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(Ad)dressing Afghanistan

The Commodification of the Ethnic 'Type' Genre

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Abstract of Thesis

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The relationship between photographer and subject in nineteenth-century photographs of Afghanistan operates as a component of identity construction. To date, this interaction is theorized in terms of power between the photographer and the colonial apparatus and labels the image as orientalist, colonializing, and ethnographic. I propose an additional perspective that places consumer interests in costume at the forefront of image construction. While Western photographers have left us with a perception of nineteenth-century Afghanistan as an intersection between British occupied India and Russia, the social economic impetus of these images require further analysis. An examination of British cultural and photographic practices reveals the role clothes play in the creation of the ethnic 'type.' My research addresses these principal themes: the continuities between photographic and pre-photographic visualities; the relationship between European cultural attitudes, the creation of costume books, and reception of commercial photography; how visual information was repurposed and influenced the development of anthropology as a discipline. The importance of studying costume and costume books in the nineteenth century is instrumental to understanding Europe's transition to a culture focused on

classification and commodification. Costume books not only allowed for the creation of a consumable 'type' in photography, and permit us to examine the actual mechanics of commodification.

Introduction: The Invisible Costume

With the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* in 1859,¹ the application of evolutionary theory onto people was effective in determining racial hierarchies and geographical boundaries. Apologists for imperialism combined Darwin's theory of natural selection and Herbert Spencer's sociological theories to justify imperialism, racism, and *laissez-faire* social and economic policies.² By claiming that individuals and groups competed for success in life, social Darwinists advocating imperialism asserted their own dominance and used this assertion to justify colonialism. It is not until 1860, twenty years after photography was first invented and one year after the *On the Origin of Species*, that we see British scholars utilizing photography to fulfill imperial agendas and confirm evolutionary hierarchies.³

Photography begs the question: how exactly did early colonial culture construct a visual 'representation' of the other? The answer is complex in that it involves an examination of the visual tendencies of artists prior to the invention of photography. The desire to both visualize and construct the 'oriental' frontier developed into typologies, which came to dominate meaning. Photography as a method for representation provided meaning to political, economic, and ethnic-social understandings, which resulted in stereotypes. Photography, as a technological advantage, was used by colonial powers in the colonies to categorize, define, dominate, and invent the other.⁴ This visual classification became a form of cultural control and power through

¹ See Darwin, Charles. *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection: or, The Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life*. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1859. Print.

² Bannister, Robert C. *Social Darwinism: Science and Myth in Anglo-American Social Thought*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1979. Print. pp. 3-13.

³ It is important to remember that when discussing the photographers, their images were an addition to the mill of imperialism. For more information, see Edwards, Elizabeth. *Anthropology and Photography, 1860-1920*. New Haven: Yale University Press in association with the Royal Anthropological Institute, London, 1992. Print. pp. 3-4.

⁴ Scherer, Joanna C. "Historical Photographs as Anthropological Documents: A Retrospect." *Visual Anthropology*. 3 (1990): 131-155. Print.

knowledge. In search for meaning and ‘reality’, photography of the ethnic ‘other’ played a role in the establishment of a regime of “truth.”

To focus on a study of the multitude of images and various visual impulses from all the peripheral territories of the British Empire would be beyond any individual researcher. This thesis will investigate the role of costume in the demand for a representation of the ‘other’ by focusing on visual representations of Afghanistan as a model of a popular exotic subject. The fact that the range of subject matter in the visual depiction of Afghanistan closely resembles the visual inclinations found in images of British colonies justifies a focus on Afghanistan.

One other feature makes Afghanistan an attractive model for this specific study. As a culturally distinct and historically powerful territory acting as a borderland between British-controlled India and imperial Russia, Afghanistan was never officially annexed by any European power. Instead it served as the territory on which proxy wars were fought to “protect” India from both the Afghans and from the Russians.⁵ The romance inspired by this ‘new’ frontier popularized Afghanistan as a suitable subject for Western artists. The limited access to Afghanistan, apart from soldiers in the British military, rendered the Afghan population mysterious and inspired various publications, journals, and chronicles.⁶ The relationship between commerce and political influence situates Afghanistan at the periphery of colonial investigation. While this political constellation stimulated British public interest in images of Afghan ethnic groups, scholarly research on the identification and popularization of Afghan ethnic groups has

⁵ B, D. *Our Afghan Policy and the Occupation of Candahar*. London: W. Ridgway, 1880. pp. 2-5. Internet resource. Accessed January 24, 2017.

⁶ The personal journal of Henry Brooke, who died in the 1880 battle at Kandahar, was published by his wife in 1881 in response to consumer interest in the events at Kandahar, Afghanistan. See, Brooke, Henry Francis, and Annie Brooke. *Private Journal of Henry Francis Brooke Late Brigadier-general Commanding 2nd Infantry Brigade, Kandahar Field Force, Southern Afghanistan, from April 22nd to August 16th, 1880*. Dublin: Printed by W. Curwen, 1881. Print.

yet to be fully examined, including the role of the British market in the making of visual culture and the role of costume in the construction of images.

The role of the consumer in the production of costume books and illustrated publications has also been largely neglected in previous scholarly research. The prevalent emphasis on photography as ethnography overshadows the function of photographs as commodities. The inclination to ignore consumer interests has resulted in a monofaceted treatment of these images. Yet these images did not originally operate in such a limited manner. Emphasis on the image as object opens new avenues to think about reception and circulation. By focusing on representations of the foreign body prior to the advent of photography, the other conventions that influenced the staging in early photographs can be examined. If these images were not initially or indeed only scientific, then we must consider why there was a commercial appetite for the visual documentation of the unknown. By catering to the European consumer, early photographers could fulfill commercial interests, and the photographs thereafter, incidentally, were also used to fulfill imperial-military agendas. This result was the amalgam of both proto-science and visual classification of the ‘other.’

Building upon the frameworks of scholars such as Edward Said, Linda Nochlin, and John Mackenzie, by focusing on an examination on the sartorial, I follow the conclusions of Jessa Farquhar, who has generated new forms of examining nineteenth-century photography by aligning these images with commercial interests rather than anthropological concerns.⁷ The desire of early British photographers to cater to a European market shaped the foundation of my research into costume as a marker of identity and a method for constructing ethnic ‘types.’ To

⁷ It requires mention that while I focus on Afghanistan through the commercial costume, Farquhar ultimately examines the *People of India* as a commercial enterprise through the lens of the picturesque. See Farquhar, Jessica J. *Beyond Binding: Reconceptualizing Watson and Kaye's 'the People of India' (1868-1875)*. eScholarship, University of California, 2016. Internet resource.

understand this situation, we must look more closely at costume as performance. Costume, as a word, has certain connotations, and its connection with dressing up or down, indicates how clothing could be manipulated to create a specific identity. Costume and dress therefore operate as a site of identity construction. According to Diana Crane, early nineteenth century London fashion became increasingly concerned with morality, both in public and private life. Costume began to connote gender traits and acted as a visual manifestation of the salient ideas and concepts fundamental to Londoners.⁸ If we consider costume as a visual network of information we can begin to think of costume as a form of communication.

This desire to communicate through costume can be seen in the tradition of commercial costume books.⁹ The tradition of classifying and constructing identity between peoples resulted in a Western history of encyclopedic representation of the world through costume.¹⁰ These publications utilized clothing from a desire to offer a 'true representation' of the other, but through dress, disaggregated a European consumer from this 'other.' This distancing effectively illuminates the importance of costume in European society. Costume books, understood as a commercial enterprise rather than scientific endeavor, reveal the ability of dress to shape history. Costume books served two functions: as a purchasable commodity, they catered to the interests of European consumers and they furthered a colonial understanding of racial hierarchy through dress. Costume as a tool for communication, established new relations and categorized racial differences. In this way, costume books codified morality, gender roles, ethnic and racial

⁸ Crane, Diana. *Fashion and Its Social Agendas: Class, Gender, and Identity in Clothing*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000. Print. pp. 26-67.

⁹ Costume books have a long standing in the history of England. The first books appear as early as the fourteenth century. For more information, see Ilg, Ulrike. "The Cultural Significance of Costume Books in Sixteenth-Century Europe." *Clothing Culture, 1350 - 1650* / Ed. by Catherine Richardson. (2004): 29-47. Print. pp. 29-30.

¹⁰ Due to an increase in trade relations, costume books appeared in Europe as early as the sixteenth century to meet public demand for factual representation of 'others.' See, Ilg, Ulrike. "The Cultural Significance of Costume Books in Sixteenth-Century Europe." *Clothing Culture, 1350 - 1650* / Ed. by Catherine Richardson, 2004: p.1-3. Print.

boundaries, and are the foundation of my research into costume as marker of identity and construction of ethnic ‘types’ in photography.

While costume has never been the entry point for an analysis of commercial art of the orient, the various publications representing foreign costumes reveal aspects of the mechanics of commodification, which Roland Barthes touches upon in his book, *The Language of Fashion*. Barthes elaborates on how costume functions as a stage for communication, as exemplified by his analysis of the ‘Fashion System.’ He notes, “clothing (that is, women’s clothes as described by Fashion every year in its specialist publications) can be studied from several points of view. We can analyze the way in which the clothing is manufactured (technology), launched on to the market (economics), or disseminated into real society (sociology); we can reconstruct its history, its aesthetics or its psychology.”¹¹ Barthes views fashion as a fundamental link to global society and as the crossroad between multiple discourses.

By focusing on costume in their works, pre-photographic artists set the stage for early photographers to disguise the Afghan body and create imaginary ethnic ‘types’ through careful selection of clothing that fit pre-existing codes of identification. The significance of pre-photographic emphasis on costume lies in the way it influences later knowledge construction of ethnic ‘types’ in photographs.¹² To shift the focus of these ethnic ‘type’ conventions away from traditional colonial discourses, it is imperative that we reexamine the importance of costume as visual convention. Costume must be understood as a visual network of information. Costume distinguished social rank through material, construction, and color, while proclaiming the occupation of the wearer.¹³

¹¹ Barthes, Roland, and Andy Stafford. *The Language of Fashion*. Oxford: Berg, 2006. Print. p. 67.

¹² Ryan, James R. *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualization of the British Empire*. London: Reaktion Books, 1997. Print.

¹³ Hartnell, Norman. *Royal Courts of Fashion*. London: Cassell, 1971. Print.

By tracing the historical emphasis of defining typologies through costume, it becomes apparent that costume was not simply utilitarian, but part of a larger complex of popular aesthetics, which influenced the imperialist vehicle. This thesis will demonstrate that the legacy of ethnic ‘type’ photography inherited visual practices with roots in early costume books and, more specifically, that these staging conventions were commercially oriented for European audiences. The pre-photographic tendencies toward costume as a readable identity place costume in the realm of power construction. While photographs operate as complex, discursive objects of colonial power and culture, it is only after we examine what has been obvious but invisible, both the costume and the impetus of commercial photography, can we understand the genesis of racial ‘type’ photography.

Costume Consumption before Photography

When looking at the genre of native types in photography, European photographs of Afghanistan cannot be understood without attending to the conditions of the genre. In the nineteenth century, European photographers and not indigenous photographers exclusively represented the Afghan ‘type.’¹⁴ The fascination with the ‘other’s’ body, which captivated costume book authors and audiences of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, continued to permeate the scene when photography was applied to Afghanistan in 1860.¹⁵ Since cultural identity relies on prescribed boundaries as ideological structures designed to individuate the self,

¹⁴ Holly Edwards argued that indigenous photography in Afghanistan was not fully realized or utilized until the twentieth century. See Edwards, Holly. “Photography and Afghan Diplomacy in the Early Twentieth Century.” *Ars Orientalis*, vol. 43, 2013, pp. 47–65. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/43490309. Accessed December 29, 2016.

¹⁵ This date is based on previous publications of Benjamin Simpson’s images of Afghanistan found in John Watson’s *People of India* (1868-1875) and *Costumes and Textiles* (1866). Simpson’s image of an Afghan group was included as early as 1862 in John Forbes Watson’s *A Classified and Descriptive Catalogue of the Indian Department: The International Exhibition of 1862*, pp. 203. See also, Farquhar, Jessica J. *Beyond Binding: Reconceptualizing Watson and Kaye’s ‘the People of India’ (1868-1875)*. eScholarship, University of California, 2016. Internet resource. pp. 116-118.

costume became the ideal method to determine the barrier between the viewer and the ‘other.’¹⁶ Hair, nails, even skin itself, while being integral to the function of the body, do not draw the eye of the viewer as quickly as costume and therefore complicate the lines of distinction between self and ‘other.’¹⁷ Costume acting as a boundary, not only frames the body and separates it from the rest of the world, but also functions as a marker of a controllable frontier. This frontier was cause for fascination, fear, and anxiety, but more importantly, it could be consumed and controlled by Western civilization. Costume presented itself as a potential tool for identifying and essentializing the ‘other.’ This section examines the pre-photographic perceptions of Afghanistan through the discourse of dress, with a focus on the relationship between costume and history.

Published from 1723 to 1737, *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde* by Jean Frederic Bernard and illustrated by Bernard Picart, amalgamated religious practice throughout the world with an emphasis on the universality of clothing. Ranked among the top ninety books owned by Parisians in the eighteenth century, the nine-volume series offered Europeans visual evidence of foreign religions. Since Picart could not sketch religious ceremonies as a firsthand observer, most his etchings are based on previous visual representations and reveal how imagination influences the aesthetics that create religious representation.¹⁸ For the wealthy European viewer, *Cérémonies* offered an opportunity to examine, secondhand, unknown cultures as well as compare themselves to these peoples.¹⁹

¹⁶ Barthes, Roland. *The Fashion System*. London: Cape, 1985. Print. 3-18.

¹⁷ Cavallaro, Dani, and Alexandra Warwick. *Fashioning the Frame: Boundaries, Dress, and Body*. Oxford: Berg, 1998. Print. p. xv.

¹⁸ Hunt, Lynn, Margaret C. Jacob, and W W. Mijnhardt. *Bernard Picart and the First Global Vision of Religion*. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010. Print. pp. 3-7.

¹⁹ Although initially costing fifty florins, the popularity of the volumes demanded immediate translation into Dutch, English, and German. At its height, the seventh volume alone fetched more than twenty florins in 1737. During this time, “per capita income in the Dutch Republic was under 150 florins a year; even the average bookseller grossed only 1,200 florins annually. See Hunt, Lynn, Margaret C. Jacob, and W W. Mijnhardt. *Bernard Picart and the First Global Vision of Religion*. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010. Print. pp. 3-5.

Clothing became vital to Europeans as a method for erecting and maintaining boundaries. *Cérémonies* divided cultural spaces between Christianity, Catholicism, and Islam.

The seventh installment of the publication focuses on an illustration of Islam. The installment claims to represent both a ‘real representation’ of dress and physiognomic likeness of an Islamic practitioner. The central characters of the *Imam*, *Effendi*, *Emir*, and *Cadi-Leskier*, or, prayer leader, lord or master, military commander or local chief, and judge (figure 1), present themselves to the viewer against a neutral background and are depicted in isolation from the rest of the world, thus clearly outlining the body. Both the visual and the accompanying text highlight specific sartorial identifiers for the figures. Dressed in flowing robes lined with fur, and topped with a simple pillow-like turban, the costume of various Islamic followers is understood as plain and colorless. The overabundance of folds in the robes add weight to the fabric, freezing the figures and restricting their movement. Moreover, Picart has made these individuals appear European to render them more familiar and thus more comprehensible. Sacrificing accuracy, many of the native peoples throughout the publication, regardless of whether they were Indian, Mexican, or Canadian, are represented as Europeans both physiognomically and through poses that invoke European aesthetics. Many of these unknown people echo European gestures and body language, especially when in stances similar to *contrapposto*. The representation of Islamic dress is generalized in the Picart publication and singularizes various nations into one identity with these controlled misunderstandings of the foreign body through dress.

The clothing of these four individuals freeze the Islamic body in time and renders them immobile by Picart’s positioning. The sartorial acts as a physical impediment on the functionality of the foreigner; while the bodies of the men look as though they were superimposed upon the backdrop, their dress alludes to the power clothes had to restrict and control the body. The

commercial success of the Picart series represent a growing European interest in the relationship between the ‘other’s’ body and dress. While these four individuals share space on the same page in the publication, their titles identify them as representatives of different nation states. Imam, Emir, and Cadi-Leskier are all Arabic words, whereas Effendi is a Turkish title. In the sphere of colonial expansion and identification, Picart’s work provided valuable insight into the official misunderstanding of and desire to restrict Islam through costume.

Costume is a visual experience of the ‘other;’ a cultural statement, which communicates a great deal of physical and symbolic information of the representative culture.²⁰ The religious norms depicted by Picart indicate a cultural complex, or as Roland Barthes has termed a “vestimentary system.”²¹ The unique dilemma of costume, for a European audience, is its fluidity. For the eighteenth-century viewer, the mutability of clothing had the potential to confuse and alter the pre-existing social codes and hierarchies in Europe. By aligning people of all faiths through an examination of costume, Picart and Bernard seemingly assert dominance by freezing the ‘other’ body. These depictions of dress, found in *Cérémonies*, reveal how notions of costume collided with early encyclopedic prerogatives and accurate depictions gave way to popular imagination. Picart presents Islamic dress as finite and rigid, thereby rendering all of Islam as singular, controllable, and easily consumed. The commercially oriented publication not only simplifies the identification of, but also clarifies the differences between religions through costume.

In 1843, *Character & Costumes of Afghaunistan* was published from original sketches of Dr. James Atkinson, Superintending Surgeon of the Army of the Indus; written by Captain

²⁰ Stillman, Yedida K, and Nancy Micklewright. *Costume in the Middle East*. New York: Middle East Studies Association, 1992. Print. pp. 13-38.

²¹ Barthes, Roland. *The Fashion System*. London: Cape, 1985. Print. pp. 213-221.

Lockyer Willis Hart, of the 22nd Bombay Native Infantry; lithographed by Charles Hague.²² The publication contains twenty-six hand colored lithographs and depicts scenes of everyday life in Afghanistan, occupational types, tribal groups, historical landmarks, street scenes, and identifies a key Afghan leaders. The publication opens with readers entering Afghanistan through the Khyber Pass in northeast Afghanistan. The subsequent images are a visual travelogue which trace a journey from the south of Afghanistan through Kuchis, Kandahar, Ghazni, Kabul, and all the way north to Kunduz. Unlike *Cérémonies*, each image is accompanied with a typeface caption and a scene description based on the personal experience of Captain Hart. Before the advent of photography, a large part of the late nineteenth-century understanding of people from the peripheral areas of the British Empire depended entirely upon the sketches and descriptions of soldiers such as Hart and Atkinson and were understood as factitious. The publication romanticized the frontier in Afghanistan through costume, indicating a concern with the interests of the commercial market.²³ *Characters & Costumes* met a European demand for representations of the ‘other’ and reveals the popularization of costume as a medium for communication.

Afghanistan as culturally different, historically frustrating, and near British controlled territories, attracted European artists.²⁴ Formatted like Picart’s *Ceremonies*, the fourth lithograph *The Kaukers of the Bolan Range* (Figure 2), features four male individuals devoid of any identifiable setting. *The Kaukers*, an ethnic group from the southeastern confines of Afghanistan, are described as “rude in their manners, and much given to robbery and murder. The Bolan Pass is infested by them: nor at any time could caravans traverse it, unless under the protection of

²² Hart, Lockyer W, and James Atkinson. *Character & Costumes of Afghaunistan*. London: H. Graves, 1943. Print.

²³ Though initially published in 1843, *Costumes and Characters of Afghaunistan* was available for purchase as late as 1887. See Quaritch, Bernard. *A General Catalogue of Books Offered to the Public at the Affixed Prices*. London: G. Norman & Son, Printers, 1887. Internet resource.

²⁴ The British Empire in India fought three wars in Afghanistan in order to understand and control its peripheries through the use of colonial knowledge. See Bayly, Martin J. *Taming the Imperial Imagination: Colonial Knowledge, International Relations, and the Anglo-Afghan Encounter, 1808-1878*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016. Print. pp. 177-178.

strong escorts.”²⁵ The moral character of Kaukers is described as rude, recidivistic, and extremely execrable. It is then up to the viewer to confirm such character traits visually through clothing. The four men are posed for the viewer and present the various angles from which to identify the ‘other.’ On the left, the figure wears a short jacket of sheepskin, with an upper garment or cloak of felt, with closed sleeves; indicative of the winter season. The next figure is identified through his small cap as a petty Chieftain. Finally, the two figures on the right are depicted in the typical costume of the inhabitants of the plains, “naked from the waist upward.”²⁶ The plate description of the Kaukers, links specific articles of clothing to the moral standards of the British viewer, and defines the Kaukers as savage and wild. Hart and Atkinson utilized clothing to construct a gaze that regarded the people in Afghanistan as dangerous, exotic, and consumable.

The most straightforward use of visuals to define occupational types can be found in the image *Cabul-Retinue of Shah Shoojau Ool Moolk-Mahomed Shah Giljee, Chief Executioner, Ghufoor, a Mutilator* (Figure 3). The scene suggests both the exotic and represents occupations of Kabul men by allowing costume to become illocutionary. Expanding upon the theories of Novitz and String where a portrait can convey information like a sentence, this image functions like a sentence by indicating a subject and attributing essentializing qualities to its subject. This visual language then becomes capable of performing illocutionary acts. An illocutionary act, first introduced by linguist John L. Austin in 1975, is an attempt to communicate, which can be

²⁵ Hart, Lockyer W, and James Atkinson. *Character & Costumes of Afghaunistan*. London: H. Graves, 1943. Print. p. 2.

²⁶ Hart, Lockyer W, and James Atkinson. *Character & Costumes of Afghaunistan*. London: H. Graves, 1943. Print. p. 2. From text: “In that neighborhood they war, during winter, a short close jacket of sheep's skin, with an upper garment or cloak of felt, made with sleeves closed at the end, which they use as pockets to carry provisions in. The felt is manufactured of wool. . . The figure on the right hand of the drawing, as also the one with a small cap on his head, are petty Chieftains. The costume of the latter is nearly similar to that of the inhabitants of the plains. The man on the left (naked from the middle upwards as they go during the summer) was sketches while chanting the exploits of a successful leader, their wars with rival tribes being always a favorite theme with this wild people.”

analyzed as the expression of an attitude.²⁷ The image consists of an illocutionary force whereby the visual language asserts, suggests, demands, promises, or vows something. The mutilator and executioner, identified by their costume, promise the reader a type of service. By approaching this image with this theoretical model, the costume of these figures is suggestive of which occupations intrigued the consumer.

String and Novitz argue that illocution is not just the act of conveying an idea, but expand upon it and state that an illocutionary act also attempts to make something happen. Costume as a subject in *Cabul-Retinue*, illustrates occupation and the consumer manipulates the costume and occupation to reestablish colonial authority. The cyclical nature of costume, between imagination and manipulation, is further understood by the multiple occupations exhibited in this image; *Cabul-Retinue* is composed of various attendants. Their costume act as a type of exotic occupational stratification. Rather than being personal choice, culturally influenced, or simply utilitarian, Hart emphasizes how clothing delineates duty: the individuals wearing “caps with imitation antelope horns would clear the way in front of the procession; those dressed entirely in scarlet, who bore standards that had the ends tucked into their waistbands, moved in lines parallel to his Majesty; the rest of the individuals would have either run alongside or followed in the rear.”²⁸ This type of procession, “this form and ceremony so hateful to the Afghans was the King's foible, and sometimes carried to an absurd extent,” commercializes the sense of duty and excessiveness with costume.²⁹ The description of the retinue relies on sartorial and ceremonial opulence as a moral transgression to cater to the reader. In this way, the retinue becomes

²⁷ Austin, James L., J O. Urmson, and Marina Sbisà. *How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University in 1955*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980. Print. pp. 108-131.

²⁸ See, Hart, Lockyer W, and James Atkinson. *Character & Costumes of Afghaunistan*. London: H. Graves, 1943. Print. p. 2.

²⁹ See, Hart, Lockyer W, and James Atkinson. *Character & Costumes of Afghaunistan*. London: H. Graves, 1943. Print. p. 2.

exoticized as a commercial commodity. Costume in this lithograph takes an active role in creating the identity of the ‘other.’

Images of women in the publication also offer a valuable first step into understanding the exotic as a creation through the elaboration and misinterpretation of female costume. The lithograph captioned *Cabul, Affghan and Kuzzilbash Ladies* (Figure 4), raises the issue of accessibility.³⁰ Of all the descriptions in the entire publication, the text for the *Cabul Ladies*, emphasizes the performance of beauty and dressing up more than an actual encounter a viewer might have with these women.³¹ When Hart illustrated this scene in the 1840’s, access to women on the streets of Kabul would have been rare considering his occupation as a soldier.³² Thinking about accessibility, how would the European viewer have understood these women? Going even further, by inverting the focus—from an emphasis on experience and encounters, found throughout the publication, to an emphasis on exotic-beauty standards—we can see a genderization of costume as a shift to include not just commercial aesthetic that emphasize costume as an encounter, but one that also focuses on dress as tool to standardize beauty.

The depictions of women from the ‘orient’ needed to serve two different functions: Keeping with social Darwinists, Afghan women needed to be depicted as either exotic beauties or as illiterate and therefore beneath the status of English women.³³ That is, images of the oriental woman needed to cater to both a male and female market. However, this construction of female beauty is contingent on the implementation of extant typology found in Western Europe.

³⁰ Nochlin, Linda. "The Imaginary Orient." *Art in America*. 711983 (1983): 119-131. Print.

³¹ Hart, Lockyer W, and James Atkinson. *Character & Costumes of Afghaunistan*. London: H. Graves, 1943. Print.

³² Men were less equipped to describe certain domestic features of Middle Eastern life—the most obvious being they did not have access to the harem or zenana—and therefore unable to interrogate or observe women in many ways; whereas women travelers are a unique source of information in this respect. For more information see, Foster, Shirley. "Colonialism and Gender in the East: Representations of the Harem in the Writings of Women Travellers." *The Yearbook of English Studies*, vol. 34, 2004. Print. pp. 6–17.

³³ Cooper, Elizabeth. *The Harim and the Purdah: Studies of Oriental Women*. Delhi: Bimla Pub. House, 1983. Internet resource. <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/11102524.html>.

The ways in which Western bourgeois had a dialogue for gender and sexuality shaped an understanding of the ‘Orient.’ One which, echoing Victorian sentiments that alluded to sex and beauty while never discussing it directly, figures prominently in this scene. Hart states:

The costume of the Afghan ladies is simple, nor does it in any way confine the free motion of the body. Their wide trousers are made out of cloth, silk, or other colored material; and their upper garments consist of loose yellow, blue, or red jackets, (the outer one edged or embroidered with lace,) which hangs down below the waist. To the arrangement of their hair they devote much of their time. It is plastered down in front with gum, in various forms, while behind they plait it into numerous tails hanging over the shoulders and back. From the lobes of their ears hang large ear-rings, and smaller ones decorate the outer margins. They use rouge, and tip their eyelids with antimony. Their necks and chest are dotted over with shapes of flowers and stars...³⁴

Hart’s depiction and description of the *Cabul Ladies* mark a shift in how the Orient was created; images previously understood by scholars as scientific and imperial, are more suggestive of a private and commercial experience, as evidenced in the romantic language of the plate description.³⁵ The emphasis on a more sensual encounter with these women reflects concerns that are not administrative or imperial, but rather concern for an intimate interaction between image and audience. Hart describes the *Cabul Ladies* from head to toe and leaves no room for misinterpretation. By framing the women with such a detailed caption, witnessing women on the streets and making the female body accessible, provides the scene with a sense of a ‘real’ encounter. Viewed together, image and text act as a site for a plausible private interaction between the viewer and the *Cabul Ladies*.

Moving away from the mysterious and intimate, the image *Cabul, a “Kuttar” or String of Blind Beggars* (Figure 5), offers a connection to a much larger context, one known as the “White

³⁴ Hart, Lockyer W, and James Atkinson. *Character & Costumes of Afghaunistan*. London: H. Graves, 1943. Print. p. 2.

³⁵ For more information, see Farquhar, Jessica J. *Beyond Binding: Reconceptualizing Watson and Kaye’s ‘the People of India’ (1868-1875)*. eScholarship, University of California, 2016. Internet resource. pp. 36-39.

Man's Embarrassment/Burden." The White Man's Embarrassment/Burden refers to an emergence of colonial ideology involved in the economic comparison of the quality of life of the colonies and their European colonizers. The stakes, however, involved much more than the principle of governmental paternalism restated in the language of Social Darwinism. Hart describes the *Kuttar* as:

In Kabul, as in most Asiatic cities, beggars of all degrees of wretchedness abound, and their appeals in the name of the Prophet for relief are both loud and incessant. Among them the "Kuttar" or string of blind men are the most remarkable. The better to make their way through the crowded streets, as also to select proper persons for solicitation, a one-eyed lad is chosen as leader. He receives the contributions of the charitable, but only to hand them over to his companions: and his tattered habiliment, when compared with the more comfortable clothing, plainly shows that he can appropriate but little to his own benefit. The other figures belong to that numerous vagabond tribe who prefer a life of idleness to one of labour, and fit their profit in so doing. This sketch will recall to mind the story related by the barber in the Arabian Night's Entertainments of his blind brother's companions beating each other mercilessly with their sticks, in the belief that they were chastising a thief who had introduced himself into their dwelling to rob them of their savings.

A major component of the native character lies in the expatiation of the beggar 'type.' As mentioned earlier, life on the colonial frontier meant an awareness of the boundaries between Europeans and non-Europeans.³⁶ *Kuttar* can be observed to function as a nineteenth-century equivalent to the modern-day charity advertisements, in this case, intended to represent the poor populace in Afghanistan. Historically and at present, images utilized for charity invoke a desire to become involved; they hint at a proto-anthropological concept of the salvage paradigm, an early twentieth century term that describes the belief that it is necessary to preserve 'weaker'

³⁶ Stockwell, A.J. "The White Man's Burden and Brown Humanity: Colonialism and Ethnicity in British Malaya." *Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science*, vol. 10, no. 1, 1982, pp. 44-68.

cultures from extinction by the dominant culture.³⁷ In a nineteenth-century commercially driven market context, such an image functions as proto-salvage imagery.

The beggar ‘type,’ frequently found in the nineteenth-century, develops into a popular commodity trope. As such, the *Kuttar* incorporates the qualities of pre-existing stereotypes of the beggar as ‘type’. These figures have been transformed into the popular idiom “The blind leading the blind.” The driving force behind such a transformation likely involves two factors. First, by invoking language loaded with proto-salvage ideology, imperial presence in Afghanistan could be justified. Second and more importantly, the association of the native as beggar communicated a social hierarchy that the European market would accept and collect.

In the pursuit of colonies throughout Asia, Afghanistan was both a gateway to India, with the Khyber Pass a direct access through the Himalayas, and a buffer zone between British-controlled India and the perceived threat of Russia. Bringing together the centrality of costume in England and the relationship between the Orient and a mass audience, we can piece together a fuller picture of the historical spur for the oriental costume. Hart’s *Characters & Costumes of Afghaunistan* placed a great deal of emphasis on depicting the most exotic subject ‘types’ possible. Rather than focus on religious practices through costume like in *Ceremonies*, *Characters & Costumes* arranged the peoples of Afghanistan by creating ethnic ‘types’ with costume generalizations. This prioritization makes sense given the desire to manipulate costume as a method of control. These images, including their application and commercial value, point us towards other artists who utilized costume to define the Orient.

This sartorially oriented vision, found in *Character and Costumes*, influenced the production of other pre-photographic artists such as James Rattray and Robert Carrick in the early nineteenth century. Artist James Rattray (1818-1854), a lieutenant in the second

³⁷ Clifford, James. "The Others: Beyond the 'salvage' Paradigm." *Magiciens De La Terre*. (1989): 73-77. Print.

Grenadiers, Bengal Army, participated in the latter half of the First Anglo-Afghan War, 1839-1842. Rattray's sketches, later turned into lithographs by Robert Carrick, were published alongside Rattray's commentary.³⁸ Rattray and Carrick, echoing techniques found in books such as Hart's *Characters and Costumes*, not only were considered the equivalent of military photographers of their day, they also served as primary reference points for early amateur photographers in the nineteenth century. These artistic renderings of typical Afghan costume provided a crucial index for the codification of self, self-discipline, behavior, ritual conventions, and institutionalized vision. The embellishment of costume found in their sketches, especially of male dress, forms a specific idea of masculinity in Afghanistan.

In Rattray's *Dourraunnee Chieftains in Full Armour* (Figure 6), the perceived distinctions between European and Afghan masculinity can be seen through an examination of costume. The colored lithograph presents the viewer with a representation of Afghan leaders incongruent with their occupation through the characterization of dress. Both figures wear traditional Afghan male costume, which consists of a combination of long knee-length tunic (*kameez*) and a baggy trouser called a (*shalwar*).³⁹ Other variations of traditional dress consist of four pieces: the dress (*perahan*), the trouser (*tunban or churidar*), the stitch-style waistcoat, a stitch-style hat and pair of flat-stitch shoes called *Paizar*.⁴⁰ In the 1847 lithograph, the two leaders strike a casual pose. Apart from the faces of the two figures, which take no notice of the viewer, the men are covered in elaborate costume. The left figure, seated and slightly slumped forward, leans against his spear with his eyes closed. Although his outer coat appears simple and dark, his crossed legs reveal a silver and gold zigzag *perahan*, matching the cloth around his

³⁸ "Rattray exhibition "Splendid Afghanistan 1848": (Japan)," Japanese Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa. Tokyo, 183-8534, Japan. http://www.aa.tufs.ac.jp/afghan/index_e.html. Retrieved 21 January 2017.

³⁹ Jaury, Marie. *Kleider Und Leute: Indien.*, 2007. Print.

⁴⁰ Bellew, H W. *Journal of a Political Mission to Afghanistan, in 1857, Under Major (now Colonel) Lumsden: With an Account of the Country and People*. Lahore: Orient Research Centre, 1978. Internet resource.

helmet. At his right arm, we get a glimpse of plaited metal with carved designs, potentially body armor, hidden by the arm of the coat. His helmet is adorned with three white plumes bent in a subtle breeze. The right figure is standing, sword drawn, in an adaptation of *contrapposto*. He wears a gold and silver-scaled *perahan* with detailed plated armor on his chest and forearms. His red waistcloth is detailed with floral motifs of red, green, gold, and black. In his left hand, he holds a small-metal shield decorated with a golden moon and flowers. In his right hand, he holds a *shamshir*, or curved sword.

By this point, Rattray has established the style of an Afghan leader, particularly in the details of their dress. The figures' appearances are interpreted not as threatening and prepared soldiers standing alert, but as idle men focused on wearing elaborate clothing, rather than on their occupation. Juxtaposing the sartorial tropes of European men in the military, in the nineteenth century, with that of the *Dourraunnee Chieftains*, the costume of these soldiers' act as a visual affirmation of behavior contrary to the idealized traits of European masculinity. The limitations of dress found in the costume of European men was closely linked to gender role expectations.⁴¹ The fluidity and individuality of the costume of the *Dourraunnee Chieftains* would have been understood as derisive to masculinity.

Rattray's depiction of dress of the *Dourraunnee Chieftains* is also closely tied to an ambiguous understanding of the occupational type 'leader.' The dress of a soldier should operate as a screen, a shield, or a structure that protects them and others from harm. Yet compared to British military uniform, the artistic representation of Afghan weaponry would appear insignificant. Although an accurate rendering of a *Sipar* (shield), the shield itself appears heavy and impractically small; the 'armor' is nonexistent and covered in gaudy fabrics. By emphasizing specific articles of costume that are distinctive from British culture, Rattray turned the leaders

⁴¹ From Godwin, E.W. "A Lecture on Dress (1868)." *The Mask*. April 6, 1949. pp. 335-52.

into a military ‘type’ defined by vibrant and feminine costume. The Afghan leader becomes part of typical commodity fetishism and in this way, becomes a marginalized body that requires military discipline. Through clothing the male Afghan body is represented as ill prepared and submissive to the might of the European military man. Rattray’s emphasis on dress, understood as feminine and docile to Western audiences, renders the body manipulable. The act of imagining the body dressed in these elaborate garbs removes the occupation of the subjects and replaces it with a stereotypical identity.

In 1866, photography was utilized to create a commercial ‘other’ by G. E. Eyre and W. Spottiswoode. *The Textile Manufactures and the Costumes of the People of India* was printed for the India Office in London and utilized the technology of photography for costume books.⁴² Although there was a positive reception for the work, it was criticized in terms of quality.⁴³ Given the commercial success of costume books in Europe, it is of no surprise that editors would take steps to increase the marketability of these books with the new technology. By using costume as a framing tool for their photographic illustrations of the ‘other,’ early photographers increased the status of their own images as a marketable commodity. Upon the publication of *Textiles and Costumes*, the ethnic ‘other’ crossed into a new phase of existence. Through a consideration of the implications of a publication emphasizing costume, we can broaden the understanding of the ethnic ‘type’ as a commercial creation.

Due to both a fascination with dress and the role it played in European society, costume books and discourse on costume gained popularity. In 1868, E.W. Godwin, an architect-designer, gave a ‘Lecture on Dress’ in England, with the desire to illustrate the three most important

⁴² Watson, J F. *The Textile Manufactures and the Costumes of the People of India*. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1866. Print.

⁴³ "Photography Applied to Book Illustration." *The Gentleman's Magazine: and historical review, July 1856-May 1868* 3 (1867): 484-98. *ProQuest*. Web. 3 April 2017.

features of dress: the cut of sleeves, the neckpiece, and the trimming. Although much of his lecture focused on the inconvenience of female attire, the lecture served as a commentary on proper masculine attire and highlighted how costume could merge with Darwinian discourse. For men to be appear masculine, their attire must be gloomy; rich color and textures were the realm of the feminine. Attire thus became associated with both constitution and gender roles. While female costume could be attributed to the eccentricity of the artists themselves, it could also be read as a subtle aberration into the realm of femininity.⁴⁴ Godwin stated, “The changeableness of 19th century fashion is perhaps not only the greatest evil, but the parent of all the other evils in modern costume with which we have to contend.”⁴⁵ Aware of the potential for cultural cross dressing, Godwin sought to warn his audience against wearing foreign costume. Costume continued to be a marker for gender inferiority and racial difference.

Fashioning the Afghan ‘type’: Photography and Costume

Here I highlight the role of costume in the creation of the ethnic ‘type’ photographic genre. Rather than understand early photographs of Afghan ‘types’ as scientific, the emphasis on movement and circulation of these images reveal a reliance of the photographer on the commercial market. Revising the chronological placement of these photographs before the establishment of anthropology as a discipline makes it obvious that we cannot understand these images as the product of scientific discourse, but rather precursors to such institutions. By chronologically examining the photographic depictions of the Orient, the development of costume and the reception of these images firmly establishes the role of the consumer as paramount in the construction of ‘types.’

⁴⁴ Robyne, Erica C. "Manly Modes: Artistic Dress and the Styling of Masculine Identity." *Visual Culture in Britain*. 16.2 (2015): 223-242. Print.

⁴⁵ From Godwin, E.W. “A Lecture on Dress (1868).” *The Mask*. April 6, 1949. pp. 335-52.

In the nineteenth century, photography as a new technology, offered up a new method for classification and control over the body in the British colonies. Photography offered a mechanical process of differentiation that became a stronger apparatus for defining boundaries than painting ever could. Photographers such as John Burke utilized photography as a tool to represent Afghanistan for British audiences while holding on to traditional representative practices found in art publications such as Hart's. *The High priests and moolahs of Kabul* (1879) (Figure 7), deepens the encompassing representations of religion by Picart while utilizing the new technology to frame clothing similar to Hart's composition of the *Kaukers*. It is immediately possible for the viewer to find a complete understanding of the 'other' in the costume. The *High priests and moolahs*, with their long knee-length tunic (*kameez*), baggy trouser (*shalwar*), coat, and stark-white *pagri* or turban, represent a stereotype of the religious representations of priests and *mullahs* in Kabul, Afghanistan. Comparable to Scottish tartans, the turban operates as a distinctive identifier of the wearer's ethnicity, region, class, and tribal affiliation.⁴⁶ The caption beneath the image illuminates British conceptualization of their subjects. Although these individuals are supposedly high priests, they are neither named individually nor do they belong to any specific tribal group. Burke's generalization strips these individuals of the power of their position. For the European consumer, the men's identities as religious specialists may be highlighted by the text, but confirmed sartorially just as in Picart's *Ceremonies*. The title and costume allow viewers a glimpse of the historical picture, where there was an emphasis to accentuate the collective in costume rather than individualism.

High priests and mullahs, attempts to elucidate the power and influence of the mullah over Afghan society through clothing. The mullah figure was found in every rank of Afghan

⁴⁶ Bellew, H W. *Journal of a Political Mission to Afghanistan, in 1857, Under Major (now Colonel) Lumsden: With an Account of the Country and People*. Lahore: Orient Research Centre, 1978. Internet resource.

society.⁴⁷ Acting as ministers of education to the populace, the power and influence of the mullah over the entire population presented the British with a large portion of the Afghan people with more power than governors, civil officers, and even the king of Afghanistan. Distinguished by dress, the mullah wore a large loose gown of white or black cotton, and a very large white turban.⁴⁸ Burke's images sartorially confirm the identification of the subjects as mullahs. In the eyes of the British, power to control Afghanistan rested not in fact with a sovereign figure, but rather in the hands of the mullahs. The visual identification of the mullah follows the framework set forth by Picart and after-the-fact could fulfil British military desires due to the political power of the mullah within Afghanistan. As important religious figures, the mullah had the power to threaten the imperial influence and control of the British within Afghanistan, a visual representation of these individuals therefore would be advantageous to the British Empire.⁴⁹

Burke's image raises questions about the relationship between clothing and knowledge, that is, about the political power of dress. 'Others' are judged and valued by their appearance and clothing is basic to the discussion of social and racial difference. By superimposing the situational propriety of the British onto the figure of the mullah, the dress compares the mullah to similar religious figures in Western European society. The costume of all fourteen sitters elaborate upon the formalized 'type' and depict the sartorial culture in Afghanistan. Using

⁴⁷ In his travelogue, Elphinstone examines and breaks down the political power and influence of the Moolah in Afghanistan. see, Elphinstone, Mountstuart. *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul: And Its Dependencies, in Persia, Tartary, and India; Comprising a View of the Afghaun Nation and a History of the Dooraunee Monarchy*. London: Richard Bentley, 1842. Internet resource. p. 282.

⁴⁸ "The character of a Moollah is conferred by an assembly of members of that order on persons who have gone through the proper course of study, and passed the requisite examination. The admission of a candidate is attended with a prescribed form; the chief part of which is investing him with the turban of a Moolah, which is bound round his head by the principal person in the assembly. The Moollahs are distinguished by a particular dress; consisting of a large loose gown of white or black cotton, and a very large white turban of a particular shape." See, Elphinstone, Mountstuart. *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul: And Its Dependencies, in Persia, Tartary, and India; Comprising a View of the Afghaun Nation and a History of the Dooraunee Monarchy*. London: Richard Bentley, 1842. Internet resource. p. 286.

⁴⁹ See, Elphinstone, Mountstuart. *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul: And Its Dependencies, in Persia, Tartary, and India; Comprising a View of the Afghaun Nation and a History of the Dooraunee Monarchy*. London: Richard Bentley, 1842. Internet resource. pp. 282-287.

costume to manufacture a photographic identity, the adornment of the *High priests and mullahs*, caters to a commercial audience by emphasizing the exotic stark whiteness of the turban and portraying the clothing of religious leaders.

Burke, a commercial photographer, operated studios in Murree, India and Peshawar, Pakistan.⁵⁰ For Burke's photographs to make an impact in the European imperial experience, coupled with the issues of access to Afghanistan, the subjects needed to reflect the European cultural inclination towards differentiation through costume, and costume thus created an imaginary orient in Afghanistan. This image speaks to the history of the Afghan wars and to what was really at stake economically in Afghanistan. Before the Second Anglo-Afghan war, the British had set up relations with the Shir Ali Khan, the third son of Dost Mohammed and due to his refusal to allow the British governor in India into Kabul, resulted in the second war. The desire of the British to solidify relations and assert their control over the countries religious leaders through costume, reveals just how difficult it was for the British to obtain, claim, and hold Afghanistan. Rather than producing a scientific survey of the various ethnic groups in Afghanistan, Burke relies on pre-existing consumer interests in turban depictions and political figures and thereby emphasizes clothing.

Once we consider photography in accordance with the history of costume books and the intended destination of these images, we can examine them in their historical time. The photographic album of *The British [Occupation] in Kandahar* (1881) raises questions regarding the understanding of images that have been grouped under the terms "scientific" or "anthropological." The album is comprised of photographs of local landscapes, tribal groups, occupational portraits, street scenes, extant historical landmarks, and sites of British

⁵⁰ For more information, see Falconer, John. *India: Pioneering Photographers, 1850-1900*. London: British Library and Howard and Jane Ricketts Collection, 2001. Print. p. 137.

encampment. The prints are by Dr. Benjamin Simpson (1831-1923), a notable surgeon in the British military, who was stationed in Afghanistan during the Second Anglo-Afghan War. Simpson had a long career as a British army surgeon spanning almost five decades from 1853 to 1890.⁵¹

The album documents the British presence in the city of Kandahar and the surrounding region following the British defeat of the Afghan leader, Ayyub Khan, at the battle of Kandahar in September 1880. The battle was famous in that it immediately followed one of the worst British defeats in history. On July 27, 1880, British troops under General Burrows, were totally defeated by Ayyub Khan at Maiwand, in the biggest British disaster and the greatest Afghan victory of the conflict. Ayyub then besieged the remainder of the garrison at Kandahar. General Roberts set out with his army of 10,000 from Kabul on August 8 to relieve Kandahar which lay over 300 miles away. The march from Kabul to Kandahar was quite a feat in moving so many men over such a distance and in a relatively short period. The victory itself had heroic aspects in that it was both a rescue and revenge mission. On September 1, the day after Roberts arrived, he defeated Ayyub Khan and the Afghan army, effectively ending the Second Afghan War.⁵²

The city of Kandahar, while seemingly out of the way, was a vital city for the British and Russians. The fort at Kandahar had immense strategic value: possession of it opened further potential conquests. Even pre-Anglo-Afghan war depictions of the city by Jean Baptiste Tavernier depicted “the Famous Fortress of Kandahar, [as] the best place in all of Asia.”⁵³

Although the compendium of photographs depict Kandahar at the middle of its transition from

⁵¹ “Obituaries: Sir Benjamin Simpson, K.C.I.E.” *British Medical Journal*. July 7, 1923.

⁵² Dupree, Louis. *Afghanistan*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1980. Print.

⁵³ Tavernier, Jean-Baptiste, John Phillips, and Daniel Cox. *The Six Voyages of John Baptista Tavernier, Baron of Aubonne Through Turkey, into Persia and the East-Indies, for the Space of Forty Years: Giving an Account of the Present State of Those Countries, Viz. of the Religion, Government, Customs, and Commerce of Every Country, and the Figures, Weight, and Value of the Money Currant All Over Asia: to Which Is Added a New Description of the Seraglio*. London: Printed by William Godbid for Robert Littlebury ... and Moses Pitt, 1677. Print.

Jewel of Asia to today's understanding of it as a lawless land, the native 'types' depicted by Simpson reveal an interest in meeting a commercial demand. The *British [Occupation] of Kandahar* serves as a key reference from which we can begin to properly place the role of costume in proto-ethnographic photography and thereby identify and examine the functioning power of the consumer imagination.⁵⁴

Consumer desire is visible in the photograph of *The Hazaras* (Figure 8). The Hazaras, an ethnic group of Mongol descent, have been positioned by Simpson in a v-formation facing the camera. Framed between two buildings, which offer a dark background, the viewer focuses on the group. In the entire album, this image is the only one containing a female. Seated in the center, the woman is framed on either side by men, and holds a child, who has turned away from the viewer. Clothed in a white veil, her gaze is directed off to the right; only the figure standing on the right stares into the camera. In the nineteenth century, the Hazaras were a poor people and characterized as "content to serve as menials."⁵⁵ Bellew's moral analysis of the Hazaras as docile and faithful servants,⁵⁶ but fierce and savage enemies of Afghans,⁵⁷ created the notion of a character sympathetic to British authority.

⁵⁴ Patel, Alka. "Medicine, Photography, and Empire: Dr. Benjamin Simpson OBE in India." Presentation at the Medical Humanities Initiative, Irvine, CA, 2016. See also, Patel, Alka. "Looking between the Subjects: War, Empire, and "Documentation" during the Second Anglo-Afghan War (c. 1878-81)." Presentation in Oklahoma, 2014.

⁵⁵ Henry Walter Bellew was a British medical officer who worked in Afghanistan. He wrote several books based on his explorations in Afghanistan during his career with the Army, which included a study of the culture and customs of Afghani tribes. For more information, see Bellew, H W. *Journal of a Political Mission to Afghanistan, in 1857, Under Major (now Colonel) Lumsden: With an Account of the Country and People*. Lahore: Orient Research Centre, 1978. Internet resource.

⁵⁶ "Hazarahs are a very poor people, and except in the neighborhood of Ghazni, where they possess a few villages and some tracts of land, they occupy but a mean rank among the other races of the country, whom they are content to serve as menials. As servants they are considered faithful, docile, and trustworthy, but in the independence of their own homes they are said to be savage and inveterate enemies of the Afghans, lovers of freedom, and capable of wonderful hardihood. They bear a character for extraordinary endurance and bravery, bordering on rashness." See Bellew, H W. *Journal of a Political Mission to Afghanistan, in 1857, Under Major (now Colonel) Lumsden: With an Account of the Country and People*. Lahore: Orient Research Centre, 1978. Internet resource. pp. 17-18.

⁵⁷ It is worth mentioning that there was an understanding of distinctions between the Hazaras, Afghans, and other tribal groups. In Bellew's journals he makes it clear that Afghanistan was not a nation state, but rather a concatenation of tribal groups. The imperialistic generalization of all people in Afghanistan has Orientalized our

Generalizing the Hazaras as a racial group, Simpson has staged the figures in such a way to simultaneously please commercial interests and fulfill military agendas. Simpson utilizes the idea of character and links it to costume to create a desirable print. The image raises the question of how dress could indicate character through careful exertion of dress as a visual aesthetic. Even though the female's attire appears in everyday garb and not ceremonial or altered costume, the staging and posing of her body requires an enormous amount of arrangement. When looking at the female figure, the viewer associates a similar composition of a female figurehead, specifically, the Virgin Mary. When two objects, such as mother and child, have frequently been seen together, the imagination of a British consumer acquires a habit of passing easily from one to the other.⁵⁸ By utilizing popular and well known imagery, Simpson established a consumable link between the Hazaras and the European audience.⁵⁹

By discussing the historical sequence of events that led to the creation of these images, the photographer's attribution, and the relationship between costume and the ethnic 'other,' the consumer is identified as a key component in the construction of the image. Current scholarship tends to view ethnic 'type' photographs as proto-anthropological inquiries. Scholars have examined costume in these images with limited inspection, focusing primarily on the scientific value of such images. However, such examinations exclude a larger consumer interest in universal identification through dress. As an alternative approach, Simpson's images should be understood via costume interests, revealing a different function of the ethnic 'type.'

understanding of nineteenth-century Afghanistan today. From Bellew, H W. *Journal of a Political Mission to Afghanistan, in 1857, Under Major (now Colonel) Lumsden: With an Account of the Country and People*. Lahore: Orient Research Centre, 1978. Internet resource. pp. 16-19.

⁵⁸ If we consider the notion that Simpson was a British doctor, the staging of the female in a manner that draws upon the popular religious iconography of the Virgin Mary, seems a natural inclination if the image is intended for consumer consumption. See, Smith, Adam, and Knud Haakonssen. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Cambridge, U.K: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Print.

⁵⁹ The origins of the Hazaras are obscure. They seem to be an amalgam of mainly two types of peoples. The Indo-Iranian peoples and the various Mongol-Turkic peoples. See, Mousavi, Sayed A. *The Hazaras of Afghanistan: An Historical, Cultural, Economic and Political Study*. Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 1998. Print. pp. 19-43.

The early 1800's was marked with a surge towards categorization, listings, statistics, data production, and collections. As Sontag has written, "to collect photographs is to collect the world."⁶⁰ Operating during such a frenzy, Simpson was predisposed to create an image that could potentially aid the collecting habits of imperialism. Though dress was utilitarian, it offered an opportunity to connect the viewer's imagination to the 'other.' The fascination with the 'orient' coupled with the political relationship between Britain and Afghanistan attracted British audiences and stimulated public interest in images of Afghan costume.⁶¹

Especially when applied to photography, costume served another function that catered to the British public. Rather than just beauty, costume had the ability to identify loyalty and morality. The semiotics of dress as indicative of character and conduct lends itself to general colonial discourse. Costume gives reputation to the wearer, to a certain degree. Just as an individual wearing a suit would be considered a gentleman, so too would the characteristics of a gentleman, as educated, generous, sincere, and loyal, be associated with him. To both a colonial and commercial mind, clothing was connected to virtues. Costume connected vices and virtues to a person, which in turn provided justification for the imperial operation in Afghanistan. Simpson's *The Baluchi Beggar "Dato Obolum Belisario"* (Figure 9), employs dress to associate transgressive behavior with the station of a beggar.

The arrival of the British in the region had profound effects on the trajectory of Baluch development.⁶² Uninterested in the region economically, the British were solely concerned with establishing a buffer zone that could forestall the encroachment of the Russians upon the rich prize of India. To further this end, the British relied on the manipulation of Baluch tribal leaders,

⁶⁰ Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. New York: Anchor Books, 1990. Internet resource. p. 1.

⁶¹ Erdogdu, Ayse. *Selling the Orient: Nineteenth Century Photographs of Istanbul in European Markets*. , 1992. Print.

⁶² Dupree, Louis. *Afghanistan*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1980. Print.

cash handouts, and the establishment of garrisons, but they paid no attention to the economic development of the region itself. The Baluch have a long tradition of poetic composition, and poets and professional minstrels have been held in high esteem; their oral literature consists of epic poetry, ballads of war and romance, religious compositions, and folktales.⁶³

The Baluchi Beggar situates an elder male beggar in front of the entrance to a dirt structure. The image is cropped so the viewer cannot determine either the size or function of the structure. The *Beggar* is dressed in a simple trouser (*tunban or churidar*), a quilted coat, and has a dark shawl or blanket draped over his shoulders. He holds a short walking stick in his left hand, and his right hand is positioned close to his body in a begging gesture. His feet are dressed in worn shoes with loose laces. His head covered in a dark turban contrasts sharply with his white beard and hair, which are visible under the turban. The *Baluchi Beggar* is accompanied with a second title: ‘Dato Obolum Belisario,’ or, “give half to Belisarius.” According to popular legend, Belisarius was a Byzantine general who, after having obtained many glorious victories over the enemies of his country, was deprived of his eyesight by Emperor Justinian for his miserliness and reduced to indigence. Belisarius is often depicted sitting upon the highway like a common mendicant, imploring the charity of any passerby.⁶⁴

Bringing to discussion how costume and textualization transform identity in this image, it is worth mentioning that the figure in *The Baluchi Beggar* is featured in another image in the album indicating how easily identity was transformed and how the same individual could serve multiple purposes. In contrast to the other figures in the album that are depicted more than once, *Group of Fakirs* (Figure 10), reveals Simpson’s hand in the staging and construction of a moral

⁶³ Baloch, I. *The Problem of "greater Baluchistan": A Study of Baluch Nationalism*. Stuttgart: Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1987. Print.

⁶⁴ Marmontel, Jean-François. *Belisarius*. New York: Garland Pub, 1975. Print.

and commercial type. Once again, the beggar ‘type’ is utilized to frame the individual in a manner that is historically popular.

A major point arguing for the treatment of these photographs as commercial can be found not only in the emphasis on clothing, but also in an examination of image circulation and duration of use. Simpson’s photographs, while somewhat limited in circulation, were still available for purchase and display. The commercial life of Simpson’s images illustrates how the photographic object can be conceptualized within complex consumption cultures. When conceptualized as such, costume can enrich our understanding of consumption objects within consumer circulation.⁶⁵

Real Artificiality: The Demystified Afghan Body

The manipulations of costume present in the nineteenth-century depictions of Afghanistan exemplify an unexamined role that images served in shaping a popular understanding of Afghanistan. Yet, by reflecting on costume, the manipulations are too prevalent to be either random or extreme cases. By framing sartorial representations of Afghanistan as commercial enterprise, this thesis has strived to identify costume as a medium in a popular Western arena as a significant determinant in the formation of colonial imagination. The influence of commercial interests while discrete, is not unrelated to the nineteenth-century colonial network. Costume, seated centrally in the metropolis, predated and overlapped with the mass fascination with the new technology of photography. It is reasonable then to believe that costume had the capability to disseminate knowledge and therefore was a vital tool for the colonial apparatus as a method of creating imaginary cultures.

⁶⁵ Bettany, S. "The Material Semiotics of Consumption or Where (and What) Are the Objects in Consumer Culture Theory?" *Research in Consumer Behavior*. 11 (2007): 41-56. Print.

Costume stands in our understanding as utilitarian, yet in the nineteenth century would have served as a primary visual index through which artists could establish conceptual practices that would later shape the photographic activity of early Western photographers in Afghanistan. While there is no doubt that bigoted misconceptions about the Orient existed, the Costume Complex is just one other aspect of the construction of colonial imagination. Nineteenth-century representations of Afghanistan are the epitome of the European costume complex. The combination of narrative, production numbers, and the longstanding availability of costume books heightened the ability of costume to enlarge access and proliferate knowledge. To ignore costume or the Costume Complex as part of the mechanics of commodification and the Imperial apparatus would be to disregard how people in Afghanistan were represented. Once these images are approached through the costume complex, scholarly inquiry is no longer limited to scientific and proto-anthropological evidence, but can expand upon other social aspects, such as the interests of mass audiences.

The first section provided an overview of the role of costume prior to the introduction of the camera as an immediate understanding of differences. This section demonstrated that current understanding of photographs of Afghanistan does not stem from the original historic value of these visual representations of the 'other'. To that point, I argue that the historic fascination with costume influenced a desire to record costume and thereby manipulate the sartorial to cater to a mass audience in Europe. I concluded the section by tracing a legacy of commercial manipulation of costume until costume became a colonial method for marking racial difference and gender inferiority. By focusing on costume, pre-photographic artists set the stage for early photographers to eliminate the Afghan body and create imaginary ethnic 'types' through careful

selection of clothing that would eventually be used to advance the British imperializing endeavor in Afghanistan.

The second section addressed the various approaches of early photographers in terms of construction, reception, and scientific value. What began as a commercial enterprise to provide a first-hand experience of Afghanistan to a mass audience ultimately manifested in photographic illustrations that were made available to a purchasing market. While the images certainly reveal aspects of ethnic ‘type’ genre, their construction depends on market trends. This section also signaled out a conceptual shift in how these images were approached by previous scholars. Rather than thinking of social Darwinism as a driving force behind the documentation of people in these images, we should think of the aesthetics of the image as a fundamentally commercial venture, the photos being a single iteration among a multitude of images available for purchase, display, and reproduction. My goal in this section was to reconcile the scientific myth of these images with the commercial reality of costume.

This thesis has only skimmed the surface of the various ways in which images depicting nineteenth-century Afghanistan could function as a future entry point for scholarly research. The process of charting and examining the construction of ethnic people through costume has revealed myriad future possibilities of research that fall far beyond the scope of this thesis. Rather than define these images as focused exclusively on clothing, the aim of this thesis was to offer new considerations for images such as these through costume. The ways in which Afghan ethnic ‘types’ were represented sartorially by the British in the nineteenth century sheds light on the role of information media in the European quest to colonize the East. There is tremendous potential for additional insight by tracing the various costume publications that came after the popularization of photography. In 1888 by Auguste Racinet, *Le Costume Historique* presented

itself as a holistic documentation of all costume throughout all time. Published in Paris by Firmin-Didot et Cie, *Le Costume Historique* serves as a proto-ethnology of culture through costume. The book raises concerns regarding the general classification, how character is understood, and status is created. By the time of its publication, photography was well known and seen as a ‘representation.’ Yet Racinet’s *Le Costume Historique* continued to occupy a central position for ethnic ‘type’ generalizations. *Le Costume Historique* acts as an encyclopedia of sorts in his attempt to depict costume across boundaries and time comprehensively. The trend towards visualizing the ‘other’ greatly influenced the construction and popularity of the book, yet it did not rely on the new medium of photography. Finally, a related theme is the *Turkestan Album*, a governmentally sanctioned publication that provided a visual survey of Central Asia from the perspective of the Russian Imperial government that took control of the area in the 1850s and 1860s. The distinctions between photographs produced for government and those produced for public sale while being hazy, allow us to consider the multiple layers beyond a sweeping colonial umbrella.

Images



Figure 1: *Le Cadi Lesquier, Emir, Effendi, and Imam*, CC by GRI, BL75 .C4



Figure 2: *Kaukers of the Bolan Range*, CC by UMN



Figure 3: *Cabul-Retinue of Shah Shoojau Ool Moolk-Mahomed Shah Giljee, Chief Executioner, Ghufoor, a Mutilator* CC by UMN



Figure 4: *Cabul, Affghan and Kuzzilbash Ladies* CC by UMN



Figure 5: *Cabul, A "Kuttar" or String of Blind Beggars* CC by UMN



Figure 6: Dourraunee Chieftains in Full Armour CC by UMN



Figure 7: *The High priests and moolahs of Kabul* © British Library Board Photo 430/3(61)



29 Group, Hazaras.

The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. ID no.: gri_2013_r_5_032. For higher resolution images visit: http://hdl.handle.net/10020/repro_perm.

Figure 8: *Group, Hazaras*, CC by GRI, 2013_r_5_032



58 - A Beluchi Beggar. "Dato Obolum Belisario".

The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. ID no.: gri_2013_r_5_059. For higher resolution images visit: http://hdl.handle.net/10020/repro_perm.

Figure 9: *A Beluchi Beggar, "Dato Obolum Belisario,"* CC by GRI, 2013_r_5_059



The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. ID no.: gri_2013_r_5_062. For higher resolution images visit: http://hdl.handle.net/10020/repro_perm.

Figure 10: Group of Fakirs, CC by GRI, 2013_r_5_062

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