slots. The British were threatened by the sections of the population that were outside the boundaries of civic society – communities of entertainers, holy men, dacoits, and pastoralists. Cohn has shown how the British devised laws which stigmatized those people who fell outside the boundaries of civil society and designated them as criminal tribes and castes.[21]

The Survey modality consisted of employing of various methods to encapsulate India. It involved measuring land for establishing boundaries and also the measuring of the farmland. This activity was also accompanied by the measuring of natural and social landscape of India. The investigative modality of surveying, as Cohn puts it encompassed a wide range of practices such as creating maps of the Indian territories under British control, collecting botanical specimens, recording architectural and archeological sites of historical significance. The British undertook a massive documentation project to Survey India, which entailed bounding of the Indian world by using various parameters. Each territory conquered by the British was surveyed and documented in terms of its "zoology, geology, botany, ethnography, economic products, history and sociology".[22] Cohn also lists the names of the famous surveyors – James Rennall, William Lambton, Colin Mackenzie, Alexander Cunningham and Francis Buchanan Hamilton. He points out how a vast amount of knowledge about India was transformed into different modes of

---

[21] Ibid, 10.
[22] Ibid, 7.

textual documentation such as encyclopedias, monographs and archives. This helped the British colonial state in fixing, binding and settling India. This processes of survey led to objectification of the Indian reality.[23]

The survey modality was also linked to the Museological modality. The Museological modality as Cohn terms it, is a byproduct of the surveys conducted by the British for land settlement and revenue. This modality was marked by the random nature of collection of different art forms by individual efforts of company officials and private collectors. This activity of collection of art forms took on an official status during the exhibitions like the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London. Institutes like The Asiatic Society of Bengal and the Archeological Survey of India were instituted as a result of this modality. Activities of these institutes led to creation of Museums which displayed archeological, natural, historical, and ethnographic specimens. Cohn points how the British viewed India as a place which simultaneously represented different timeframes from the past. As a result of this perception, it was seen as a source for objects which will satisfy the British need for collectibles and curiosities from India. By collecting, classifying, categorizing and exhibiting objects taken from India, the British, as rulers, created cannons of taste, and defined the Indian past by recording the details of its civilization.[24]

The survey modality employed by the British was also linked to collection of objects from India. As a case study, Cohn has traced this process of documentation of Indian art and sculptures and their objectification during the process of survey by Colin Mackenzie. He traces the trajectory of Buddhist sculptures discovered by Mackenzie at Amravati. (Plate 6) As he

---

[23] Ibid, 6-10.
[24] Ibid, 10-12.

describes the circuitous route these sculptures take as they get noticed, appreciated, documented, collected, categorized and critiqued by various agents[25] and also their fate when they reach the metropole (London) where they are pulled out of their context and put on display during the Great Exhibition. Cohn cites the case of Amravati marbles to show how the objectification of artifacts that happened through random efforts of the company officials and their interpretation was subject to the colonial biases of individual interpreters like James Fergusson.[26] Cohn shows how the British through the process of documenting Indian art and architecture, attempted to create a history and a sense of past to the Indian colony, and through this process attempted to create an identity for the British nation. They saw in India an echo of their medieval past and India was seen as a museum of the European past. (Plate 7, 8) They were disconnected with it due to the processes of industrialism and modernity. As Fergusson puts it in his lecture,

> It is also important because architecture in India is still a living art. We can see there, at the present day, buildings as important in size as our medieval cathedrals erected by master masons on precisely the same principle and in the same manner that guided our medieval masons to such glorious results.[27]

Objects

A main component of this thesis is the study of objects. I study two of the theoretical aspects for considering objects, as propagated by Henry

---

[25] Cohn, 'The Transformation of Object into Artefacts, Antiquities, and Art in Nineteenth Century', 92-93.

[26] Ibid 93-98
[27] Ibid 93

Lefebvre, and Arjun Appadurai to locate my enquiry in the current theoretical discussions. Both the authors look at objects as things that make our social reality and as commodity that decide economic exchanges. Our visual world is full of man-made objects that serve either for utility or emotive function. We tend to take them for granted and underestimate our dependence on them. As Henri Lefebvre has written 'The everyday is the most universal and the most unique condition, the most social and the most individuated, the most obvious and the best hidden'[28] Objects hide the social space by a double illusion—the illusion of transparency, and the illusion of opacity. In his *Social Production of Space*, he details out how these illusions in an intrinsic manner constantly constitute and shape our reality.[29]

Arjun Appadurai analyses objects as by revisiting Marx (commodity), and Mauss (gift). He proposes a new perspective on the circulation of commodities in social life by focusing on the objects that are exchanged he argues that what creates the link between exchange and value is politics. In other words, like Lefebvre, he also comes to the understanding that objects have social lives of their own. At the same time, even though 'things' described in this way are unobtrusive and escape attention, they are nevertheless instrumental in the literal and grounded sense of mediating the link between people and artifacts and therefore between the human worlds of the mental and the physical. It is in the everyday world that politics and polity, economics and the economy, aesthetics and beauty, are concretized,

---

[28] Chris Butler, *Henri Lefebvre: Spatial Politics, Everyday Life and the Right to the City* (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 30.

[29] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Wiley, 1992), 28-30.

experienced, and perhaps transformed – in short, lived[30]. Material objects are as much a part of the weave of our lives as our bodies are; indeed, these two aspects of our lives have the fundamental characteristic of physicality not possessed by most other facets of our existence.

In the context of the above discussion, I argue that the significance of British collection of objects had much deeper impact beyond the economic (Appadurai), and the social (Lefebvre); in the field of design--by changing the way we use the space, we have changed our way of designing and our ways of associating with it. My thesis will touch upon some of the first conscious acts of design policy making during British India, which are well documented.

Let us again focus on the thing and the concept called object. Objects on display do not provide their own narrative. Displayed objects must be textualized, and, therefore, they require verbal and written explication in the form of signs, guides, and catalogues—if they are to be anything other than a mere accumulation of disoriented curious and wondrous artifacts. As world fairs progressed, such explication became embedded in the discursive languages of history, ethnography, archaeology, and eventually art. These emergent forms of knowledge and colonial rule were dialectically tied; their emergence was dependent on a colonial presence in India (and in other parts of the world), while, at the same time, their development facilitated colonial modes of governance. As long as both are the same, we are in familiar context; or probably the opposite is more accurate: as long as the context of

---

[30] The everyday object is historical and contextual, its boundaries shifting with the changing landscape. The everyday object is sensual, bodily, emotional, and intellectual. There is no escape from the everyday, no position outside it, for either the subjects of history or its writers.

the object is familiar the concept and the thing we call object both are the same. When the context changes, the meaning of the object also starts on its own trajectory.

The British Royal Commission organised the 'Great Exhibition' in 1851 in order to show case the wealth of the colonies and just imperial endeavors of the Crown. This event was a great success and eventually, a couple of decades down the line in the 1880s, plans came for another Exhibition in 1886 to mark the silver jubilee of the Queen's rule. The British devised proper schemes and networks of organizations for collecting artifacts and documenting, collecting, and classifying them. These organizations later transformed into various institutes for documenting alien cultures. The following discussion covers the two exhibitions and the *Draft Scheme* which was the plan to collect objects for the 'Colonial and Indian Exhibition'.

The Great Exhibition of 1851 was certainly the biggest and the most ambitious project to collect and house objects from all countries under one-roof. It was not only one of the first but also one of the most influential attempts to gather Indian crafts into a common frame of reference. 1851 Indian Court featured a diverse collection of manufactured goods, raw materials, models of agricultural and artisans' tools, and other miscellaneous objects. One stated goal for the collection was to stimulate trade with India. According to John Forbes Royle, "A more extensive knowledge among European manufacturers of the Raw Products of the Indian soil could hardly

fail to increase its commerce; while an exhibition of its manufacturing skill may still extort admiration."[31]

Throughout the nineteenth century, subsequent exhibitions followed the 1851 model of highlighting Indian crafts while steadily expanding Indian Courts to offer ever more comprehensive views of manufactures from all parts of the subcontinent. However the influence of the 1851 exhibition was felt within India also. Inspired by their European counterparts, British administrators put up an impressive series of exhibitions across the country in the course of the nineteenth century; whereas, other officers ensured more permanent displays of local raw materials and manufactures by creating provincial economic museums.

In 1883 Edmund C. Buck, the secretary to *Revenue and Agriculture Department,* organized the conference for developing strategies for Industrial Design and Museums inviting Arts and Museums committee members, Lockwood Kipling, T H Hendley, and E. B. Hevell. The committee comprising the Draft Scheme devised a number of strategies and means to popularize and promote Indian art. This involved establishment of local and regional museums, exhibitions and overseas sales of Indian art. They also resolved to start a journal on Indian Art so as to create a dialogue around various issues in production, exhibition and sale of Indian art. The overt purpose of this journal was to popularize Indian art, but the covert purpose was to focus on increasing the prospects of its sale and thus on the increase in profits. So journal was to perform the function of sales catalogue for Indian artifacts

---

[31] John Forbes Royle, *On the Culture and Commerce of Cotton in India and Elsewhere* (London: Smith, Elder, 1851) quoted in Abigail McGowan, *Crafting a Nation in Colonial India* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 30.

which would interest buyers form international exhibitions and commercial enterprises in India and abroad.

Key figures associated with art museums and art-schools of various Provinces were very active. The *Journal* served as a forum for promoting this vision of Indian Art as well as the positions of its advocates. Lockwood Kipling, Col. Hendley, E B Hevell, Birdwood, and Growse were active contributors to the *Journal*. They collected, created and described exhibition and museum displays in India and abroad, and this in the process, constructed an identity of India *both* for the British and for the natives. The Indian elite were outsiders to the *Journal*-- bystanders to discussions and polemics which established meaning and value for these objects. [32] Rarely when Indian writers entered the discussion, the terms of the discourse and the agenda were already set by European purpose and intention.

The *'Colonial and Indian Exhibition'*, organized by the Prince of Wales, opened in South Kensington on 4 May 1886. It lasted for six months, and accommodated 5.5 million visitors. It featured extravagant displays from British colonial collections. The Indian section consisted of the most spectacular and largest of the displays, measuring at five times the size of the Indian Pavilion at the 1851 Crystal Palace Exhibition. The 1883 exhibition held in Jeypore was reinstalled along with displays from Calcutta, Gwalior, Lahore, and Mumbai. The entry to the exhibition was through the richly sculpted Gwalior Gateway leading to an Indian palace and a bazaar, where traditional Indian artworks and crafts were displayed. Many visitors thronged to the

---

[32] Cohn, 'The Transformation of Object into Artefacts, Antiquities, and Art in Nineteenth Century'.

Palace Courtyard, where they were attracted by the live crafts demonstration. The ambience of Indian Street and Palace Courtyard, which were a metonymic reduction of the colony, transported European visitors to a utopian plane.

If the 1851 exhibition staged Britain as the cultural and industrial capital of the world, the exhibition in 1886 secured for India a place as the most favoured colony. Together, both the exhibitions were milestones of the introduction of the nationalist discourse, however diffused or understated it was made out to be at that time. The British reduced a huge unknowable colony to an object they could grasp and represent; now they had the possibility to experiment with it the way they pleased.

Design policies are inherently political in nature and hence they involve conflicts of interests and contention between colonial hegemony and national self-imaging. We can detect similar roles that arts and politics played in the negotiation of power and identity as much during the British rule as in the contemporary times or in the previous ages. However, I believe that by focusing on the colonial times, we can write the proto-history of modernism in India more precisely and objectively—thereby filling a major lacuna in this under-explored terrain. Hence, I have restricted the present study spatially to the Indian subcontinent during the British rule and temporally to the Nineteenth century, ending much ahead of the advent of the Swadeshi movement.

I study the process of formation of the 'Design Policies' by examining documents such as the Company's Charter acts, various policies of British in India after the 1857 when the power passed into the hands of the British. I

also study the impulses behind the *Great Exhibition* of London in 1851, which sparked off a deep interest in the wealth of the Indian colony, and led to a massive campaign to collect Indian artifacts and exhibit them. This collection of objects from India was exhibited at the 'Colonial and Indian Exhibition' in 1886, where Indian courts attracted maximum interest and attention from the visitors. I also study the creation of various institutions, disciplines in order to study, collect, classify and categorize these objects.

The first chapter examines the period from the first British victory in Seringapatam till the Great Exhibition of 1851. It discusses how collection and display of objects have a connected with the concepts of loot, war trophies and victory carnival. These characteristics were exhibited in England after the British victory in Seringapatam in 1799 was recreated in numerous Panoramas which depicted this victory for the curious British audience. The chapter next discusses how the meaning of the object changes when it is removed from its context and labeled, categorized and classified. It also looks at the Great Exhibition various aspects of the Great Exhibition which took place in 1851.

In second chapter, the period covered is from 1857, the year which the revolt against the British government took place till the period leading up to the 'Colonial and Indian Exhibition' in 1886.It looks at the relationship between objects and people and the phenomenon of collecting as an interface between two. We will also look at how the British administration tried to make collection systematic and orderly; virtually re-inventing it by devising design policies.

The third chapter focuses on various aspects of the 'Colonial and Indian Exhibition' are described in detail – the three courts – economic, art ware, and administrative, the presence of live artists who were also put on exhibition along with the objects, I also study the creation of various institutions that were created by the British for systematically collecting objects for this exhibition this exhibition and study how they evolved into disciplines and institutions. The conclusion brings together insights gained in each chapters and explains the concept of design policies.

Works Cited

Butler, Chris. *Henri Lefebvre: Spatial Politics, Everyday Life and the Right to the City*. London and New York: Routledge, 2012.

Cohn, Bernard S. 'The Transformation of Object into Artefacts, Antiquities, and Art in Nineteenth Century'. In *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, 106–62. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Cohn, Bernard S. *An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays*. Oxford University Press, 1989.

———. 'Introduction'. In *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, 1–19. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*. Part 1. http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/526/pg526-images.html

Cooper, Frederick, and Ann Laura Stoler. *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*. University of California Press, 1997.

Dirks, Nicholas. 'Foreword'. In *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, by Bernard S. Chon, iv–xii. Studies in Imperialism. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996.

Guha, Ranajit, and Partha Chatterjee. *The Small Voice of History: Collected Essays*. New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2009.

Julier, Guy. *The Culture of Design*. London: SAGE, 2007.

Kaviraj, Sudipta. 'Imaginary Institution of India'. In *Subaltern Studies VII: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, edited by Partha Chatterjee and Gyanendra Pandey, 1–39. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Wiley, 1992.

Mani, Lata. 'Cultural Theory, Colonial Texts: Reading Eyewitness Accounts of Widow Burning'. In *Cultural Studies*, edited by Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula Treichler, 392–405. New York: Routledge, 1992.

McGowan, Abigail. *Crafting a Nation in Colonial India*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

'Proceedings of the Revenue and Agriculture Department'. Oriental and Indian Office Collections, January 1884.

Spivak, Gayatri. 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' In *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, 271–313. Urbana, 1988.

Tenniel. 'Cartoon'. *Punch or The London Chronicle*. 15 April 1876.